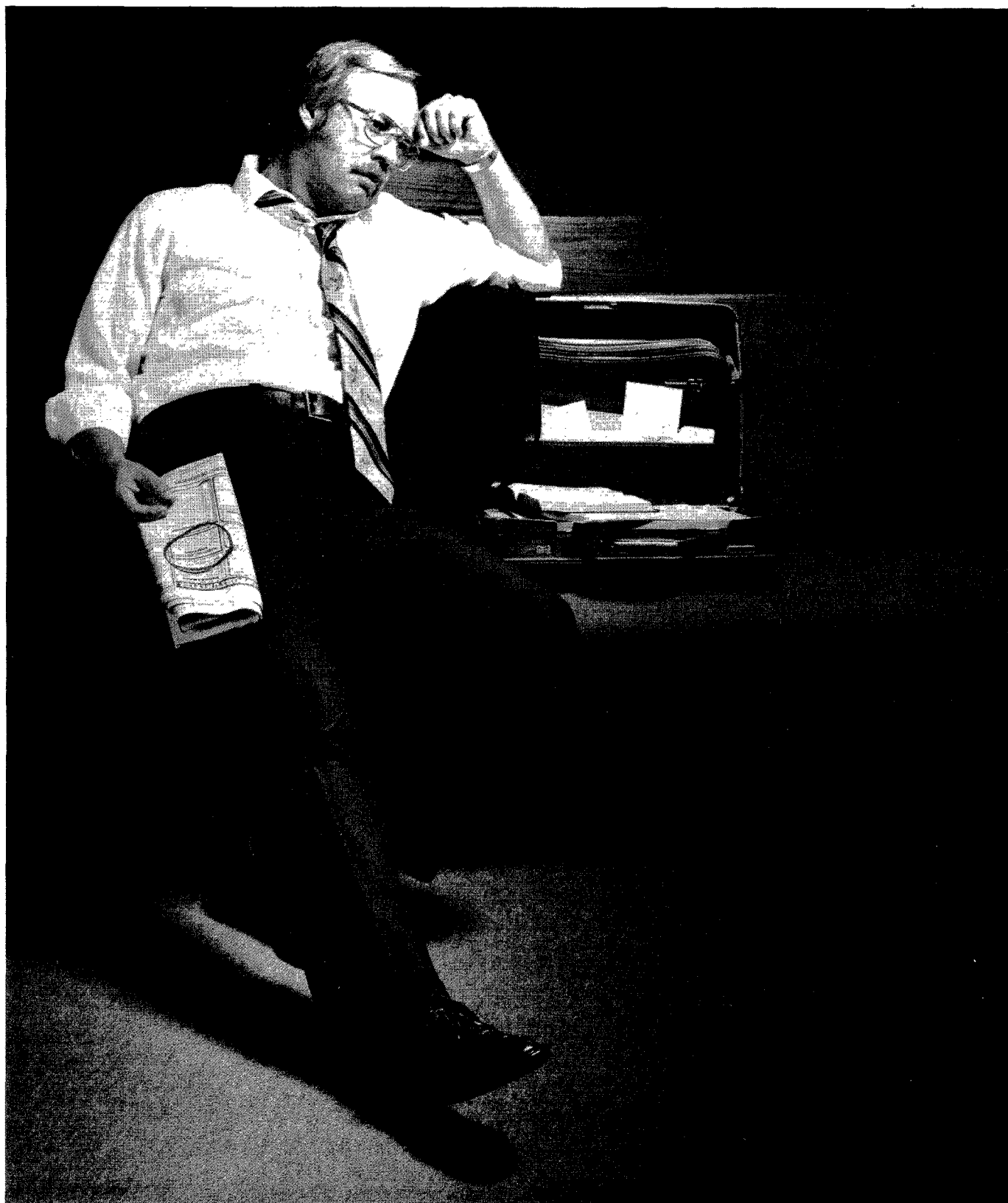


Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/December 1981



Morale in Ministry

Letters

Pastors find much to be hopeful about in the fact that church leaders are taking a look at their specific concerns. Some, however, dare to hope that these concerns will result in action and not simply die.

Appreciates open look

Thank you for your very open and candid summary of the meeting that Elder Bradford had with the twenty-four pastors from various districts and churches in the denomination ("Concerns of 24 Pastors," August, 1981). Having pastored some small multichurch districts for a number of years and now being at the Highland Academy church, I feel the committees adequately summarized the problems, challenges, and joys of being called into the Seventh-day Adventist ministry today. Perhaps, if further study was desired, a survey of similar questions sent to a larger cross section of pastors might confirm these findings all the more. However, I think that the challenges both for administrators and pastors have been clearly outlined by this group. I appreciated the fact that our church is taking an open look at these things. Obviously, God is leading.

The only problem with MINISTRY is that it comes only once each month!—Fred R. Fuller, Portland, Tennessee.

I consider some of the ideas expressed in MINISTRY's editorials to be on the cutting edge of the experiences many of us pastors face each day. Of special interest to me was the recent report "Concerns of 24 Pastors." I appreciated the open forum provided these pastors by the General Conference administration, indicating an awareness of where the real action in the church ought to be—the local church. I appreciated the insights of the pastors, especially in the areas of finance and family life. What bothers me, though, in all of this is what may—or may not—come of this expression of concern. I am most happy to see this report, but I am also anxious to see something done about it. My experience with administration and the necessary slowness of organizations makes me wonder whether I ought to file this piece, prepare for follow-up reports of actions based on it, or just forget it.

I believe in our church and its organization at every level. I sometimes wish I could see more efficiency, but I believe God's hand is over all. I just hate to see such valuable insights as I perceived in this article go to waste. My purpose in writing this letter, then, is to prod possible actions based on what I read in the editorial. I believe hundreds of pastors share my

perspective—pastors who love their church, wish to see it prosper, and will defend it with their last breath. Let's tap that concern and energy and do *something* about the wisdom of the twenty-four voices who have reported from where the action is!—Charles Liu, Brookings, Oregon.

I can hardly contain myself, having just read the editorial regarding the concerns of twenty-four pastors! Since I am well acquainted with one of the twenty-four, I can report that it is representative of the March meeting. As the pastor of a multichurch district in a small conference, I can't stress enough how important these recommendations really are. It is my urgent plea that they be thoroughly pursued and not be allowed to die in the endless rounds of some committee.—Brad Gardner, Ronan, Montana.

Three cheers to Elder Bradford for bringing twenty-four pastors to Washington to share with him their concerns! Six cheers to Elder Spangler and MINISTRY for the courage to print those concerns. A thousand cheers to the administrator who will implement these concerns!—Bob Hunter, Madison, Tennessee.

It's encouraging to know that some in the "higher echelons" of the church are concerned about those of us at the grass-roots level ("Concerns of 24 Pastors," August, 1981). I too have been concerned about our use of tithe monies for plant and equipment expenses, as well as secretarial salaries on the conference level. However, the reallocation of these funds to the outreach of the local church (as one group suggested) would not be any more justified in my opinion. Regarding tithe, Mrs. White says, "A very plain and definite message has been given to me for our people. I am bidden to tell them that they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe should be applied. . . . One reasons that the tithe may be applied to school purposes. Still others reason that canvassers and colporteurs should be supported from the tithe. But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers. There should be today in the

field one hundred well qualified laborers where now there is but one."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 248, 249.

If colporteurs and teachers (except Bible instructors) do not qualify to be paid from the tithe, how do we justify conference office expense? Nearly every conference could use more ministers to reduce multichurch districts. This would result in less traveling time and expenses for the minister, as well as allow him to concentrate his energies. Only as we follow the counsel of the Lord will we receive His full blessing.—Don Byard II, Mt. Lake Park, Maryland.

Your August editorial has probably brought you a number of fervent amens. Although I am no longer in the ministry, let me add my amen as a former pastor both in the United States and overseas.

Particularly impressive was the financial aspect of the report. A thoroughgoing restudy and implementation of the distribution of funds—especially tithe funds and their use for evangelism—are long overdue. I don't mean to imply that these funds are currently being mishandled, but a better use could be made of them. Dollar for souls, we are not really getting our best out of them. I feel that tons of our good literature or Bible portions (especially overseas) could be given out free from a percentage of the tithe funds. I know that appropriations are made now to our publishing work, but that is not what I am talking about. I would like to see selected books, such as *Steps to Christ*, paid for entirely and scattered broadcast. For the dollar invested in this way, how many more people might we witness to!—E. Robert Reynolds, Riverside, California.

No theologians?

Regarding the article "Thinkers v. Doers?" (August, 1981), I do not read about theologians in the Scriptures. I do read about evangelists, pastors, teachers, and others. A pastor should know the doctrines and be able to explain them clearly. A thorough knowledge of the Scriptures is all-important. I enjoy MINISTRY very much, although sometimes I don't agree with everything that is written. But when it comes to doctrine, MINISTRY is right to the point.—C. B. Warren, Clearlake, California.

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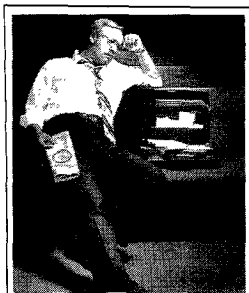
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Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/December 1981/Volume 54/Number 12



COVER: CHARLES WHIELDON

Morale in Ministry—A Study of the Pastor as a Person/5.

Roger L. Dudley, Des Cummings, Jr., and Greg Clark. Most Seventh-day Adventist pastors love their work and would not want to do anything else. But for an increasing number of them, morale is drooping; the flame that once animated has now flickered, burned low, or gone out. An extensive sampling of Adventist pastors across North America seeks to determine the extent of, and the factors involved in, this lessening of contentment in pastoral ministry.

Let's Fight the Right Fight/10. C. Raymond Holmes, who left a Lutheran pastorate in 1971 to become a Seventh-day Adventist minister, says, "Ten years later, I am hearing strange sounds. I am hearing that the gospel has only recently been discovered in the Adventist Church, that it is just now being taught and proclaimed, and that a reformation is just now beginning among us due to this 'discovery' and proclamation. What, I ask myself, was it that I found in Adventism ten years ago if the gospel has not been known by Adventists until 1981?"

The Pre-Advent Judgment/12. Edward Heppenstall. A wider perspective is needed in order to recognize the true scope of the judgment. There is no valid reason to limit its concern only to the saints; it is a divine process in which both God and His people, as well as their enemies, are included.

Weeding the Garden of Prayer/16. Robert M. Johnston.

What's in a Name?/18. James R. Hoffer.

What's So Unique About Adventism?—2/19. J. R. Spangler.

Pastors' Kids Are Different!/22. Molly K. Rankin.

Sin and Judgment Among the Ancient Egyptians and Babylonians/25. Siegfried H. Horn. Evidence left behind by these early civilizations indicates that these peoples had a clear understanding of moral concepts similar to those enshrined in the Ten Commandments.

From the Editor/19.

Shepherdess/22.

Biblical Archeology/25.

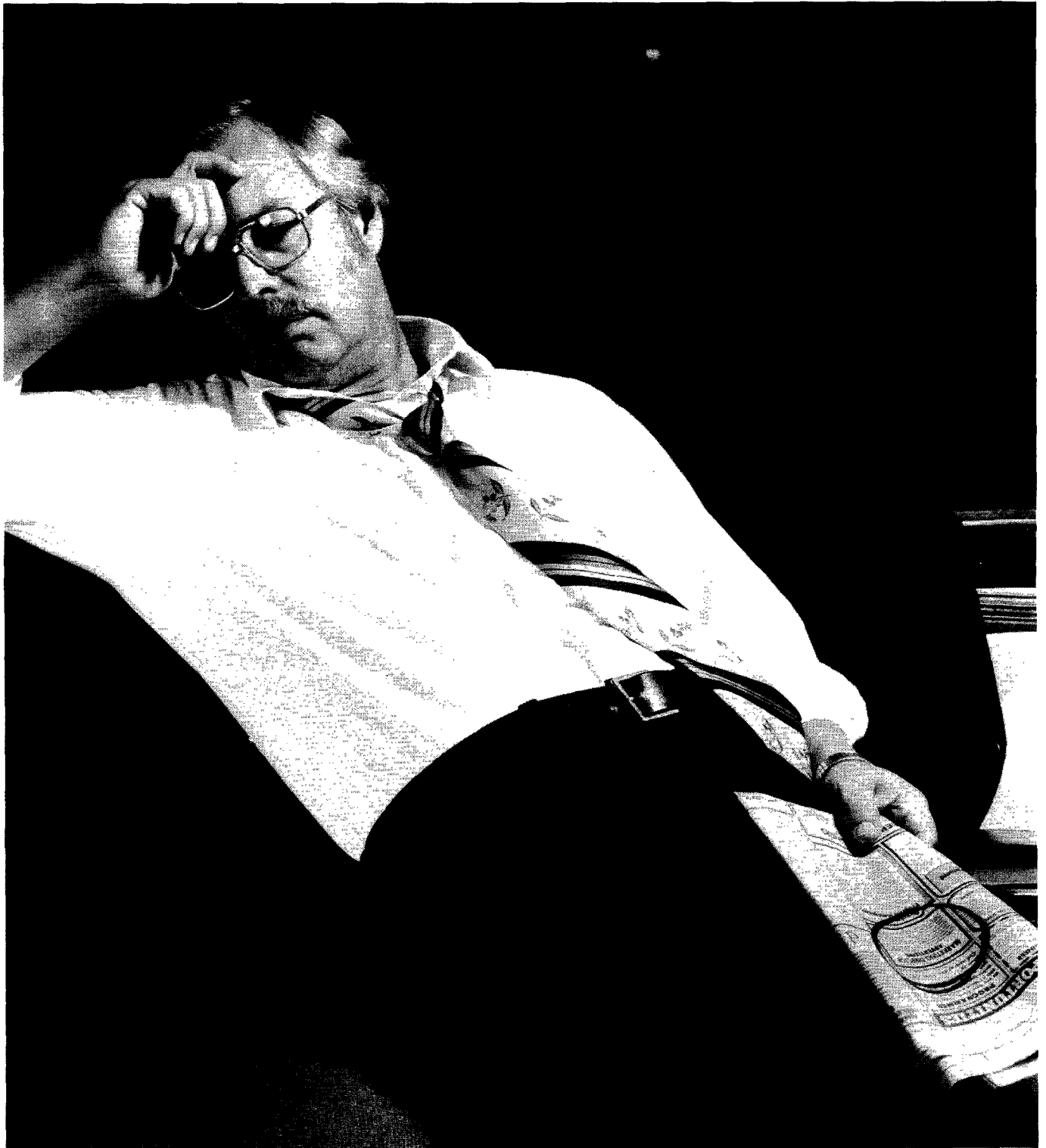
Shop Talk/28.

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Recommended Reading/32.

What are the greatest sources of frustration for the Adventist pastor? What areas cause the most satisfaction? How seriously does family life affect pastoral morale? A recent sampling indicates that personal factors, even more than professional expertise, may determine effectiveness and contentment in pastoral ministry.

By Roger L. Dudley, Des Cummings, Jr., and Greg Clark



Morale in ministry —a study of the pastor as a person

The following project report is based on a research study carried out by the Andrews University Institute of Church Ministry and commissioned by the Ministerial/Stewardship Association of the General Conference. It is the first half of the complete study and deals with the pastor as a person and husband and the effects these factors have on morale in ministry. The second half of the study (which will appear in MINISTRY at a later date) examines the pastor's wife and her role in relationship to morale in the pastoral ministry.—Editors.

Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church quite a bit of study has been given to the work of the pastor. Better methods of evangelism, church administration, worship leadership, and personal ministries have been considered. Frequent articles have sought to understand and improve the professional life of the pastor. All of this and more is needed.

On the other hand, little research has gone into the pastor as a *person*. Yet there is a growing consensus among church leadership that personal factors may be even more important than professional factors in determining effectiveness in the pastoral ministry.

To be more specific, this study deals with the question of pastoral morale. There is a concern that in recent years pastoral morale has been slipping and that pastoral ministry no longer holds the challenge and fulfillment that it once did.

Of course there are still many pastors who love their work and who would not want to do anything else. They find their calling satisfying, rewarding, and joyous. But for an increasing number, the flame that once lighted their vision has flickered, burned low, or gone out. They find their daily routine to be drudgery. They have not found the success needed to fulfill their own expectations or those of their conference administrations. They feel a sense of failure and of guilt. Some are hoping for a "promotion" into departmental or administrative work. Some seek a transfer to a teaching position. Others are simply leaving the ministry for secular callings. Many feel trapped and attempt to "tread water" until retirement.

One theory is that the decline in morale may be related to the stresses that the pastoral ministry places on family life, particularly on husband-wife relationships. A previous study of pastors' wives in the North American Division (see MINISTRY, June, 1981, pp. 28, 29) revealed that many suffer a sense of isolation. Because of the high mobility of pastoral families and the supposed need to maintain impartiality, many wives have no close relationships in community or congregation. Then if the husband devotes long hours, including evenings and weekends, to his profession, she may feel very alone indeed. Often the husband is better educated and much in the limelight while she has neglected her personal development and sees herself being left behind as the years pass. This situation may create strain and misunderstanding in the relationship and reinforce the pastor's doubts whether the pastorate is really where he ought to be after all.

The present research was designed to determine the depth and diversity of lowered morale among pastors in North America. It also allowed opportunity for the respondents to indicate what changes they would suggest to make the pastoral ministry a more fulfilling calling.

Methods

The Institute of Church Ministry designed a simple questionnaire, "The Pastor as Person and Husband." It consisted of twenty-one items on personal and pastoral morale and on husband-wife relationships. To each item the pastor could respond on a five-point scale ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement. In addition, four open-ended questions dealt with: (1) the greatest sources of satisfaction in the ministry; (2) the areas of most frustration and disappointment; (3) suggested changes; and (4) the one to whom pastor or wife would turn for counsel if confronted with a personal or family problem.

It was decided to use as a sample the same group of pastors who had responded to the North American Division Church Growth Study (see MINISTRY, July, 1981, pp. 4-7) so that the data banks on each study could be interfaced and more information made available. In the previous study 295 churches had been randomly

selected from the entire division. Pastors of 251 had returned completed surveys. Because in some of these cases two churches had the same pastor, only 238 individual pastors were involved. Each of these men involved in the earlier study received a survey regarding morale in ministry with instructions on September 2, 1980. Throughout the autumn and winter, three follow-up letters were sent and telephone calls were made to those pastors not responding to the letters. By May 1, 1981, the Institute of Church Ministry had received 172 usable surveys. This represents a response rate of 72 percent. The findings of this study are based on these 172 responses.

A pastoral profile

Each of the twenty-one items was presented as a statement to which the pastor could strongly disagree, disagree somewhat, remain neutral, agree somewhat, or agree strongly. The results are displayed in Table 1 in two ways.

First, the percentage of those disagreeing or agreeing (either strongly or somewhat) is given following each item. Those who chose the neutral position or who omitted the item account for the extent to which the first two percentages fail to total 100 percent.

The second way of displaying the results is to give the mean or arithmetic average. Here the numbers 1 to 5 have been assigned to correspond to the positions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. (If everyone chose strongly disagree, the mean would be 1, while if everyone chose strongly agree, the mean would be 5). The higher the mean for each individual item, the more agreement is indicated. Since in some cases the item is worded positively and in other cases negatively, it is important to note that the higher score may indicate high or low morale. The wording of the item must be considered. (As they appear in Table 1, the items are only summaries of the entire statement appearing in the actual survey instrument. A complete copy of the survey may be obtained by sending a large self-addressed, stamped envelope to MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.)

The first impression that comes from the information in Table 1 is that there is

much reason for encouragement. The overall morale appears to be better than might have been expected. Item 7, "I really enjoy being a pastor," received the second-highest percentage of agreement (94 percent) and the highest mean. Only 2 percent disagreed with the statement. Also notice that 95 percent are comfortable in one-to-one witnessing, 87 percent believe they are successful in their work, and 82 percent say that husband and wife are agreed that God wants them in the pastoral ministry.

In the light of current theological controversies within the church, it is encouraging to report that only 19 percent of those pastors surveyed have had their faith in some of the church's historical teachings called into question (only 6.4 percent *strongly agreed* with the item) and that the mean (1.87) was the lowest of any of the twenty-one items.

Also, the relationships between pastor and wife are generally positive. No one disagreed with the statement "My wife and I always confer together before making a major decision." Other positive statements on spouse relationships drew from 78 percent to 91 percent agreement.

Yet a closer inspection reveals some areas of concern. For example, 34 percent feel that they might not meet the approval of their superiors in the conference office, 21 percent hope to be "promoted" to some other form of ministry, 26 percent are disturbed by the faultfinding and criticism of members toward them, and 58 percent sometimes feel a loneliness and isolation in the ministry. Another 28 percent sometimes feel as if they would like to leave the pastoral ministry, and 33 percent have discussed the possibility of a transfer with their wives.

Even in the generally positive areas of spouse relationships, there are some problems. Notice that in 3 percent of the cases, the wife does not encourage and support her husband in the ministry, in 5 percent there is not an open relationship between pastor and wife in which they can discuss their deepest feelings with each other, in 6 percent the couple are not agreed that the pastoral ministry is where God wants them to be, in 9 percent they do not counsel together concerning the work of ministry in their area, and in 10 percent the pastor does not regularly take time for his wife and children.

While we may be grateful that these percentages are small, when they are applied to the hundreds of pastors in the division, the absolute number of those who are concerned, feeling alone, or in strained family relationships becomes significant. It represents a personal anguish and a potential loss of human resources to the working force of the pastoral ministry that is frightening. Even the 6.5 percent who strongly agreed to item 5 (questioning some of the church's teachings) translates into many pastors (this represents 11 in

this sample alone).

At least two conclusions might be fairly drawn from this analysis: 1. The overall morale of most pastors is high, but a substantial minority struggle with some doubts and discouragements concerning their calling and a smaller minority are experiencing home-related stresses. 2. Even though negative attitudes may be found in only a small percentage of the pastors, these percentages still represent a considerable number of ministers because of the large size of the working force.

All this demonstrates a need. Some measure of this need can be determined by the fact that 23 percent indicated that they did not have an effective program for their own professional growth and 92 percent would welcome a continuing education program for the upgrading of their ministerial skills. Even more revealing may be the fact that 70 percent agreed that it would be good if a counselor with no ties to administration were provided with whom pastors and their wives could discuss problems.

Husband-wife relationships

Does this study lend any credence to the hypothesis that low pastoral morale might be related to stress in the pastor-wife relationship? All surveys of those who disagreed, either strongly or somewhat, to items 16, 18, or 19 were singled out. These are the pastors who reported that they and their wives do not counsel together concerning the work of ministry in their area, or do not have an open relationship where they can freely discuss their deepest feelings, or the wives do not encourage them and support them in the work of pastoral ministry. There were twenty-three such surveys, or about 13.4 percent of the total. Table 2 reveals the percentages of those pastors who disagreed or agreed with certain morale items.

When Table 2 is compared with the corresponding items in Table 1, a startling picture emerges. On every single one of these nine items, pastors indicating marital stress disagreed with positive morale statements and agreed with negative morale statements in a higher proportion than did the total sample of pastors! And the shifts in percentages are substantial. They range from five to thirty-one percentage points, with an average of seventeen points.

Of particular significance are these facts:

Twenty-eight percent sometimes feel that they would like to leave the pastoral ministry, and 33 percent have discussed with their wives the possibility of a transfer to another type of ministry.

Only 43 percent of these pastors reported a satisfying personal devotional life in contrast to 74 percent of the total sample; 39 percent do not have regular family worship in the home as opposed to 16 percent of the total group; only 35 percent have an effective professional-growth program compared with 57 percent overall; 39 percent disagreed with the statement that they sometimes felt like leaving the pastoral ministry in contrast with 61 percent of the whole sample; and 91 percent expressed a desire for a counselor with whom pastors and wives could discuss problems compared to 70 percent of all the pastors.

Although the number of pastors found in this situation is rather small to provide conclusive evidence, it does seem that a trend is being identified. In homes where there are barriers to deep-level communication and a minimum of mutual sharing and support, it is likely that pastoral morale will be lower than average. Certainly church leadership should consider it a top priority to develop programs that build the quality of interpersonal relationships between pastors and their spouses.

Questioning doctrines

What kinds of responses might be expected from those pastors who agreed, strongly or somewhat, with the statement that "current internal theological challenges have caused me to question some of our teachings"? There were thirty-two such surveys, or 18.6 percent of the total sample. These too were compared to the total sample on the percentage of agree-disagree items.

On most items, these pastors did not differ significantly from the larger group. However, on items 11 to 14, the percentage agreeing was from eleven to twenty points higher than the corresponding item in the total sample.

In this group, 41 percent sometimes felt as if they would like to leave the pastoral ministry, 44 percent had talked with their wives about the possibility of transferring to another type of ministry, 81 percent thought it would be good to have a counselor for pastors and their wives, and 78 percent sometimes feel a loneliness and isolation in the ministry. The corresponding percentages for these items among the overall group, as given in Table 1, are 28, 33, 70, and 58 percent.

So it does seem that doctrinal uncer-

tainty may be related to some aspects of the morale problem. It has not been established which, if either, is the causative factor. This does suggest, however, that providing an opportunity for the exploring of questions and finding answers in a nonthreatening atmosphere may be another means by which church leadership can elevate morale in the ministry.

A measure of morale

Thus far, morale has been considered as a collection of separate items. The analysis is now carried a step further to develop a morale scale on which every pastor may receive a score. The scale was constructed from eleven of the twenty-one items: numbers 5-12, 14, 15, and 20. Each pastor was assigned a score of 1 to 5 on each item, with 5 representing the highest morale (reverse scoring had to be used with negatively worded items). Then the scores for each item were totaled to yield a morale score for each pastor. Since there were eleven items, the lowest possible score would be 11, while the highest possible would be 55. The scale had a reliability coefficient alpha of .74.

Actually the range was from 27 to 55 points, with three pastors receiving 55 and four scoring 54. If everyone were completely neutral, the mean score would have been 33. The actual mean was 42.3, which reveals that as a group the pastors were on the high side of the morale scale. Only fifteen pastors, or about 9 percent, fell on the lower side. Yet if this proportion holds true for the division, many pastors may be suffering a morale problem, even though they are in the distinct minority.

A measure of pastor-wife relationships

Since a relationship has been established between pastoral morale and the quality of pastor-wife relationships, a pastor-wife relationship scale has also been constructed similar to the measure of morale described above. This scale was based on seven of the twenty-one items: numbers 3, 16-21. Since there were seven items, the lowest possible score would be 7, while the highest possible score would be 35. This scale also had a reliability coefficient alpha of .74.

The scores ranged from 16 to 35, with nearly 27 percent of the pastors receiving 33, 34, or 35. If everyone had been neutral, the mean score would have been 21. The actual mean was 29.6, which places pastors as a group on the high side of the scale. Only five pastors, or about 3 percent, fell on the lower side. Pastors report good overall relationships with their wives, yet, as has been seen, in selected areas the percentage with problems is somewhat higher.

Sources of satisfaction

The last four questions on the survey were open-ended. Question 22 asks,

Table 1/Responses to items on disagree-agree scale

Item	% Disagree	% Agree	Mean
1. Satisfying personal devotional life	17	74	3.78
2. Professional-growth program effective	23	57	3.35
3. Regular family worship in home	16	70	3.88
4. Want a continuing education program to upgrade skills	1	92	4.53
5. Question some of church's teachings	76	19	1.87
6. Comfortable in one-to-one witnessing	1	95	4.58
7. Enjoy being a pastor	2	94	4.58
8. Believe I am a successful pastor	3	87	4.22
9. Concerned about not meeting approval of superiors	51	34	2.54
10. Hoped to be called to administrative, departmental, or teaching position	51	21	2.30
11. Sometimes want to leave pastoral ministry	61	28	2.27
12. Wife and I have discussed transferring to another type of ministry	54	33	2.35
13. Counselor separate from administration needed for pastors and wives	9	70	3.98
14. Sometimes feel lonely and isolated	34	58	3.24
15. Disturbed by faultfinding and criticism toward me	42	26	2.57
16. Wife and I counsel together on work of ministry	9	80	3.92
17. Wife and I always confer before any major decision	0	95	4.70
18. Wife and I have an open relationship	5	81	4.09
19. Wife encourages and supports me in ministry	3	91	4.40
20. Wife and I are agreed God wants us in pastoral ministry	6	82	4.22
21. Regularly take time for wife and children	10	78	3.90

Table 2/Responses of marital-stress group to morale items

Item	% Disagree	% Agree
1. Satisfying personal devotional life	35	43
2. Professional-growth program effective	39	35
3. Regular family worship in home	39	52
8. Believe I am a successful pastor	22	74
10. Hope to be called to administrative, departmental, or teaching position	43	35
11. Sometimes want to leave the pastoral ministry	39	48
12. Wife and I have discussed transferring to another type of ministry	39	52
13. Counselor separate from administration needed for pastors and wives	4	91
14. Sometimes feel lonely and isolated	26	74

Table 3/Sources of satisfaction in the ministry

Rank	Source	% Choosing
1	Preaching	52
2	Personal evangelism/giving Bible studies	51
3	Visiting people	34
4	Public evangelism	27
5	Counseling	17
6	Leading people to Christ and baptizing them	11
7	Administration and planning	10
7	Nurturing members' spiritual, personal, and interpersonal growth	10
8	Teaching	9
9	Training members to witness	7
10	Involving members in the church's ministries	6
11	Fellowshipping with members/social activities	5
11	Personal study	5
12	Ministry to youth and children	4
13	Working with small groups	3
13	Comforting the sick, dying, bereaved, and aged	3

"Which areas of pastoral ministry provide the greatest sources of satisfaction for you?" Many answers were given. To make the data more comprehensible, the responses were carefully studied and placed into classes. Table 3 displays the percentage of pastors who named satisfactions in each category. Because pastors could list as many sources of satisfaction as they wished, the percentages total more than 100 percent.

Several other categories were listed, but they contained 2 percent or less of the responses. It may come as no great surprise to learn that "reaching financial goals" and "Ingathering" were each chosen as sources of satisfaction by only 1 percent of the pastors.

Doubtless some of the categories overlap. "Leading people to Christ and baptizing them" may have been stated by only 11 percent of the pastors because others had it in mind when they wrote "personal evangelism" or "public evangelism." Likewise, "training members to witness" or "involving members in the church's ministries" may be subsumed under "nurturing members' spiritual, personal, and interpersonal growth."

Ministers fortunately find the greatest satisfactions generally in the kinds of service that ministers do a great deal of. The listing appears reasonable for the most part. However, the high ranking of preaching and the low ranking of personal study may comment on the quality of sermons being presented at Sabbath worship services.

Areas of frustration

Question 23 asks, "Which areas of pastoral ministry furnish the most frustrations and disappointments for you?" A large variety of answers were given. They were classified in forty-four categories. Those chosen by a significant percentage of pastors are shown in Table 4.

Twenty-four other categories were chosen by 2 percent or fewer of the pastors. As in the case of satisfaction, categories doubtless overlap. The free-response question produces a great variety of answers, and the present listing is an arbitrary attempt to make the data easier to grasp quickly.

It will certainly be noticed that the areas of frustration are more diversified than the sources of satisfaction. Nevertheless, an inspection of this listing leads to the conclusion that they may be summed up in two general themes: difficulties involved in getting members to be and do what they should, and details of church administration.

Suggestions for changes

Question 24 asks, "What changes would you like to see in the profession of pastoral ministry?" Approximately 25 percent of the pastors either did not answer the question or recommended no changes.

The others gave a wide variety of suggestions, which were placed in fifty categories. Thirty-two of these were mentioned by 2 percent or fewer of the pastors and are disregarded. The other eighteen categories have been ranked in the order of choice and are displayed with their respective percentages in Table 5.

The categories are arbitrary, and possible combinations will be readily discerned. Several general areas seem to emerge from the data:

1. Pastors would like to see improvements in their own training, both pre-service and in-service, and in the development of their talents and abilities so that they can function more effectively in their ministerial roles.

2. Pastors would like relief from many tasks such as administrative minutiae, fund-raising, promotional programs, and related duties that they perceive are draining their time and strength from high-priority ministerial functions.

3. Pastors would like to relate to conference leadership more on a basis of equals complementing each other than on an employer-employee relationship. They would like to have more input into conference programs and would like administrators to be more sensitive to their needs and problems.

The nature and intensity of feeling of many of the suggestions shed light on the problems of morale in the pastoral ministry. While most pastors want to remain in the pastorate, large numbers struggle against discouragement over certain aspects and customs that have grown up around the profession. Some of the suggestions may not be feasible for economic or practical reasons, but where it is possible to move in the direction of these changes, it is highly likely that pastoral morale could be greatly heightened and many workers saved for the ministry.

Counselors for pastors

Question 25 asks, "If you or your wife were confronted with a personal or family problem, to whom would you turn for counsel?" This question elicited some of the most heart-touching replies. About 23 either gave no answer, were not sure, didn't know, or felt there was no one they could trust. The answers in this category ranged from a rather smug "If a pastor needs counsel, then he is not fit to counsel others!" to this poignant statement:

"There simply isn't anyone! So for twenty years of ministry, we've suffered through several major dilemmas with no one to talk to whom we can trust!"

The remaining 77 percent of the pastors named possible counselors. These were placed in categories, and those categories named by at least 3 percent of the pastors are shown in Table 6 in their order of strength.

Certainly all SDA ministers (and church members) should seek counsel from such sources as God, the Bible, and the Spirit of Prophecy. But sometimes, understanding human help is needed to provide the necessary exchange and objectivity needed in problem solving, to say nothing of emotional support. The high number selecting only these spiritual resources may indicate that this is their way of joining the 23 percent who simply could not think of any human helper who would be both competent and trustworthy.

Responses to this question and the fact that 70 percent of the pastors agreed that it would be good if a counselor with no ties to administration were provided for pastors and their wives suggest a real need in this area. That some conference leaders are meeting success in establishing helping relationships with their pastoral workers is evidenced by the 26 percent who stated that they would turn to these leaders for counsel on personal problems. Other conferences are beginning to appoint someone trained in counseling and familiar with pastoral ministry to meet this need. Herein lies a promising direction for the lifting of pastoral morale.

Conclusions

The findings that have been presented may be summed up in several conclusions:

1. Most pastors are generally happy in their work, feel as if they are successful, and wish to remain in the pastoral ministry.

2. A substantial minority do find discouragements from time to time and in certain areas. In 1980 there were 2,763 ordained and licensed pastoral and evangelistic workers in the North American Division. Thus even a small percentage in trouble translates into many workers.

For example, only 9 percent of the pastors scored on the low side of the overall morale scale. But if this sample is representative of the workers in the division, this represents 249 pastors. Also, 13.4

The greatest sources of satisfaction in the ministry are found in preaching, personal evangelism, visiting people, public evangelism, counseling, leading people to Christ, and baptizing them.

percent of the pastors were found to have at least one indicator of marital stress in their profiles. This means 370 pastors in the division. And the 19 percent who agreed that current theological challenges have caused them to question some of the church's teachings translate into 525 ministers.

3. There does seem to be a correlation between pastoral morale and the quality of the relationship between the pastor and his wife. Building this relationship must be a concern of conference leadership, not only because it is vital to the effectiveness of the pastor but also because the pastoral home serves as a model to families in the church.

4. There does seem to be a relationship between questioning the church's teachings and some key areas of pastoral morale. Conference leadership cannot afford to have these doubts bottled up. Every effort must be made to aid the ministers in resolving their questions and regaining strong confidence in the message they are called to proclaim.

5. The greatest sources of satisfaction in the ministry are found in preaching, personal evangelism, visiting people, public evangelism, counseling, leading people to Christ, and baptizing them. These are key functions of the ministry, and pastors must be allowed to focus more of their energies on the kinds of tasks that bring fulfillment.

6. The greatest areas of frustration and disappointment in the ministry concern motivating and involving members and being overwhelmed with administrative trivia. Pastors need help in the form of guidance and resources that will enable them to motivate and mobilize their members to accomplish the mission of the church and to relieve the pastor of most of the maintenance ministries of the local congregation.

7. Pastoral morale could be raised by instituting certain changes in the structure of the pastorate. In addition to relieving pastors of administrative minutiae, these changes should involve more continuing education, with its development of talents and abilities, as well as a more equal relationship with conference administrators, including input into conference goals and programs.

8. There is a real need to appoint counselors who have no administrative functions but who have a deep understanding of pastoral ministry to work with pastors and their wives in the solution of personal and professional problems.

Church leadership cannot afford to ignore the issue of morale in pastoral ministry. The problem is widespread and serious enough to require urgent attention. The pastor is the key person in mobilizing the church for the finishing of the work. Only as this calling is satisfying, meaningful, and fulfilling will the best and brightest talents of the church be willing to dedicate their lives to the pastoral ministry.

Table 4/Areas of frustration and disappointment

Rank	Source	% Choosing
1	Motivation of laity for ministry, responsibility, discipling, or leadership	22
2	Administrative work	17
3	Dealing with members' problems	12
4	Board, business, and committee meetings	10
5	Poor interrelationships between members	8
5	Ingathering	8
6	Church discipline	7
6	Promotion of many conference programs	7
7	Lack of funds/poor stewardship of members	6
7	Time pressures/managing time	6
8	Seeing people reject the message after working hard to save them	5
8	Too many churches or too large a territory to cover	5
8	Conference administration	5
8	Self-righteous attitude of members	5
9	Building programs and fund raising	4
10	Resistance of members to change and growth	3
10	Secularization of members	3
10	Evangelism	3
10	Attendance at meetings	3
10	Imposition of goals	3

Table 5/Suggestions for change in pastoral ministry

Rank	Change	% Choosing
1	Raise professional level with more continuing education and in-service education	14
2	Less promotion of conference programs	8
2	More emphasis on soul winning	8
3	Decrease pastor's multiple roles, less administrative work, and increase lay responsibility	7
4	More understanding and sensitivity from the conference	6
4	Increase spiritual emphasis	6
5	Reduce multichurch districts	5
5	Less administrative direction	5
5	More opportunities for interrelationships with other Adventist pastors	5
6	More input from pastors in setting conference goals	4
7	Longer pastorates	3
7	Less fund raising	3
7	More team ministries (e.g., husband-wife, doctor-pastor)	3
7	Less pressure for baptisms	3
7	More emphasis on equipping the church for ministry	3
7	Clear job description of pastor	3
7	Better and more relevant training at undergraduate and seminary levels	3
7	Less theologizing and more practical help	3

Table 6/Preferred counselors for pastors

Rank	Counselor	% Choosing
1	God	35
2	Conference administrators or leaders	26
3	Fellow pastor and/or wife	19
4	Professional counselor	13
5	Spouse	10
6	Close friend	8
7	Parents	7
8	Relatives	6
9	Bible	5
10	Spirit of Prophecy	4
11	Doctor	3

Justification by grace through faith has been the author's spiritual "bread and butter" for more than thirty years, both as a Lutheran and as a Seventh-day Adventist. Those, he says, who suggest that our message lacks theological validity because we have managed to produce some legalists among us, are fighting the wrong battle.

by C. Raymond Holmes

Let's fight the right fight

In the fall of 1970 I arrived on the campus of Andrews University as a Lutheran minister, with ten years of pastoral experience. I came with a critical spirit sharply honed by distressing professional and personal crises. I came to discover the heresies of Adventism, particularly the heresy of legalism, which I had been told was prevalent among Adventists. I read widely and with extreme caution, diligence, and skepticism. The most immediate and pressing question I faced was: Does the gospel, the good news of salvation in Christ, expressed in the theological formula of justification by grace through faith, exist in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Second, if it does, has that message resulted in a born-again experience and a living testimony for Christ in the lives of Adventist believers? The answer, I discovered, was a clear and resounding Yes to both questions!

The Biblical truth of salvation by grace through faith in Christ was central in classroom teaching and course content in the theological Seminary. It was evident in the personal lives of the professors, many of whom were the finest examples of Christlikeness I had seen. I heard it time and time again from the pulpit of the Seminary chapel. It was manifest in the students' lives and conversation. I discov-

ered it to be the central theme in the writings of Ellen G. White. And it permeated the pages of the *Church Hymnal* so loved and widely used by Adventist believers around the world. Because Christ lived in the Adventist Church, and because His gospel was the fundamental message preached and believed by Seventh-day Adventists, it was possible for me to take a serious look at the doctrines of the Sabbath, the heavenly ministry of Christ, and His second advent. It also made possible my eventual decision to become a Seventh-day Adventist believer and minister.

That was in 1971. Now, ten years later, I am hearing strange sounds. I am hearing that the gospel has only recently been discovered in the Adventist Church, that it is just now being taught and proclaimed, and that a reformation is just now beginning among us as a result of this "discovery" and proclamation. What, I ask myself, was it that I found in Adventism ten years ago if the gospel has not been known by Adventists until 1981?

The Christian church has always had a problem finding and maintaining the proper balance and relationship between God's law and gospel, grace and works, justification and sanctification. There are legalists in every Christian denomination, and Seventh-day Adventism has its share. There were legalists in the congregations I served as a Lutheran minister, in spite of the fact that the doctrine of justification by grace through faith has been the major emphasis in Lutheranism. This indicates that to emphasize justification does not

eliminate legalism from the church's life. The absence of an emphasis on sanctification also produces legalists, for whom faith has become a work of merit. It is the *proper balance* between justification and sanctification, faith and works, gospel and law, that produces Spirit-filled believers whose lives reveal the fruits of the Spirit.

The fulcrum of Seventh-day Adventist theology is Revelation 14:12, wherein the people of God are identified as those who maintain a balanced understanding between faith in Christ and obedience to God's law. The maintenance of such a balance requires vigilance, careful attention, and patience. It is part of the exercise of the saintliness of God's people to maintain such a balance. This balance is not only essential to Christian spirituality and authentic Christian experience, but it is vitally important to the ultimate success of Christian missions and above all to the success of Seventh-day Adventist missions.

There are always persons in every Christian denomination who will misunderstand and/or misappropriate the gospel. Many insist on turning gospel into law or law into gospel, grace into works or works into grace. But that is not because the gospel is not taught. It is because fallen man, even religious man, finds it difficult to accept salvation on God's terms alone. The problem is not, therefore, with our message, our theology, but with the one who hears it. How do you hear? How do you read? If one is determined to disbelieve, or to change gospel into law, no amount of evidence or persuasion will convince him otherwise. If one who reads the works of Ellen White cannot find the gospel there, it is not because it is not there. As she herself wrote: "Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 672. It is also true, of course, that those who refuse to believe will find sufficient evidence for their unbelief.

A good general will never fight the wrong battle at the wrong time in the wrong place. That is a formula for defeat. But that is what we are doing right now as a denomination. We are fighting the wrong battle. Our problem is not so much theological as it is methodological. Yes, we do have a problem. But it is not with the basic theological truth and reliability of our message. Our problem is with the way that message is often communicated. It is a matter of semantics, the choice of words, and the personal perception of that message by teacher and/or preacher. To illustrate, let me tell you about a sermon I heard one Sabbath morning.

The preacher announced his theme as "Growing in Grace." His text was 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and in the

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knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "I am going to talk about growing in grace," he began, "because we believe in righteousness by faith and not by works."

Wonderful! I thought, and settled back expectantly. But my expectations were dashed to bits by a misplaced emphasis. The preacher proceeded to tell me four things I *must* do in order to grow in grace, as though grace were the goal rather than the environment in which growth takes place. I must read the Bible daily, pray regularly, worship faithfully, and witness eagerly.

Of course all four of these spiritual exercises are very important in the believer's life. Indeed, it is not possible to maintain the Christian faith without them. The need and desire to exercise them are also gifts of God's grace. But the way they were used by the preacher effectively transformed gospel into law, grace into works. There was no relationship at all between the preacher's opening statement of what he believed and his method of communicating that belief. He did not say what he said he would say. Only misunderstanding and distortion can result from such communication.

The Biblical phrase "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord" offers the clue as to the direction that sermon should have taken in order for it to be true to the text and an accurate expression of the preacher's stated belief. It also suggests the perfect analogy for what the text actually says. The preacher should have spoken first about the need for spiritual growth, with apt illustrations from life and nature. Then he should have devoted the major part of the sermon to discussing the Biblical truth that if there is to be any spiritual growth at all, it must take place in the "soil" of God's grace. Growth is possible only in grace. Growth takes place in grace. That's what the text says. That's all the text says. Grace is the soil in which the Christian life germinates and grows to fruition and productivity. Grace is not the goal one arrives at by certain exercises; it is rather the necessary environment for spiritual growth. When one is in that kind of environment, growth is a natural process, rather than something forced. The sermon's emphasis should have been on what God has done, and is doing, to make such growth possible, rather than on what the believer must do to grow. Such an emphasis would have constituted *good news*. Instead of the bread of life, the worshipers received a stone.

Yet even though the preacher misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misapplied the text, I did not fault the entire church and its theological history. I did not call into question the reliability of Ellen White or the authenticity of her spiritual gift. Nor did I begin to think the pioneers were wrong. I was not tempted to think such thoughts, because my previous study and investigation had convinced me that our message is indeed reliable and theologi-

cally sound. I did think there was something wrong with the preacher's perception and homiletical method, however.

Even the theological formula "righteousness by faith" is understood and communicated in different ways. When asked to interpret and articulate the meaning of that formula, one person may say, "I accept by faith the righteousness of Christ imputed to me," and another person may say, "I believe that if I do right I will be accounted righteous." The reason for the difference does not lie with the fundamental truth of righteousness by faith, but with the manner in which it is understood, expressed, and communicated. Just because a person explains it in the latter fashion should not lead us to doubt the truth or accuracy of "righteousness by faith."

The problem is not that we have not had the truth. But we have not always told the truth about the truth. It's one thing to know the truth, to have the truth; it's another thing to tell the truth about the truth. The public proclamation of the gospel is a serious business in which every word is fraught with potential for great danger or great good. For what takes place depends not only upon what the preacher says but also upon what actually happens in the inner being of the listener. Our words do things to people. If the preacher does not say what he intends to say, his homiletical method needs careful scrutiny and adjustment.

He must ask two very important questions in the preparation process: What do I want my listeners to know? What do I want to happen to them as they listen? He may be successful in the former and fail miserably in the latter. That is to say, he may present the right information but get a response he did not want or anticipate because he presented the right information in the wrong way, a response that leads the listener to question the validity of the information he has been given or to draw an erroneous conclusion.

As preachers and teachers, we must examine not only what we say but the way we say it, the choice of language, the structure of sentences, the nuances of meaning implied by voice and gesture and expression. Another incident will serve to illustrate.

Some years ago I was appointed to lead in the benediction at the close of worship and sat through the service observing the congregation from an excellent vantage point on the platform. The guest preacher was a man of considerable stature in the faith. His theme was one of vast importance for the Adventist believer. He spoke of the need for the infilling of the Holy Spirit for the completion of the task God has assigned to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The information he presented

was in itself sound and theologically true. The problem was with the way in which he presented his material. Instead of the sermon giving hope and assurance and moving the people to faith, it led instead to depression, defeat, and hopelessness. The theme of his sermon could be reduced to this proposition: Because the church is not filled with the Holy Spirit, the work will never be finished. There was certainly no hope or power for good in that sermon! No good news! I watched a lady in the second pew literally driven into her seat by every heavy blow from the preacher, her face a gradual study in despair and defeat. The preacher finished with great fervor, believing in what he was saying and doing, but having no idea of the consequences of his words and forms of expression. Instead of hope and victory, he had managed to bring that congregation hopelessness and defeat. They were in a worse predicament after he finished than before he began. And he did it with words, with the truth. But he failed to tell the truth about the truth.

The current suggestion that the theological validity of our message is to be doubted because we have managed to produce some legalists among us is to fight the wrong battle. The battle is not one of theological validity, but one of understanding and communication. Justification by grace through faith has been my spiritual "bread and butter" for more than thirty years, both as a Lutheran and as a Seventh-day Adventist. It is the fundamental message of Protestant Christianity. And set in the context of an eschatological perspective of history and theology, it is the fundamental message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I could never have joined this church if that were not so.

The gospel must always be a new thing. It is wonderful when it is personally discovered by the new convert, the young minister, and even the young theologian. Periodic spiritual revival must come to us all. But with such a personal rebirth should come also an appreciation for the history and traditions that formed the context in which the gospel was kept alive and transmitted from one generation to the next. The excitement that is generated by the gospel must be tempered by the stability of an appreciative historical perspective. It is cause for rejoicing when the good news becomes experiential and vital. It is cause for sadness when the church suffers casualties in the ranks of either laymen or ministers in a battle that should not be fought.

Instead of arguing about righteousness by faith, let us preach and teach it. Let us tell the truth about the truth. But in the telling, let us be faithful not only to the truth but also to our denominational history, which we believe is also a gift of grace from God. Fight we must for truth and right. But let us fight the right fight. Together!



HARRY ANDERSON, ARTIST

Have we so emphasized the eschatological aspect of the pre-Advent judgment that we have failed to see a wider scope—a dual role to Christ's sanctuary ministry—that involves both the saints and the antichrist?

by Edward Heppenstall

The Pre-Advent Judgment

Since 1844, Adventist teaching on Christ's high priestly ministry in the Most Holy Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary has centered upon the doctrine of a pre-Advent judgment.

Until October 22, 1844, early Adventists believed that the sanctuary was the earth, which Jesus Christ would cleanse by fire at His second advent on that date. The morning after the great Disappointment, Hiram Edson claimed to have received new insight and correction regarding the cleansing of the sanctuary. His message? The sanctuary referred to in Daniel 8:14 is in heaven. Its "cleansing" involves what has come to be known as the "investigative judgment" of the saints, beginning October 22, 1844, and terminating at the close of probation. This appeal by the early pioneers to the heavenly sanctuary was to determine the entire doctrine of the antitypical day of atonement and the pre-Advent judgment.

Leviticus 16:30 was cited in support of this teaching: "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." This cleansing was identified with Daniel 8:14, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Thus the pioneers firmly believed that the word *cleansed* in both texts referred to the same event. This interpretation has been challenged recently. Briefly stated, it is now pointed out that:

1. The words translated "cleansed" in both Leviticus 16 and Daniel 8 are not the same Hebrew word. In Leviticus 16 the

Hebrew word is *taher*, the common word for cleansing. In Daniel 8:14 the word used is *tsadaq*, meaning to justify or restore. This latter Hebrew verb occurs forty-one times in the Old Testament, but is translated "cleansed" only once—in Daniel 8:14. In most cases it is translated "justify." Therefore it is argued that the two words do not mean the same thing, and in any case, it is undesirable to build an interpretation or doctrine on a single word.

2. The contexts in both chapters deal with two completely different situations. In Leviticus 16 the sanctuary issue is between God and His people Israel; but in Daniel 8 the sanctuary issue is between God and the apostate horn, the antichrist.

How, then, can we reconcile what appears to be two opposing positions or interpretations?

The solution to much of the present discussion of this topic, it seems to me, is to recognize the true scope of the pre-Advent judgment. Consistency both to our historic position and to the Biblical context requires that we recognize a dual aspect to Christ's high-priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary—a judgment both of the people of God and of the antichrist. When our perspective is thus widened, these two aspects need not be viewed as contradictory but as complementary. What valid reason is there to limit the concern of this pre-Advent judgment only to the saints? This judgment is a divine process in which both God and His people, as well as their enemies, are included.

Judgment in Daniel

Let us consider the great prophecies in the books of Daniel and the Revelation that bear on the subject of the pre-Advent judgment. They are like so many windows through which we are able to view all the issues and parties involved in salvation

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history, both in redemption and judgment. Many of the great prophecies cover much of the same ground, not as exact reproductions covering the same events, but as recapitulations with additional features. Almost invariably the historical sequence of world empires, nations, and religious powers as given in these prophecies follows the same stretch of salvation history: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, ten horns, apostate horn, the judgment.

Two chapters crucial for our study are Daniel 7 and 8. Chapter 7 is structured in three parts: (1) the vision is given and recorded as Daniel saw it (verses 1-14); (2) Daniel desires to know the meaning of the vision, and the angel responds with a partial interpretation (verses 15-22); (3) the angel returns and interprets other features of the vision, including the terrible fourth beast and the all-powerful, apostate "little horn" (verses 23-27). Each section is climaxed with a court scene in the heavenly sanctuary, an event that follows the natural sequence of the world powers and the "little horn."

The first is found in verses 9 and 10; "As I looked, thrones were set in the place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. . . . Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened" (N.I.V.).*

The court scene of the second section occurs in verses 21, 22: "As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom" (N.I.V.).

And the third reads: "'He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High'" (verses 25-27, N.I.V.).

The second and third court scenes recapitulate what has been given in the first, with additional features in the interpretation of the vision. The third gives the time (following "'the time, times and a half,'" or shortly after 1798) when this pre-Advent judgment is to begin. The day of judgment referred to three times in Daniel 7 is the assembling of the high court of heaven at a definite point of time and space.

The throne of judgment is not occupied until the Ancient of days comes and takes his seat following the "'time, times and a half.'" In the vision Daniel sees the Ancient of days take His place on the throne. According to verses 9 and 10,

"'thrones'" are placed, or set up. The "'thrones'" are in the plural, suggestive of a celestial jury. The importance of this judgment would not be as vital if God sat by Himself. The parallel view in the Apocalypse pictures the Father seated on the throne, and "surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads" (Rev. 4:4, N.I.V.).

The thrones are now occupied at a specific time, the time when the judgment is to begin and the books are opened. No single book would have sufficed. "Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him" (Dan. 7:10). Why is the whole angelic host present? They are not on trial before God. Why is their presence so important? They are present to give approval to this judgment that decides the destiny of all men. They are also Christ's attendants when dominion is taken away from the apostate horn power and given to Him.

Obviously this is a judgment of great magnitude, one of the great events in salvation history. There is an important issue involved: Is there any change in the high priestly ministry of Christ that takes place in the heavenly sanctuary when this court is seated and the books are opened shortly following the period of the 1260 years and prior to the return of Christ? Three times in this chapter this heavenly assize is said to stand in historical sequence following the "little horn." The Scripture does not say how long this pre-Advent judgment will last, but we have every reason to believe that it is part of the same sequence that quickly follows the long period of the persecution of the saints in 1798.

The basic question is this: At this time, following the long period of the persecution of the saints and the dominion of the "little horn," is there a change in Christ's high priestly ministry, an entirely new divine action, that has not occurred previously in the heavenly sanctuary?

Scope of the pre-Advent judgment

Who are the parties involved in this heavenly assize? What is its scope? Who are included, and who are to appear before this judgment seat?

We have usually taught that its scope is defined by the words "the investigative

judgment" and is limited to the saints. I suggest that we have so emphasized this one eschatological aspect that we have failed to see a wider scope. For the most part, we have based our interpretation on an appeal to the typical Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. It appears to me that, conditioned by the historical context of their own time, the early Adventist pioneers saw only this limited view. The trauma of their disappointment in 1844 must have been severe—Christ had failed to come as they had expected and predicted, and they were cast out of the established churches. Is it inconceivable that their main concern was their standing with God following such a misinterpretation of Scripture? Thus, when they made their appeal to the sanctuary in heaven, where Christ sat on the right hand of the Father, their chief concern was their own standing before the judgment seat of God, and for them the scope of the judgment was limited to the saints. But now, when we carefully examine chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel, the judgment is seen to have a wider scope.

First the pre-Advent judgment is *in favor* of the saints. "As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom" (verses 21, 22, N.I.V.).

This translation is slightly different from the King James Version, which reads: "judgment was given to the saints of the most High." Brown, Driver, and Briggs render this phrase: "Judgment was given in favor of."

For 1260 years the saints had been persecuted, condemned, and slain under the dominion of the apostate power of the "little horn," which claimed to stand in the place of God, with the right to forgive sins and to decide cases for weal or for woe. The judgment of the church on earth had gone against them all these years. At last the record is to be put straight. The pre-Advent judgment will reverse the judgment against them by the antichrist and his earthly agents. This judgment rendered by the heavenly tribunal cannot be called into question. It is the only true court of appeal; God's judgment in and from the heavenly sanctuary will reveal who the true saints are.

Once that judgment has been com-

Consistency both to our historic position and to the Biblical context requires that we recognize a dual aspect to Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary—a judgment both of the people of God and of the antichrist.

pleted, the text declares: "The time came when they possessed the kingdom" (verse 22, N.I.V.). And when do the saints possess the kingdom?

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. . . . Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:31-34).

It is quite plain from these scriptures that the heavenly assize set forth in Daniel takes place prior to the return of Christ, since the saints possess the kingdom as a result of it.

Second, this pre-Advent judgment is against the apostate power that persecuted the saints, that cast down the truth to the ground, that spoke great words against the Most High, and that trod down His sanctuary. By the very nature of the case, a judgment in favor of the saints involves a judgment against the enemies of God and His people.

"He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High" (Dan. 7:25-27, N.I.V.).

God does more for the saints in this judgment than merely pronounce a verdict in their favor. In light of the antichrist's longstanding efforts to counterfeit the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary and to persecute the saints, God proceeds to vindicate His people with the purpose of giving them the kingdom. The apostle John, in the vision of the seven seals, complements what Daniel has said: "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, 'How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?'" (Rev. 6:9, 10, N.I.V.).

At no other time is revealed to men the extent to which God is involved from His sanctuary in a judgment that encompasses all men. The important question is this: Is God directly and personally involved in the final movements of this world's history? If we answer affirmatively, then the period of the pre-Advent judgment is part of His involvement and is climaxed by the return of Christ.

Judgment not instantaneous

Objection may be raised against having such an extended period of time for judgment from the standpoint of God's

omniscience and omnipotence. Of course, God does not need 140 years or more to determine who the true saints are, as if that is all there is to the pre-Advent judgment! He has known that all along. The judgment in and from the heavenly sanctuary is not a private affair between God and the remnant church. It also has its counterpart on earth in judgments that are poured out upon the wicked as depicted in the seals, the trumpets, and the plagues of the Apocalypse. It is a judgment that provides the angelic host and all of God's creatures throughout the universe with a revelation of His justice. Although we may be loath to accept an extended time for God to judge the world and vindicate the saints, the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation present it this way, both for the righteous and the wicked. Judgment is not something done by God in isolation or in an instant.

The full meaning and scope of all that is taking place in the heavenly sanctuary prior to Christ's return, particularly as it is pictured in both Daniel and Revelation, can stagger the mind. It would be foolish to claim that this church knows everything about the final phase of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Nevertheless, we have believed all along, based on these great prophecies, that in this work of redemption and judgment prior to His return, we, as God's people, are deeply involved.

The pre-Advent judgment results in universal dominion being given to the Son of God. "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13, 14, N.I.V.).

Jesus comes to the Father before this huge assembly in heaven, not to the earth. In this pre-Advent judgment He is given "dominion." The Hebrew word, *sholtan*, indicates the right to rule—not territory, but people. The Father presides in this judgment before the angelic host; it is revealed that Christ has so many subjects that "all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." In this judgment Christ

stands up to claim them all, for He has every right to do so. His reign and His kingdom cannot be considered accomplished and victorious until His claim for all His followers is acknowledged before the angelic host and the universe. For 1260 years the issue has been either the dominion of the antichrist, who has claimed to stand in the place of God, or the dominion of Christ Jesus the Lord, who judges from His throne in the sanctuary.

On earth the commission to proclaim to the world this judgment-hour message has been given to His church. This message aims to change the course of events on the earth. The more we understand the nature, the time, and the scope of this pre-Advent judgment, the more we understand God's purpose for the world and for us even to the consummation of all things.

Cleansing the sanctuary

"Out of one of them came forth a little horn. . . . Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down. . . . Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, . . . to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (chap. 8:9-14). "Then shall the sanctuary be restored to its rightful state" (R.S.V.).† "Then shall the wrongs of the sanctuary be righted" (Goodspeed).‡ "Then the Holy Place shall emerge victorious" (N.E.B.).§

The eighth chapter of Daniel is largely a recapitulation of Daniel 7 and the climax to it. There is almost the same sequence of earthly powers, not contemporaneous, but successive and diverse one from the other. Again we are confronted with this "little horn" that is more powerful than the nations from which it arises.

The difference in the "horn" of Daniel 7 and the "horn" in Daniel 8 is more conjecture than real. The one in Daniel 8 includes both pagan and papal Rome, since its power and reign extended almost until the end of the 2300 years. Both are united in their opposition to God, their apostasy, and their persecution of the saints. The 1260 years are located within the 2300 years, both closing within a few

The pre-Advent judgment is not a scheme of retribution because God has doubts about His people. It is a true revelation of their standing in Christ. No judgment from His sanctuary can put the saints in jeopardy.

years of each other. Action from the heavenly sanctuary takes place in both cases, justifying, restoring, cleansing.

The long persecution of the people of God by the apostate horn appears to be one of the causes requiring this pre-Advent judgment. The action of the persecuting power makes God appear that He has forgotten to be just. The saints on earth have been mocked, condemned, and slaughtered. Nothing can clear and vindicate them except a divine judgment from God, approved by the angelic host—a judgment from God in their favor. In the cleansing, restoring, righting, and emerging victorious of the heavenly sanctuary, there is a strong element of vindication of both God and His people.

It is important for all to discover whether God's justice and righteousness will prevail in the face of an earthly verdict that has gone against the true saints of God. The angelic hosts praise and admire God's judgment from the sanctuary in heaven, for it is the only one that is just, and therefore is the only one that counts. The saints require this kind of judgment from God. The additional feature here is that the heavenly sanctuary and its ministry of judgment emerge victorious.

After the judgment on earth has gone against the saints, it is necessary that the justice of God from the sanctuary become clearly manifest to all God's creatures and abide forever. This judgment has the design of justifying, cleansing, and restoring the sanctuary, as well as God and His people, for it finally settles all the issues in the great controversy.

Unless God's character is made clear to all the universe, including the angelic host and the redeemed, there can be no triumph of the sovereign rule of God from his sanctuary. The Hebrew word *tsadaq*, translated "cleansed," "justified," "restored," means a right understanding and vindication of God and His people by means of a righteous judgment.

The ministry of Christ our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary is the message that God confronts man with both redemption and judgment, in order that he might stand redeemed and finally justified before the throne of God. The pre-Advent judgment is grounded in God's justice. Here God actively pursues the right in passionate concern for His people and for His righteousness' sake.

Judgment as revelation

Furthermore, God's elect stand over against the rest of humanity. The pre-Advent judgment is a revelation from the sanctuary respecting the destiny of the saints. This judgment has a firm foundation. The faith of the saints has been severely tried by the injustice of their enemies. It appears that justice and righteousness have been suppressed.

The pre-Advent judgment is not a scheme of retribution because God has

doubts about His people. It is a true revelation of their standing before God as they are found to be in Christ. No judgment from His sanctuary can put the saints in jeopardy. The grounding of their lives in Christ signifies that they have nothing to fear. To live and die in Christ is to view the judgment with praise, gratitude, and certainty of salvation. Thus the pre-Advent judgment reveals to God's people the coming of better days, based on their vindication before the angelic host and all of God's creatures around the universe. The throne of judgment will emerge, and the truth about His children will be made known.

So remarkable and trustworthy are the contents of the heavenly records, which speak of divine judgment in their favor and against their enemies, that the final triumph of the saints and their reception of the kingdom when Christ comes is already guaranteed.

So the prophet Daniel speaks of the judgment following the 1260 years, not on earth when Christ comes, but a heavenly assize in the sanctuary when God reveals for the first time what He has known all along: who are the saved and who are the lost.

Such a judgment comes into prominence between the end of the prophetic time periods and the return of Christ. God gives Himself time to work out and complete His purposes in both redemption and judgment. Here we have the last full evidence of divine grace, mercy, and urgency for men's salvation. It is a time of crisis; a time when men are called to account. It is a time when wickedness will prevail on the earth to an incomparable extent. God is now doing this incredible thing for His people the world over and in every church, patiently waiting for their repentance and complete surrender.

The finished work at the cross cannot mean anything unless there is continued action in and from the heavenly sanctuary in terms of redemption and judgment. The saving work of God prior to Christ's return must inevitably appear in the form of judgment, since the decisive judgments for all men still remain to be effected. The atonement is the fulfillment of the purpose of God in dealing with the sin problem. The ministry of Christ our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary is the sequel to that atonement made at Calvary. The true understanding of the sanctuary truth and

priestly ministry is that it is utterly impossible for any man to save himself. This divine action both on the cross and in the heavenly sanctuary is an essential part of the salvation history, whereby Christ at His ascension began to function in a new way in the work of human redemption and judgment. This saving work of our Lord continues doing for us and in us that which we could not do for ourselves.

God must direct us from His sanctuary if final victory is to be achieved. God has brought the world to the hour of judgment prior to His return, a judgment that speaks to all the world and decides the fate of all men. The high priestly ministry of our Lord is grounded in time. It seems to me that the historical sequences indicated in these time prophecies of the books of Daniel and the Revelation are inevitable by the fact that judgment follows the persecution of the saints during the period of the 1260 years. Here God and His people are part of the divine vindication that leads to the return of Christ.

There is no reason to insist that the pre-Advent judgment is concerned only with the saints. We must include all those powers and parties that Scripture involves in it. We must keep in mind that the judgment affecting the saints is part of a larger whole. The voice from the sanctuary brings the conviction: "God be merciful to me a sinner." The cry is prophetic of a divine judgment. Christ, our High Priest, ministers in all that needs to be done to save us to the utmost, to judge us, and to vindicate us.

Since His ascension to the right hand of the Father, Christ has not left us with a blank space in time and history. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were given with all God's knowledge of Israel's failure. God did not suddenly find it necessary to change His plans or to reinterpret the prophecies. There are no delays with God, only with men.

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The finished work at the cross cannot mean anything unless there is continued action in and from the heavenly sanctuary in terms of redemption and judgment. This ministry is the sequel to that atonement made at Calvary.

Like weeds, thoughtlessness in the content and wording of public prayer has an amazing way of flourishing and spreading. Of course, God accepts even the clumsiest prayer when sincerely offered, but should we not seek to approach Him with all the weeds eradicated?

by Robert M. Johnston

Weeding the garden of prayer

According to an ancient story, a certain heathen came to Rabbi Hillel the Elder and said, "Convert me on condition that thou appoint me high priest, so that I might serve at the altar."

Hillel replied: "Sit down, and I will tell thee something. If one wishes to greet a king of flesh and blood, is it not right that he learn how to make his entrances and exits?" The heathen agreed, and Hillel continued: "Thou wishest to greet the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He. Is it not all the more right that thou learn how to enter into the Holy of Holies, how to fix the lights, how to approach the altar, how to set the table, how to prepare the row of wood?" The heathen then embarked upon a course of study and became a proselyte but learned that he was not qualified to become a priest. (See *Aboth de R. Nathan*, 15; translated in *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* [New York: Schocken Books 1974], p. 81).

We know that we have a High Priest in heaven who is able by His merit to make even the clumsiest prayer acceptable before God (see Heb. 4:14-16). But does this fact excuse us who lead our congregations in public prayer from employing proper forms and filling out prayers with intelligible content in order both to bless God and be a blessing to our fellow worshipers? Corporate prayer is prayer in the first person *plural*; he who prays publicly in the worship service is articulating praise and petitions on behalf of the congregation, and all should feel God glorified and their hearts lifted up to Him.

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VERNON C. TOOLEY III

Unfortunately, when a bumbler prays, the whole business is spoiled for many, however generous the Lord may be about it. In fact, it is unthinkable that he who prays sincerely would not also want to pray his best. To pray well for his people in public, acting in a sense as their intercessor, the man of God ought to seek to be as meticulous as Hillel's high priest. Some may feel that to criticize thoughtlessness in the content and wording of prayers is to be narrowly picky and to miss the more important spiritual content. But as Ellen White put it, "There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 491.

We in the free tradition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are properly wary of formalism, of clinging to a hollow crust long after the insides have leaked out. But formalism is not the same as good form, which comes partly from a proper yearning to make holiness beautiful and partly as a natural accompaniment of everything good and true. Some bad form can mean very bad praying. I would like to illustrate by three poor prayer habits which have spread like weeds in our own denominational tradition.

The first I call "*Unitarian prayers*." These prayers are addressed, correctly enough, to the first person of the Godhead, with a formula such as "Our heavenly Father," but conclude with the words "In Thy name we pray, Amen."

A little matter? Perhaps. But let all who take the New Testament as a norm be reminded that Christian prayer is offered up in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son, the second person of the Godhead. Jesus said: "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13, 14),* and "Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you in my name. Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (chap. 16:23, 24).

A proper concluding formula to a Trinitarian Christian public prayer could be simply "In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen," or as the *Book of Common Prayer* so sonorously has it, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen."

The second weed is a bit more difficult to uproot. I call it "*extemporaneous prayers that aren't*." Extemporaneous prayer is virtually an article of faith in many evangelical churches, including our own. We usually scorn formal liturgical prayers or written prayers devoid of the Spirit. But when formalism is expelled through the front door, it has a way of slipping in again through the back door, unrecognized. Conscious effort is necessary to maintain

spontaneity and variety, but most of the time no such effort is made, and our prayers become as stereotyped as if we were indeed reading them from a prayer book. Their words become fixed by congregational tradition or personal habit. They become mechanical and slide all too easily from our lips without first passing through the brain.

They are, in short, cliché-ridden prayers, a pastiche of pious bits of rhetoric that once meant something to somebody, but now in their second or third afterlife have turned rancid and moldy. So far removed from the lips which once gave them genuine utterance, they have not enough beauty or force to merit liturgical preservations. Such prayers could probably be produced as well on a computer. Could it be that those who offer them dimly sense that they have no "unction" and so often try to compensate by praying longer?

Occasionally a bold soul will make a stab at trying to say something fresh in a prayer. If he tries too hard, the result is merely cloying. A few years ago I heard a minister in my church begin the pastoral prayer by saying, "Good morning, Lord." It was arresting, even jarring. But it aged quickly when for months after one seldom heard anything else. Imitation may be a compliment, but the thing did not wear well.

Every cliché began as a fresh and powerful phrase that was sufficiently apt to impress its hearers, who in turn made such good use of its expressiveness that it got used up. A once-powerful phrase reaches cliché status when lesser souls than its originator use it merely to impress, to obfuscate, and to fill time, but not to communicate genuine thought or feeling. Too many public prayers are full of such things. How can we learn again to pray with the mind and the heart, not off the top of the head?

It might be a liberating experience for some to try writing out a few prayers—as an exercise, not to use in public. But it would help everyone to compile a list of deadly prayer-clichés, especially the kind that trigger a whole concatenation of other clichés. I have such a list. At the top are all thanksgivings "for the privilege that is ours of . . ." Never have I heard of privilege that is so routine. Get rid of this bromide that is yours! A phrase that is not only affected but mindless is doubly bad. Borrowed piety can uplift no more than painted fire can warm!

The third weed in the garden of poor

prayers I call "*benedictions that aren't*." Not one minister in a hundred, it seems to me, and even fewer church members, know the difference between a *benediction* and a *closing prayer*. The etymology of the word should make it clear that a benediction is the pronouncement of a blessing. It may be, but need not be, in the form of a prayer addressed to God. It may be addressed directly to the people. In the latter case, good tradition calls for the minister to face his congregation, not bow his head, and with hand or hands uplifted pronounce a final blessing upon his people. I prefer scriptural benedictions, for they resonate, but nonscriptural ones are acceptable. The prototypical benediction is the Aaronic blessing in Numbers 6:24-26: "The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." The minister may appropriately add "Amen." Note that it is addressed to the people, not to the Lord. It would not be fitting to bow the head while saying this blessing.

Another scriptural benediction is supplied by 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all," to which the minister may add "now and forevermore, Amen." If the minister does not feel comfortable saying the benediction without bowing his head, he may alter the second person plural pronoun to first person plural, thus: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, Amen." Such a prayer can still be called a benediction.

Some may wish to conclude the worship service with a final prayer, which is not a benediction, following the established revival meeting or evangelistic meeting format. Very well. But in the church bulletin do not call it a "benediction," causing confusion and revealing ignorance. For my part, I prefer a bona fide benediction. Most closing prayers that I hear are anticlimactic recapitulations of the sermon. There are better ways to call for a response to the preaching.

Bad habits are hard to break, especially if they have been sanctified in church, but it's worth the effort in order to be at our best before the King of kings.

* Scripture quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version. Thomas Nelson, Inc., publisher.

We in the free tradition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are properly wary of formalism, of clinging to a hollow crust long after the insides have leaked out. But formalism is not the same as good form.

A visitor to church, a new family in town, a former member, a correspondence-course graduate—are they just names? Or do they stir in you visions of people longing for salvation?

by James R. Hoffer

What's in a name?

Pastor, if I don't get a response soon, I'm going to write to a minister of some other church!"

Mrs. A. was upset and disappointed, and rightfully so. As a member of my congregation, she had written to the pastor of an Adventist church in a neighboring State, requesting that he visit her granddaughter, whose husband was stationed at a military base near that church. No response. In time her granddaughter and husband had been transferred to a base in another State. Another letter went to an unknown pastor at the address given in the *SDA Directory of Churches*. Again, no response.

Mrs. B., who was recently baptized in my church, has a sister in a Western State. Mrs. B. promptly shared her new faith with her sister through letters, tracts, and phone calls. Now the sister wanted a pastor

to call on her. I wrote and wrote, and finally in desperation called the local conference to get the pastor's address and phone number. He finally made the visit, rather reluctantly it seemed. One visit; nothing more. No appeal for Bible studies, no attempt to befriend or to invite to church. The sister is now attending a church of another faith.

Unfortunately, stories like these are all too common. They betray a serious lack of interest on the part of some workers in following up names.

Names! The very word stirs in me visions of people looking and longing for salvation, people that I must reach.

Why are some ministers careless about names? I can think of at least three reasons:

1. *Wrong priorities.* As ministers, our primary responsibility must be people. We must learn to maintain a balance between the amount of time we spend in study, preaching, visiting church members, giving Bible studies, counseling, office work, and other duties. But if we are not spending many hours a week in the homes of people, something is woefully wrong with our priorities. And if we cannot find it in ourselves to change this imbalance, we do not belong in the *pastoral* ministry. To those who place strong emphasis on preaching (as I do), may I say that the greatest fire for preaching comes not from reading books by the fireside but from being out on the firing line!

2. *Lack of organization.* Names written on odd-size bits of paper scattered about, poorly organized and classified (or worse yet, trusted to the memory), will never produce the baptisms that we seek. The minister who has not learned to organize his names for visitation is seriously handicapped. A little time spent cultivating an interest file is well worth the trouble. Lack of organization becomes, for the minister, a veritable sin, allowing candidates for the kingdom to be neglected or lost sight of.

My own system of organization may not necessarily work for you, but I mention it here by way of example. It revolves around the names themselves, the geographical location, and the time allotted for visitation.

All names from whatever source are typed on 4" by 6" Rolodex cards (available from the Evangelistic Supply Center, P.O. Box 4353, Washington, D.C. 20012, phone [202] 291-2035). I place names of *inactive* interests in a file card box or drawer, alphabetized by last name within each city or post office section. These names are used for mailing purposes and for visitation during the first two weeks of an evangelistic series to ascertain any change in the level of interest. Incidentally, on all mailings for whatever reason, the words "address correction requested" appear under the church's return address, so that we can continually update our files.

Names of *semiactive* interests go in a section of the file used for addressing our

monthly church newsletter, which goes to semiactive and active interests as well as to church members. The newsletter is always slanted to make these individuals feel a part of what is going on in our district. These semiactive names receive an occasional visit.

Names of *active* interests and current Bible studies are organized both geographically and also by the day of the week in which I visit that area. Four solid afternoons and evenings a week are devoted to this, supplemented by visitation on other days as needed. The church list is also divided geographically so that visits to members can be interspersed through the day in each visitation area.

Such record-keeping may seem ponderous to some, so the best time to make notations on visitation cards is right out in the car following the visit. Of course you should do so out of sight of the house you have just called on!

3. *Difficulty in learning names.* The old saying "I never forget a face, but I can't remember names" is true for too many. Sometimes this problem can result in names that are overlooked in our visitation program. However, rather than throwing up our hands in despair, let's do something about it.

It would be well if all pastors could take a Dale Carnegie course and learn its excellent name-memorizing techniques. But even without such training, a little extra time to work on this weakness will do wonders for us. When meeting a person, get a clear vivid impression both of that person's face *and* his name. Then repeat the name both mentally and verbally. We need not be embarrassed to ask someone to repeat his name, since most people love to hear their names repeated. We can also learn to play certain games of association, or use various memory devices. More complete information is found in the booklet *How to Remember Names*, published by Dale Carnegie & Associates, Inc., 1475 Franklin Avenue, Garden City, New York 11530.

Our minds are far more capable of remembering details than we give them credit for. Usually we don't remember names simply because we haven't applied ourselves to the task.

What's in a name? A soul for God's eternal kingdom hides behind each one. That visitor to church, the new family that recently moved into town, that person in the hospital, that backslider, the Voice of Prophecy interest—all are worthy of our dearest and closest attention.

When a brother pastor asks me to follow up a name and I let the matter slide, a serious breach of ministerial ethics has been made. But of even greater seriousness is the fact that I have failed the sacred responsibility placed on me by God.

May He forgive us for our strange neglect and impress us anew with the privilege of working with names.

James R. Hoffer is pastor of the Marshall-Bellevue district of the Michigan Conference.

What's so unique about Adventism?—2

God's special movements throughout history have usually been more restorative in nature than innovative. Uniqueness depends not so much on originality as on rediscovery and restoration.

Since I plan to continue the theme started in my October editorial, I urge you to read it carefully if you have not already done so, in order to see its foundational connection with this editorial.

One major point of the October editorial should be reemphasized and expanded here: the uniqueness of any of God's special movements during the course of history has not consisted in newness or originality, but rather in a *rediscovery and restoration* of truth that has always existed!

The quality of uniqueness and originality has a hypnotic fascination for many minds, as underscored by the continuing craze for antiques and original paintings and the fabulous amounts of money being paid for them today. This same urge for original items has somehow spilled over into the world of religion and especially into Adventism. We Adventists seem to find a special security or sense of self-worth if we can feel that we have some teaching or doctrine that no other religious group has or ever had. True, certain prophetic aspects of God's special movements in history could be labeled unique and original, but in principle, these movements should be classified as restorative rather than innovative.

Noah's ark was certainly an original (and some are still searching for it today)! But the essence of Noah's message centered on the great and ageless theme of salvation by faith alone in the Lord.

Thus, it is the restoration concept that constitutes our uniqueness. The weeping prophet, Jeremiah, emphasized this point in his day when Judah had backslidden far from God's truth. The Lord said through him, "'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls'" (Jer. 6:16, N.I.V.).*

Two factors stand out clearly in this admonition: "ancient paths" and "rest for your souls." God did not instruct Jeremiah to direct Judah to a new path, but to old paths! His was a message of restoration of neglected and forgotten truths.

This was the same work that Jesus sought to accomplish during His time here on earth. He invited people to take His yoke and burden—to learn of Him—prom-

ising that the result would be rest to their souls. Was Jesus offering the people something new or different from what Jeremiah had offered? Not at all! Jesus was giving them old paths. Please read the statement by Ellen White, "Christ the Originator of All Truth," on page 25 of the October MINISTRY. This statement eloquently points out that Christ's work was to "readjust and establish . . . in the framework of truth" precious gems of spiritual knowledge that He Himself had originated and given in the beginning. Note that these precious gems of truth had been "cast . . . into the minds and thoughts of each generation." Solomon summed up this idea in the words "There is nothing new under the sun" (Eccl. 1:9, N.I.V.). The only thing new is the setting, the particular point of historical context, in which truth, "present truth," is rediscovered.

With this "not-new review" of thoughts from the October editorial, let us examine briefly other facets of Adventism's "restoration theology." In Part I we considered the Sabbath in the setting of the three angels' messages. It is the same Sabbath on which Adam and Eve worshiped, but now it is in the unique (if you please) setting of the everlasting gospel proclaimed by the three angels of Revelation 14. And the restoration of the Sabbath truth could not come at a more significant time in earth's history. In a sense, the preaching of the Sabbath as a memorial of God's creative and re-creative power in these times of nearly total belief in and acceptance of evolutionary theories is as significant as was Noah's ark-theme in the pre-Flood days. The truth of God's Sabbath and what it represents is desperately needed by our planet, which has lost the knowledge of its true roots. To honor God's fourth commandment in spirit and in truth constitutes the firmest possible bedrock against the acceptance of evolutionary theories with their elimination of God.

The next teaching of Adventism that I wish to discuss in the setting of uniqueness is the teaching of the gifts of the Spirit, and in particular the gift of prophecy. Obviously, I am doing so since this doctrine has been and is under considerable discussion. Any religious movement that claims to have the gift of prophecy and

announces that there is a prophet among that people is suspect at best. There has probably been more misunderstanding on the part of those outside the Adventist Church regarding this doctrine than any other. I don't know of an article or book written in opposition to us that does not dedicate a portion to contending against the idea of the gift of prophecy as evidenced in the writings of Ellen G. White. Furthermore, I know of no leading Seventh-day Adventist dissident, past or present, who has not used disbelief in all or part of the writings of Ellen White as a point of departure. Canright and Kellogg are just two examples; the list could be made much longer.

My heart is saddened to see confusion and dismay on the part of a few of our ministers over recent discussions on this subject. I trust that what follows may help to clarify our thinking.

I, for one, am sympathetic with those who are having problems in this area, even though I am not in agreement with them. I want to state categorically that it is my belief that church leadership, including myself, must bear a portion of the responsibility for the problems we now face in this area. As I see it, I have, consciously or unconsciously, made claims for and demands on the writings of Ellen White that exceed those I made on the writings of the Bible prophets. I have held to what might be called verbal inspiration for her writings, but not for the Scriptures. I did not do so intentionally, of course; rather, it resulted from illogical thinking. I am ashamed today to recall the many sermons I have preached based on a statement from her works in which I hammered away at a phrase or even at a single word such as "all," or "everyone," or "none."

In my college sophomore year a teacher whom I greatly appreciated brought up a point that caused me to ask him after class whether he knew of any contradictory statements or concepts in the writings of Ellen White. He hesitated several moments and finally shook his head saying, "No." This answer greatly strengthened my confidence in the prophetic gift. Being a young man, my impetuous mind, youthful dogmatism, and unrealistic idealism demanded perfec-

tion—absolute perfection—of Ellen White's writings. It was unthinkable to me to conceive of mistakes or contradictions in either the Bible or her work.

I finished my last two years of college at another campus. While there, I learned that the teacher who had told me he knew of no contradictions in Ellen White's writings had left the church! The main reason? Certain "contradictory" statements regarding chronology had rendered null and void the entire scope of her writings for him. Here again is another exhibit of a person finding fault with the gift of prophecy and departing from us.

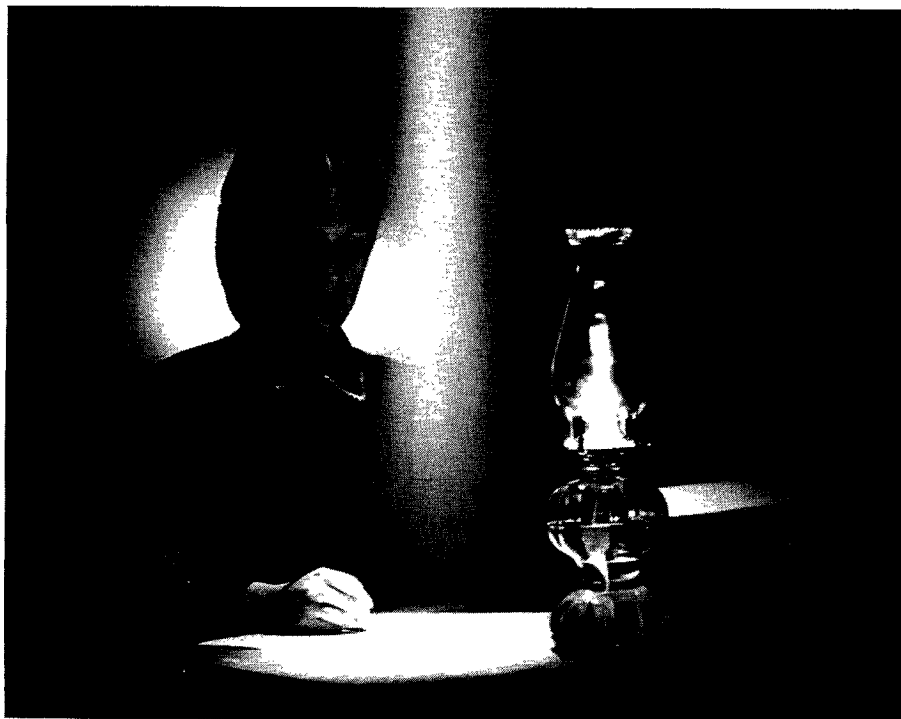
In looking back on this experience, I have often wondered whether this teacher was already having problems in his own mind and graciously refrained from revealing his true feelings to me in order not to shake my confidence. How much better it would have been (and would be today) if we had been taught differently regarding the doctrine of inspiration and revelation, if we had understood that inspiration results in infallibility, integrity, consistency, and trustworthiness, but not necessarily in absolute personal perfection!

We should understand and teach that nowhere in Scripture do we find the doctrine of verbal inspiration or the idea of divine dictation. If God's thoughts are so much higher than our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth, surely we can expect a perfection of expression on the part of God that all the prophets put together could not match! And if they did, we poor mortals couldn't understand it anyway! The inerrancy debate that consumes much time and attention among some Christians today could be resolved quickly if we clearly understood that while it is true that God-inspired writings have a beauty of unity, cohesion, and oneness, and while it is true that they are infallible in concept and truthfulness as a whole, one cannot take a word, phrase, or sentence and build a concept cathedral that is contrary to the underlying harmony or theme of the whole. We plan to feature articles on this point in future issues. I feel it is most urgent and important for us as Seventh-day Adventist ministers to have a far deeper and broader understanding of the inspiration process.

I confess, too, that I have spent more time in my spiritual studies reading her words than in studying the Bible. I did the very thing she strongly admonishes us not to do! But after saying this, let me assure you that I make no apologies for reading more of her works than those of any uninspired author, past or present!

Also, I have at times equated inspiration with originality. To make originality a test for the authenticity of inspired revelations ultimately leads to disillusionment the moment one finds a passage or pages in inspired writings that have previously appeared in noninspired documents.

In college I knew that Ellen White used



VERNON C. TOOLEY III

Profiting from His prophet

The particular title of this editorial is one that is used in our health section. The January [1973] subtitle read, "Ellen G. White's Comments on the Value of Exercise With Scientific Confirmation." An interesting and provocative response from one of our readers indicated concern over our use of the term *prophet*. To him our title seemed to indicate that what a prophet says is not only divinely inspired but also should be new and original. Thus, any scientific confirmation of what Ellen White said places her writings in the realm of foreknowledge.

Our correspondent pointed out that many individuals prior to her time made similar statements. For instance, on the subject of exercise Cicero, who lived nearly a century before the birth of Christ, emphasized the necessity of exercise for maintaining good health. Others living in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries thought and wrote the same. Our brother suggested that before we published anything in our periodicals to prove Mrs. White's "foreknowledge," a thorough study should be made of the works of writers who predate her. He felt that any "scientific confirmation" only proves the correctness of her predecessors who wrote without claiming divine revelation as their authority. The question is: If men during past centuries hit on certain facts not based on special revelation from God but rather were the result of observation, reason, and

more often common sense, much of which was common knowledge before Mrs. White's time, why should God repeat these truths through special revelation? This is a good question, and it deserves an answer.

D. E. Robinson in his book *The Story of Our Health Message* throws light on the subject. Robinson makes it clear that there were those, such as Joseph Bates, who had correct insights on disease, its causes and cures, before the epochal day of June 6, 1863, when Ellen White had a vision at Otsego, Michigan. She wrote concerning this experience "'that the great subject of health reform was opened before me in vision'" (page 76).

Information conveyed to Ellen White in that important vision and in subsequent ones, laid down certain principles that were scientifically correct and generally were far in advance of medical knowledge of that day. But this is not the most significant contribution made by the Spirit of Prophecy. What is the most significant contribution?

Simply this. There is an indissoluble union among physical, mental, and spiritual health. A man's spirituality is affected by his physical habits. Intemperance in any form affects a man's life not only at the moment but eternally. Any defects in our manner of living threaten our entire existence. In view of this, our health message is as important a doctrine as any

material from other sources in her book *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. No great issue was made of it, so I gave it little thought. It is interesting in this connection to note that if a loyal, spiritually mature person presents a problem such as this and attempts to provide a solution in a sweet, Christian spirit, the situation is quite readily understood and accepted. But when a problem of this nature is presented in a controversial setting as an attack on Ellen White, then it shocks people, and doubts and darkness invade the minds of some. So much depends on the attitude and spirit of the individual who makes the presentation. So much depends on whether one speaks as a friend or as an enemy. Would to God there were more of a spirit of loyalty, love, and oneness among us!

I have had to change drastically my own thinking and attitudes on this matter of equating inspiration and revelation with originality. This change of concept came to me about ten years ago. In the early 1970s we enlarged MINISTRY to include a sizable health section, in which we

published, at times, pertinent Ellen White-written health materials under the heading "Profiting From His Prophet." One selection dealt with the importance and necessity of exercise. In response to this particular article, one reader wrote a rather lengthy letter admonishing us not to use the word "prophet" in connection with Ellen White, since, in his opinion, the term indicated originality and newness, and many health concepts given by Mrs. White can be found in earlier writers.

His letter caused me to do some reflection on this point of originality. Frankly, at that point I was of the same opinion as he—that to be a prophet implied originality. After some study my mind began to change, however, and I published my conclusions in an editorial appearing in the May, 1973, magazine. I feel that the concepts expressed there are most applicable today. In fact, I feel it would be beneficial to reprint in its entirety that May, 1973, editorial (see below).

Because of my change of mind at that time, I have had little difficulty with charges that Ellen White was a plagiarist or

evidence of her literary borrowing. As things stand today, it makes little difference to me how much she borrowed or didn't borrow. Who am I to question how God uses His messengers or how His messengers obtain the right words and phrases to reveal truth—or perhaps I should say to *restore* His truth—to us today?

Today I stand in awe and appreciation as never before for what the gift of prophecy through Ellen White has meant to me personally and to this church. We have been uniquely blessed by these inspired writings. Unfortunately, we have too often ignored them, misused them, misunderstood them, or ridiculed them.

Our responsibility as Seventh-day Adventist ministers is to use them correctly and to share with our people a better understanding of revelation and inspiration.—J.R.S.

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other. It is a definite part of the three angels' messages, and to omit the health message, either in practice or in teaching, violates the will of God as much as if we ignored other basic truths.

Elder J. H. Waggoner in the August 7, 1866, *Review and Herald*, beautifully clarified this point: "We do not profess to be pioneers in the general principles of health reform. The facts on which this movement is based have been elaborated, in a great measure, by reformers, physicians, and writers on physiology and hygiene, and so may be found scattered through the land. But we do claim that by the method of God's choice it has been more clearly and powerfully unfolded, and is thereby producing an effect which we could not have looked for from any other means.

"As mere physiological and hygienic truths, they might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence; but when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel's message by the sanction and authority of God's Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of *present truth*, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril."

The Advent Movement is a continuation of the Reformation. God in these final days is bringing to the world, through His appointed agency—His church—the whole truth for the whole world to make man whole. The preaching of the whole truth is the business of the Advent

Movement.

As to whether Ellen White's writings were original or new in the area of healthful living is unimportant. There is nothing new under the sun! Much of the teachings of the Old and New Testament prophets probably were enunciated by pagans who predated them. I seriously doubt that Christ said much in some areas that had not been said in principle by some of the philosophers who lived prior to His incarnation. But divine sanction was given to the words Christ spoke. All truth, whether spoken by pagans or worshipers of God, has for its original source the mind of God. The glorious truth about the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy is that God has preserved His plan for man. That plan as found in these writings has not been mixed with error. What we can get from the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy is pure truth. The wheat and the tares have been verbally separated. Do we really appreciate this point?

If Adele Davis, author of several volumes on nutrition, had lived and written one hundred years prior to Ellen White's time and you read one of her books, how could you competently separate fact from fancy? Much of what Adele Davis has written is true, but some of it evidently is fanciful (see Nov., 1972, *Life and Health*). To continue our illustration, say that Ellen White came along and made similar statements as those found in Adele Davis' books. Should I be disturbed and perhaps question her prophetic gift? Never! As a believer of the Spirit of Prophecy I would be convinced that the concepts that were similar to those in Adele Davis' books were

absolute truth, because God guided Ellen White in a special way. There are no tares in this modern wheat field of truth. But I can never assume the same attitude toward the writings of Adele Davis, Cicero, Paul Dudley White, or any other eminent uninspired author.

As to the suggestion that we study all the writings in the health area that predate Mrs. White, I can thank God that this is unnecessary. Inasmuch as her writings were inspired, I am saved the impossible task of searching out what everybody has said on the subject. Furthermore, I can be assured that what I find in the Spirit of Prophecy is unquestionably true, and I never need fear being led into the paths of falsehood and error. Life's highways are strewn with the wreckage of those who have followed partial truth mixed with much error.

If one has to follow the suggestion to study everything on health prior to Ellen White's day, then by the same token one should study everything in religion prior to the days of Christ, Isaiah, Daniel, or John. The words of Lindsay A. Semmens, my college Bible teacher, are pertinent at this point: "Why wade through fifty feet of sewage in order to find one scintilla of truth when God has given it to us in such a beautiful and complete form?"

This does not mean that I will never read anyone else's writings, but when it comes to finding and understanding truth, let us go to the unpolluted source. Praise God for His love and let us as ministers share with the world the wealth of saving truth we have.—J.R.S., *Ministry*, May, 1973, pp. 2, 3.

Pastors' kids are different!

Human nature urges one to conform, to be part of the crowd. Parents of PKs would do well to capitalize on the advantages of being different while keeping the liabilities in proper perspective.



Charles Whieldon

I came out of the meeting feeling utterly discouraged. With two sons studying for the ministry, another graduating from medicine next year, and a teen-age daughter whose sights are set on teaching, I had thought that all that was past. Yet I still feel a complete failure whenever I attend a meeting on child psychology or hear the “correct” way to bring up children. Our children and our methods of child-raising simply do not fit the pattern laid down by the experts.

Molly Rankin, who lives in Auckland, New Zealand, is the author of *I Heard Singing* and *No Chance to Panic*.

“Well,” I sighed as I drove home beside my husband, “all I can say is that our kids must be different.”

He shrugged. “I guess all pastors’ kids are a little different.” He did not elaborate, but his observation made me think. Are pastors’ kids really different? I wasn’t sure, but I determined to find out.

During the next week, chaos overtook our house as our three sons arrived home for vacation—each on a different day! I stayed up till the early hours listening to the latest in college and university news; I disposed of mountains of washing (not the whole semester’s collection, they assured me); and as soon as I could find them

collectively in a sane enough frame of mind to give attention to “Mom’s thing about pastors’ kids,” I plied my sons with questions. So thought-provoking were the answers that I decided to contact several other ministers’ children, from 18 to 80 years of age, and question them, too. The results of these inquiries and my conclusions I set down here, not as an authority—I’m anything but that—but in the hope that they may be of help to some young ministerial mother.

Almost all the pastors’ children I spoke to said that as schoolchildren, they knew they were different from the rest of the youngsters in their group. They talked

about differences in background, attitudes, and outlook. For example, continually hearing about people's problems gave them a broader view of life, and their constant exposure to evangelism taught them the gravity of life, thus fostering a greater desire to share truth.

Effect of constant moving

On the negative side, constant moving from town to town and often from one country to another meant that they developed a feeling of never really belonging. They recalled people asking, "Where do you come from?" And their only possible reply was "I'm not sure, really, but at the moment my parents are living in . . ."

This observation brought to my mind something my youngest son wrote during the past semester. He had not been home for eighteen months, and during that time we had had two changes of address. I read with a pang, "I guess I have really left home now, because I don't even know where home is."

Entering a new school every year or so, the pastor's child often does not arrive until the school year is well under way, and just as often he has to be excused for a week or two at the end of the year in order that the family may vacation together before Dad takes up his new appointment or is required to help set up camp meeting or attend workers' meetings. Such situations make it difficult for the child to form long-lasting friendships or establish an identity.

My youngest son felt this way until he went to college. Then overnight he found himself, for right there in class were the girls who had dared him, when he was 3 years old, to jump from the henhouse (that was the time he broke his leg); kids who had been on correspondence lessons with him in New Guinea, and old high school mates, all friends with whom he could identify.

Pastors' children also feel they are always on display, not only in church but also in school. Even in church school they are told, "You shouldn't do that; your dad's a pastor." This built up resentment in some that led to rebellion, but the majority seemed grateful even for the expectations people had of them. As children they responded to these expectations and so were often restrained from getting into mischief for which they would have been sorry later.

The feeling of being on display is even worse at a public school, where a pastor's child may often be the only Adventist. Teacher and classmates are aware of his church's standards, and the pastor's child feels a greater responsibility to live by principle. He tries harder to be truthful and obedient; he has to take a stand for Sabbath observance; and he feels more acutely the necessity of living according to health principles.

Surely all this moving about must be

hard on young children. Not necessarily. One young man thrived on change. He found adventure in packing up and tasting new pastures. Another admitted to a few qualms at always being the new boy, but others simply resigned themselves to being at a different school next year and looked forward to the prospect with interest and some excitement.

Did all this affect their grades in school? Not really. Often they were ahead in some subjects, and when they were behind, Mom was always there to give them a hand with homework.

Then came a thought that was entirely new to me. To compensate for the differences, pastors' sons needed to excel in some physical achievement. Brought up in an atmosphere that frowned in general on competitive sports, they felt a desperate need to be best in some athletic activity—swimming, weight-lifting, skiing, or even wrestling if nothing else presented itself. They felt that this not only established their pecking order at a new school but proved that vegetarians are not sissies. Pastors' daughters didn't seem to attach such importance to the physical aspect, but often found their specialty in being class pianist or some such position.

Advantages of being a PK

Did pastors' children feel penalized as a result of being different? In no way. There were some real compensations. Being a pastor's child gave them status, and besides, Dad would be unhappy with any job other than the ministry, so they accepted the differences as part of life.

There were all kinds of advantages in being a pastor's kid, anyway: the privilege of personally knowing important church figures; the early realization that sometimes nothing happened within the church unless the pastor and his family made it happen, and the opportunity for developing leadership and administrative abilities that such a realization provides; the purely mercenary advantages of overseas travel and subsidies on college fees; and finally, the advantage of personal dignity.

Who makes the corsages for the usherettes at the mission, or gives out the songbooks at vespers, or stamps the gift Bibles, or helps Dad with the speaker system? The mere fact that he is essential to the smooth functioning of the ministerial team gives the pastor's child this sense

of personal dignity. Pastors' kids are vital not only to the family but to Dad's church.

In fact, in my questioning I heard only one real complaint. A young lady, a guest in our home, was fed up with always being introduced as her father's daughter. "I want to establish my own identity," she stated vehemently. However, when it came time for her to continue her travels, I phoned the pastor down the line and said, "Remember Jimmy Whosit from college days? His daughter's coming to your town and needs accommodations for the night." The enthusiasm with which she was welcomed forced her to admit that Dad's name had its advantages.

Parent's influence

As pastors' children, did they feel there was any single thing that especially influenced their lives? I got a unanimous, resounding "Yes!" They mentioned "Dad's consistency" or "integrity" or "impartiality." Big words. What did they mean?

Well, Dad was always completely honest. He was always just. He did things, not always because he wanted to, but because they were right. ("No, I don't particularly want to go to the social tonight either, but the committee has put in so much work, we can't let them down, can we?") His constant concern for other people. Who could complain about Dad's being late for a birthday party when poor Mrs. Brown needed his words of comfort over her son's arrest? Or what did it matter that Dad had to postpone his reading of the last chapter of that bedtime book when Mr. Jones had requested Bible studies? Yes, God's work came first (and in some cases it was the only thing that got done), but did the kids mind? No. It was what they expected, and besides, they were in it together with their father. They helped with the new church building, worked the projector on Bible studies, and passed opinions on his sermons. They were part of the team. To the boys, Dad was confidant and adviser; he listened to their problems and advised according to Bible principles. To the girls he was a hero and the epitome of love. He was kind to people, an example of sincerity without narrow-mindedness. Dad was tops.

And what about Mom? I asked the question timidly and with my tongue in my cheek.

"Mom?" said the boys in blank amazement. "Why, she's just Mom. She's always

Continually hearing about people's problems gave preachers' kids a broader view of life, and their constant exposure to evangelism taught them the gravity of life, thus fostering a desire to share truth.

there." One said she helped with the homework, conducted family worship in Dad's absence, saw that they knew the doctrinal test, but even then, Mom was just Mom.

The girls were more specific. Mom was their friend; she gave Dad her total support; she bound the family together with a sense of humor and music; and one said that the only time Dad made mistakes in his ministry was when he acted without asking Mom's opinion. Nevertheless, not too many expressed profound opinions about the role of Mom in the minister's home.

What to do

And so, from my own experience and the lessons I learned by questioning my young friends, I reached certain conclusions on raising pastors' children that I gladly pass on for what they are worth:

1. *Get through to your children that the privilege of being a worker for God more than compensates for any differences they may feel.* Let's face it. In spite of what mature youth may say, moving can often be a harrowing experience for young children. No sooner do they settle down and make friends in one place than they are uprooted and shifted to another. No sooner are they acclimated to snow and skiing than they find themselves learning to scuba-dive and having to like pineapples.

But when they cry and complain, instead of crying with them and championing their cause, try saying, "I know exactly how you feel. Quite frankly I would rather be in a cooler climate too, but God called us *here*. And if this is where He wants us, then this is the place that will benefit us most. You wait; God has it all worked out. He's never let us down yet, and He's not going to now." In convincing

children, you may convince yourself.

2. *Strive at all costs to foster the positive image the children have of their father.* Complaining that Daddy is always too busy to spend time with the family, condemning the brethren for the way they have treated him, criticizing the narrow-mindedness and self-centeredness of the church members, will do nothing to promote Dad's cause, but it will do much to send your children right out of the church.

So what if you are homesick and lonely and your toes hurt with the cold? Buy some snow boots and learn about the district where you live. Do some Adventist Youth nature honors with the kids. You will learn to love the country when you know its unique trees or birds or wildflowers, and you will be making memories for your children at the same time.

So what if your husband is away most all the time on Bible studies and does not notice that Billy Joe has a problem? Be patient; the pressure will soon ease. Whisper in his ear at lunchtime or when you get to bed at night that Billy Joe is not doing too well at school and that it is time he had a word with him. That is part of the teamwork in the minister's home.

3. *Make God's work a delight for the children.* Take a picnic with you on the country Appeal for Missions trip. See who can put out the most handbills, you and your daughter or Daddy and your boy. God's work is exciting. Impart the fact to your children.

4. *Encourage personal dignity in your children.* Let them know that you appreciate the cakes they bake for Sabbath lunch or the music they played for the school concert. Show them you trust them.

I was amused to hear two young men whom I questioned claim that the hardest thing a parent could say was, "Well, son,

it's your life. Do what you want, but you know how your dad and I feel."

"Was this the wrong approach?" I asked.

Their answer? "Of course not, but when parents trust you like that, how can you let them down?"

5. *Face the fact that although your children may be different in many ways from non-preachers' kids, when it comes to the propensity to sin, they are utterly distressingly normal.* No amount of Bible study, family worship, or child psychology will shelter them from Satan's attacks if they choose to be ensnared. And when they do, love them more than ever before; pray harder for them and with them; and realize that you have allies. That church school teacher loves your child too. Otherwise he or she would be a bus driver or a typist, anything but a schoolteacher. He or she wants to help, and together you can work out your child's problems. Most often it is just a phase that Emily or Johnny will soon get over and never want to mention again.

6. *Finally, enlist the aid of the brethren.* Do not hesitate to say to another minister, "Johnny is uncertain what to do when he leaves school. He thinks a lot of you. Could you find time to speak to him?" I shall always be grateful to the education secretary who discussed my son's university psychology course with him (the mere listening crystallized his thoughts and helped him change to the ministerial course), or the doctor who invited another son to watch him do a tendon transplant at the mission hospital, or the union president who wrote to us in the mission field to say he had met our boys at college and they were just fine.

Have you ever worried that your children were different? Relax! If they are part of your team, working for the Lord, they need to be!

Prayers from the parsonage

Pen in hand, Lisa pores over the Sears Christmas catalog, frequently carrying it over to show me something she wants.

"Mommy, I'm marking an X on everything I like—just so you'll know what to buy me."

Paging through the toy section later, I find big X's on almost every item. She wants Baby Softears and My Friend Mandy, although her present doll family sits neglected for weeks. A toy piano is marked, though we have a real one she can play. She's free to practice any time on our old typewriters, but she still wants a

children's "Petite Elite." Some choices (a Lego set, a medical kit) are wise and reasonably priced. Some (like Barbie's dream house and the Fresh 'N' Fancy cosmetic kit) are frivolous and expensive.

I don't fault her for wishing. The part of me that loves to surprise Lisa might even try to fulfill all those desires—if she'd be better for it. Knowing her so well, I can think of things she hasn't yet discovered but would really enjoy, even as I can guess which dreams are only passing fancies.

"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your

heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:11-13).

Father, becoming a parent has made me better understand your delight in providing every good and perfect gift. Yet, even with a universe of resources, You don't grant just any request.

Sometimes I ask for the good when You want to give the best. Often my petitions are selfish or unnecessary, but You listen anyway and wait until my motives improve and my needs are real. You even save surprises for very ordinary days!

As I plan gifts for the holidays, may I follow Your example. Don't let me equate love with material goods. Make me, instead, lavish with time, attention, and thoughtfulness. Bless both the giving and the receiving so that each will glorify You.

By Cherry B. Habenicht

Sin and judgment among the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians

The evidence indicates that the ancient world recognized the maxims of a divinely instituted moral law known to the Judeo-Christian believers as the Decalogue.

The ancients possessed a consciousness of sin, an awareness of what was morally right and wrong, that did not differ materially from more modern concepts. They also had some knowledge of a judgment in the hereafter, believing that after this earthly life they would face a divine tribunal that would decide their weal or woe in the afterlife.

Discovering that the ancients knew what sin was and that they feared a divine judgment either in this world or in the hereafter, we see that the apostle Paul was justified in his remarks about the pagans of his time. He said that they "do by nature what the law requires," without having the law, and that "they show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness" and either accuses or excuses them (Rom. 2:14, 15, R.S.V.).*

While the truth of these words can easily be attested by a study of Roman and Greek religious beliefs, we will, in this article, go further back in history to show that the ancient Babylonians (including also the Sumerians and Assyrians) and the Egyptians recognized the maxims of a divinely instituted moral law known to the Judeo-Christian believers as the Decalogue.

Sin among the Babylonians

Numerous prayers, hymns, and texts of admonition have come to light during the last century and a half among literally thousands of cuneiform tablets written by the ancient people of the Mesopotamian valley. These religious texts give us a rather comprehensive insight into their feelings, hopes, and fears. They tried to find answers to such universal questions as why some men suffer more than others from misfortunes or calamities, considered by them to be divine punishments. In one

such Babylonian text the following questions are raised:

"Has he committed a sin against a god or against a goddess?

"Has he done violence to one older than himself?

"Has he said yes for no, or no for yes?

"Has he used false scales?

"Has he accepted a wrong account?

"Has he set up a false landmark?

"Has he broken into his neighbor's house?

"Has he come near his neighbor's wife?

"Has he shed his neighbor's blood?"¹

These questions indicate that the ancient Babylonians considered not only that sins committed against gods produced punishment in this life, but also that sins against society called for divine retribution. It is obvious to anyone who knows his Bible that these sins are the same as those listed in the second half of the Biblical Ten Commandments. This text shows clearly that the ancient Babylonians knew what was morally right and wrong.

In fact, the ancient people of Mesopotamia were so conscious of their sinful nature and the need for forgiveness that they frequently included in their prayers urgent requests for pardon. An old Sumerian prayer, for example, includes even pleas for forgiveness of sins committed in ignorance:

"O god whom I know or do not know, (my) transgressions are many; great are (my) sins.

"O goddess whom I know or do not know, (my) transgressions are many; great are (my) sins.

"The transgressions which I have committed, indeed I do not know;

"The sins which I have done, indeed I do not know. . . .

"The transgressions which I have committed, let the wind carry away;

"My many misdeeds strip off like a garment.

"O my god, (my) transgressions are seven times seven; remove my transgressions;

"O my goddess, (my) transgressions are seven times seven; remove my transgressions."²

Another ancient prayer, which carries a label showing that it can be used by priests or penitents, reminds us strongly in its supplications of similar expressions used in some of the psalms of David. In fact, if we did not know that this prayer came from the lips and pen of an ancient polytheist and therefore was addressed to a god and a goddess, it could easily be mistaken as a quotation from the Biblical psalter:

"O my god, who art angry, accept my prayer; O my goddess, who art angry, receive my supplication. . . . Look with pity on me and accept my supplication. Let my sins be forgiven, let my transgressions be blotted out. Let the ban be torn away, let the bonds be loosened. Let the seven winds carry away my sighs. I will send away my wickedness, let the bird bear it to the heavens. Let the fish carry off my misery, let the river sweep it away. Let the beast of the field take it from me. Let the flowing waters of the river wash me clean."³

Judgment in the afterlife

The Babylonians had a very pessimistic outlook about the hereafter. Their underworld, the realm of the deceased, was a dark land, full of dust, where the bread was bitter and the water brackish and where the dead wore garments of feathers to protect them from the cold. During the night their needs for light, food, and drink were thought to be supplied by the sun god.

However, detailed descriptions of a belief in a judgment after death have not been found in the cuneiform literature of the ancient Mesopotamian people, although several gods are called judges in their texts. They believed that Ereshkigal, the sister of Inanna (Ishtar), was the goddess of the underworld, and that seven judges sitting in front of her pronounced the sentence of death over the deceased person when he entered their realm. The nature of this sentence is never stated in the available texts, but it is said that the

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names of the dead would be registered by Geshtinanna, the scribe of the underworld, on the tablets of records, so that they would become legitimate dwellers in the underworld.

The twelfth tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic, which unfortunately is preserved only in fragments, as well as certain other texts, contains hints that the well-being of the dead person in the hereafter was thought to depend on the way he died, whether his body received a decent burial, and whether his surviving relatives continued to offer the prescribed mortuary sacrifices for him. Whether the fate of the

righteous dead was considered to be the same as that of a criminal is never clearly stated. In fact, one finds in reading the cuneiform records of ancient Mesopotamia that the Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians seem to have had a rather fuzzy belief regarding their expected life in the hereafter.⁴

Sin among the Egyptians

In contrast to the people of Mesopotamia, who threw themselves on the mercy of the gods to secure forgiveness for their sins, the ancient Egyptians believed that it was possible to convince the gods of their innocence. The means to do this was the use of magic and correct formulas giving asseverations of innocence. These solemn declarations of innocence, many of which have come into our hands, contain specific lists of wrongdoings that the owner of the documents denied having committed. They show unmistakably that the ancient Egyptians knew quite well what was right or wrong.

Such statements of innocence, generally called "negative confessions," are found in the ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, a document that describes the experiences that the deceased would have upon reaching the underworld. It also contains the formulas to use in facing one's judges upon entering the underworld. The following are examples:

"I have not blasphemed a god.

"I have not done violence to a poor man.

"I have not done that which the gods

abominate.

"I have not killed.

"I have neither increased nor diminished the grain-measure.

"I have not added to the weight of the balance.

"I have not committed evil.

"I have not stolen.

"I have not been covetous.

"I have not told lies.

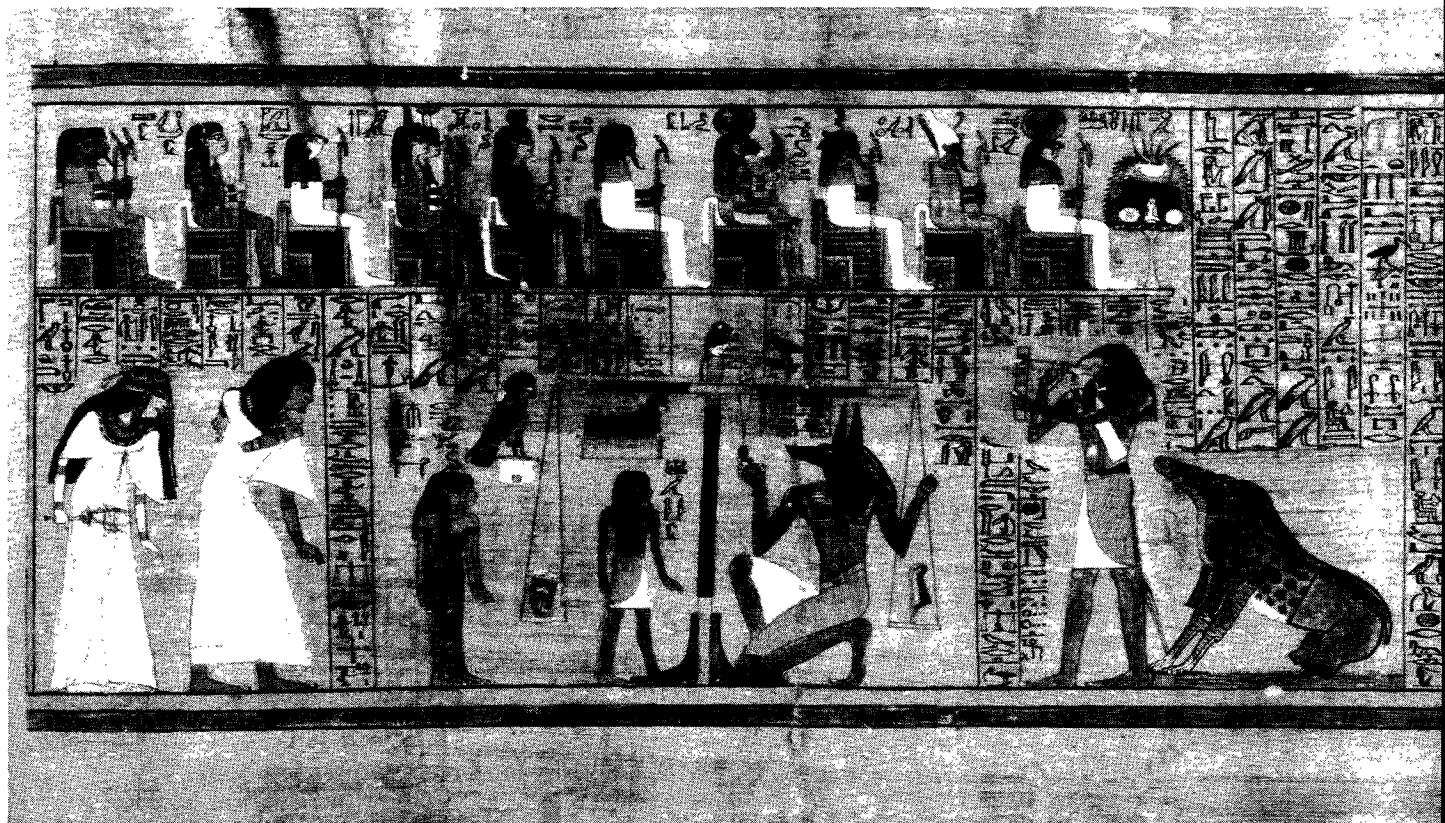
"I have not committed adultery.""

We smile at their naiveté for thinking that they would appease their divine judges by having the right answers ready when they were to give an account of their life on earth. Yet, whether or not we accept their claims to have always been law-abiding citizens who followed well-doing and shunned evil, one thing is clear: the ancient Egyptians knew what was right and wrong, and they expected punishment in the afterlife if records of wrongdoings such as adultery, lies, thefts, or even covetousness could be brought against them.

Only a few cases are known in which an ancient Egyptian admitted to having done something wrong. Such admissions were made only if some calamity, which was considered to be a divine punishment, had fallen on a person. The following portion of a mortuary text contains such an admission of guilt. It deals with one who had become blind and attributed his misfortune to a false oath he had earlier made:

"I am a man who swore falsely by Ptah, lord of truth; and he caused me to behold darkness by day. I will declare his might to

Pictured are two judgment scenes from the Ani Papyrus, or "Book of the Dead," dated from the Eighteenth Dynasty (about the time of Moses). At the far left is the nobleman, Ani, followed by his wife, bowing before the jackal-headed god Anubis. The left part of the balance holds a small vase containing Ani's heart, which is weighed against the feather of truth on the right side. The ibis-headed god Thoth stands to the right and acts as scribe recording the verdict, while twelve gods as judges remain seated at the top of the panel. The second scene pictures Ani being led by the falcon-headed Horus into the presence of Osiris, the god of the afterlife, seated on his throne, where he receives his reward. The Ani Papyrus is 78 feet long and 15 inches wide.



him that knows him not, And to him that knows him, to little and great: Be ye ware of Ptah, lord of truth!"⁶

These examples, negative as well as positive confessions, show clearly that the ancient Egyptians, like their contemporaries in Mesopotamia, were familiar with right and wrong and knew that sin would not commend them to the gods who, they believed, controlled their well-being in this life and would determine their eternal condition in the hereafter.

The Book of the Dead

There is a marked difference between the Egyptians and Babylonians regarding judgment in the hereafter. While we know little of what the Babylonians thought concerning their fate in the hereafter, the Egyptians have left numerous records of their beliefs. These mortuary texts range from the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom via the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom to the Books of the Dead of the New Kingdom. In the course of nearly 3,000 years their beliefs did change in some respects, as illustrated by these various texts. However, we will limit our brief discussion to the later periods from which some elaborate copies of the *Book of the Dead* have survived. These describe in great detail, both in word and picture, what a person could expect to experience after death and how he could ensure a favorable outcome of his trial before his divine judges.

According to the *Book of the Dead*, the deceased would have to appear before

Osiris, the god of the underworld, the great judge who was assisted by forty-two assessors, or judges of the dead. The dead person is shown being led by Anubis, a jackal-headed god, to face his judges. There his heart was placed on one pan of a balance and weighed against truth, represented by a feather lying on the opposite pan. The ibis-headed god Thoth supervised the whole procedure and recorded its results on a tablet. Then the dead person had to recite his negative confessions, referred to above, first in general terms to the whole assembled tribunal, and next to each of the forty-two judges individually. At the foot of the balance sat a monster, half hippopotamus and half crocodile, awaiting the outcome of the trial. Should the deceased fail to convince the judges of his innocence, the monster would devour him, thus depriving him of eternal life. On the other hand, if he was vindicated, he was admitted to the other world to continue his life without end in most pleasant circumstances, although similar to those he was accustomed to on earth.

In case the dead person could not recall the right formulas, a copy of the *Book of the Dead* would be put in the coffin with his mummified body. Those who could not afford to take a complete copy of that lengthy document had to be satisfied with shorter excerpts or summaries. Sometimes a large stone scarab was placed on his heart, the only internal organ that was left in the mummy, and this beetlelike amulet contained an inscription that read in part: "O my heart, the most intimate part of my

being! Do not stand up against me as a witness before the tribunal."⁷

Thus, while we have discovered great differences in the way the people of the Mesopotamian and Nile valleys thought they could escape future divine retributions for earthly wrongdoings, we note one common factor. They all knew there were sins that sooner or later, either in this world or in the life to come, would bring punishment upon the transgressor. The Babylonians pleaded for mercy, while the Egyptians put their trust in magic formulas. The Babylonians believed in some kind of judgment in the hereafter, although we know little about their specific beliefs. On the other hand, we know almost every detail of the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians regarding the divine trial they expected to face after this life.

¹ Leonard W. King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology* (London, 1899), pp. 218, 219.

² Ferris J. Stephens in J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1950), pp. 391, 392.

³ King, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

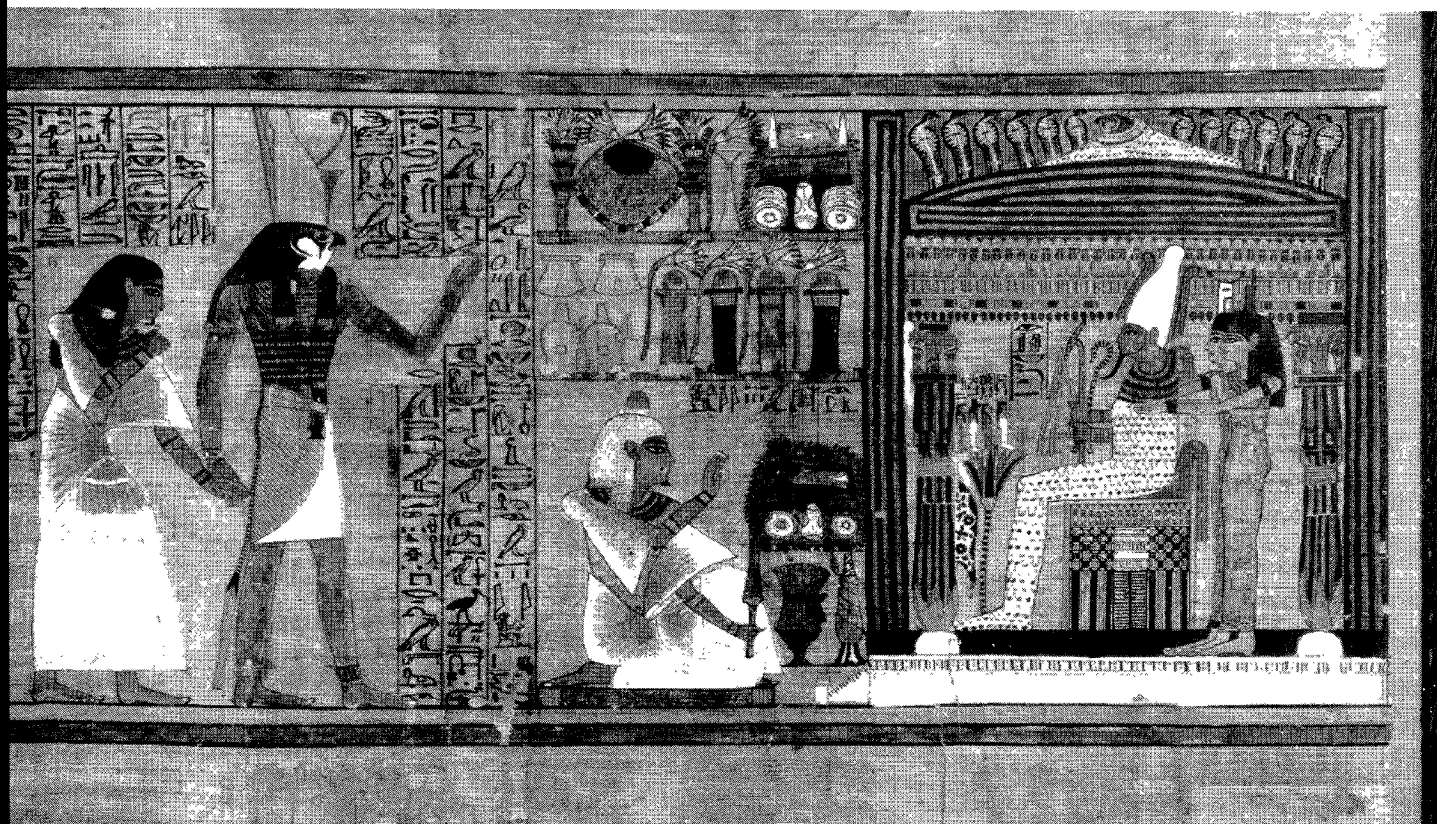
⁴ For a discussion of the Babylonians' belief in death and an afterlife see Alexander Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels* (Chicago, 1946), pp. 137-223; Dietz O. Edzard in H. W. Haussig, ed., *Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient* (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 130-132.

⁵ John A. Wilson in Pritchard, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 35.

⁶ This is part of an inscription on an ancient Egyptian tombstone, Stele 589 in the British Museum. Battiscombe Gunn, "The Religion of the Poor in Ancient Egypt," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 3 (1916), 88.

⁷ Georges Posener, *A Dictionary of Egyptian Civilization* (London, 1962), p. 253.

* Bible texts credited to R.S.V. are from the Revised Standard Version. Thomas Nelson, Inc., publisher.



Editor J. R. Spangler authors the 1982 missionary book, *Marked!*, giving an unusual perspective to the mark of the beast in the context of the three angels' messages and the prophecies of Revelation.



Editor writes 1982 missionary book

Is the mark of the beast the Universal Product Code? Your Social Security number? World currency? There are many wild speculations regarding this topic. *Marked!* does not deal in sensationalism. It focuses on what God's Word has to say about the "beast" and his "mark." Rightly understood, these solemn truths speak to us of salvation.

Marked! is written by MINISTRY Editor J. R. Spangler and is an effective witnessing tool to challenge the thinking of men and women in every walk of life. Be sure you have enough copies on hand to distribute widely. Single copies are priced at only US\$1.25; a pack of ten is only US\$9.95. Available at your Adventist Book Center.

Papers available

Copies of papers presented at the Theological Consultation, August 15-20, 1980, will be available for a brief period through the Biblical Research Institute. Topics dealt with the role in the church of administrators and theologians, their mutual interrelations, and their relation to the mission and message of the church.

The complete set of papers (about 14 papers plus responses) is available postpaid for US\$17 in the United States and US\$19 elsewhere. A listing of the

individual papers and prices is also available upon request.

Mail orders and checks for the complete set and requests for a listing of individual papers to: Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. All orders must be received by March 31, 1982, and will be processed together and mailed in April, 1982.

Your help needed

Loma Linda University is preparing a *Sourcebook of Research on Seventh-day Adventists*. This document will contain an annotated bibliography of a wide range of studies related to the Adventist Church. Such information is valuable to church administrators, pastors, scholars, and lay persons. If you are aware of any studies dealing with Adventists or examining some aspect of church activities, please send a copy of the study, an abstract, or the reference to: Dr. Ian P. Chand, Project Director, Behavioral Sciences Research Group, Loma Linda University, Riverside, California 92515.

Singles ministry

Do you have any idea how many widowed, divorced, and never-married adults you have in your church? How many are in the church in general?

According to the United States census, 30.8 percent of males and 36.5 percent of females over 18 years of age are not married. That's about one out of three. If that figure applies to our church, we have many more than 200,000 singles in North America! So a person wanting to follow the Lord's advice to date and marry within the

church should have no problem doing so—right? Wrong!

Seventh-day Adventists make up only some 0.25 percent of the U.S. population, which means that only one out of every 1,185 people is an unmarried Seventh-day Adventist, to say nothing about that person's sex, age, height, educational background, interests, et cetera.

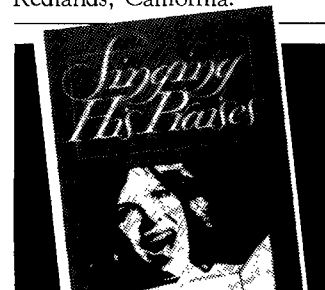
How many people do you know who have left the church because of dating and marrying outside the church? How many do you know who would like to attend church but who are tired of sitting alone year in and year out? What programs do you have to serve the needs of unmarried adults? Many churches may not have enough singles to operate a continuing program of specific activities. But you can minister in less formal ways, and you can be aware of and support Adventist Contact. This organization attempts to introduce single Seventh-day Adventists on the basis of computer-matched interests and attitudes.

Brochures are available at no charge to explain the entire program and how it operates. These are ideal for sending in your monthly newsletter to every single in your congregation. For more information, write Adventist Contact, P.O. Box 4250, Takoma Park, Maryland 20012.

Help for nominating committees

For a more efficient and effective nominating committee, I have found that each member should have at least three items in his or her folder—an up-to-date church membership list; a set of worksheets, and a pencil. The organized set of worksheets

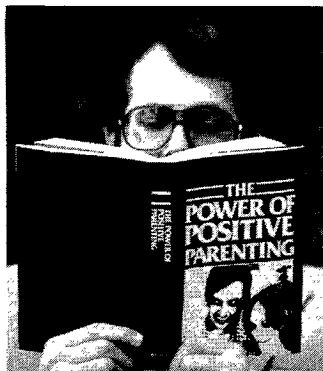
can be most helpful. On 8½"x11" sheets, list all the current officers on the left side. Opposite this list, put down the same offices with blank spaces following so that the nominating committee can fill in these as it does its work. I instruct the committee to write these names in pencil. After the individual has accepted the position, the name can be put in ink. This makes it easy to keep track of who has accepted a position and who has not. Likewise, a name can be easily erased when a person refuses a nomination and another name is inserted.—Gary P. Friesen, Redlands, California.



New songbook

Evangelistic songbooks, no less than evangelistic sermon titles and materials, need to be updated from time to time. *Singing His Praises*, a new songbook designed for evangelistic use, will appeal to audiences today. Many of the longtime favorites are still included, although some of the little-used songs have been dropped in favor of new ones that have become popular and speak to contemporary needs. This new songbook contains more than one hundred selections gleaned by some of the church's leading evangelistic musicians. Available in paperback for US\$1.65 from the Evangelistic Supply Center, P.O. Box 4353, Washington, D.C. 20012. Phone: (202) 291-2035.

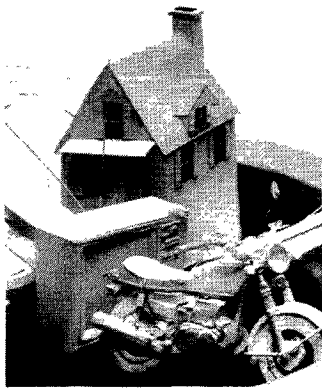
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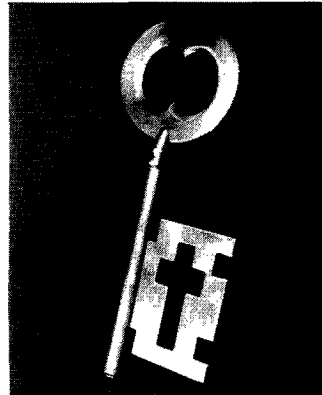
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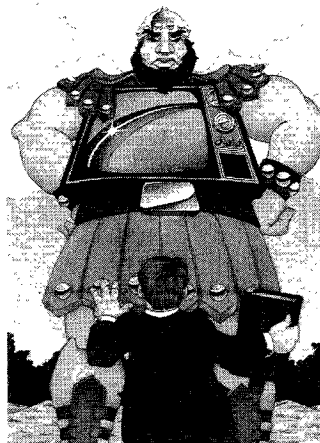
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Pastoral work: Concerns of 24 Pastors [editorial]. J. R. Spangler. Aug 20
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 Ellen G. White—Plagiarist? [editorial]. J. R. Spangler. Mar 20
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Recommended reading

Pastors ought to give as much attention to the Biblical grounds for reconciliation as they do to establishing the Biblical grounds for divorce. This is the message of Geoffrey Bromiley's God and Marriage.

God and Marriage

Geoffrey W. Bromiley, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49502, 1980, 88 pages, \$3.95.

The book upholds the indissolubility of marriage (the only exception besides nullification being the case where a nonbeliever insists on separation) and presents a theology to support this view. The persevering faithfulness of God to Israel's continuing unfaithfulness serves as the paradigm for the spouse who finds himself/herself in such a situation. The saving work of Christ makes possible for Christians the power to restore and reinstate any faltering marriages. If separation must take place, the Christian does not remarry but keeps the door open for reconciliation. This book provides a much-needed emphasis today, but it should be balanced by human realities.—Sakae Kubo.

Is the Majority Moral?

Norman Gulley, *Review and Herald*, Washington, D.C., 1981, 32 pages, \$.95, paper.

The moral standards of Americans seem to have reached the point of utter chaos, and liberal politics have not helped to bring order out of the morass. In reaction to this moral turbulence, the Moral Majority swung into action and exerted an unprecedented influence during the recent election. But the leaders of the Moral Majority have even further expectations—a neotheocracy in America. Gulley writes sympathetically of the Moral Majority's basic ideals, but he also warns of the coming consequences in light of Bible prophecy.

Pauline Studies

Donald A. Hagner and Murray J. Harris, eds., Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, 293 pages, \$19.95.

Prepared as a memorial volume for the noted scholar F. F. Bruce on his seventieth birthday, this work contains a number of essays of interest to ministers. Of special significance are the studies of David Wenham, "The Christian Life: A Life of Tension? A Consideration of the Nature of Christian Experience in Paul" (pp. 80-94), and Robert Y. K. Fung, "Justification by Faith in First and Second Corinthians" (pp. 246-261). This book is solid fare for all serious students of Paul.

I Didn't Plan to Be a Single Parent

Bobbie Reed, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1981, 158 pages, \$6.50.

This easy-to-read book is filled with true-to-life experiences illustrating the problems faced by single parents, along with practical guidelines for dealing with these often-overwhelming situations. A list of resources for further reading is included. This book should be recommended to the newly divorced in your congregation.

Engaging the Aging in Ministry

Mark Bergmann and Elmer Otte, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1981, 80 pages, \$6.95.

The guidelines in this book can be used by the pastor as he helps the elderly in his church develop a program of ministry, but it will be most successful if it is used by the elderly themselves in setting up and administering their own program. The book contains sample worksheets and a list of resources.

Successful Family Devotions

Mary White, NavPress, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1981, \$4.95.

The author explains how busy parents can have meaningful devotional times that children will look forward to and learn from by creatively building on the foundation of Scripture and prayer. Using music, memorization of Scripture, discussion, and activities, she shows how to guide children in adopting the principles of Christ-centered living.

Earthkeeping: Christian Stewardship of Natural Resources

Loren Wilkinson and others, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, \$10.95.

This holistic approach to Christian stewardship of natural resources addresses the resource-use problems of the world today, drawing on economics, history, philosophy, theology, and the natural sciences. The authors do not deal in specifics, but deal with the larger problem of how Christians should use the world. This book is the result of a yearlong study by a group of Christian scholars from

various disciplines who were brought together at the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship.

Your Body, His Temple

Alfred L. Heller, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1981, 194 pages, \$4.95.

This Biblical approach to physical fitness will help people understand their bodies better and is written in such a manner that the reader will be eager to put the principles into action. Dr. Heller, a Christian endodontist, covers such topics as behavior modification, exercise, fad diets, and the ten big killers.

Witnessing for Christ

Review and Herald, Washington, D.C., 1981, 176 pages, \$2.95 paper, \$4.50, three-ring binder.

This newly revised guide for witnessing is a joint effort of the several departments of the General Conference concerned with evangelistic outreach. It is a "how-to" book dealing with the various aspects of witnessing, with detailed, practical suggestions to guide the lay person in effective soul winning.

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