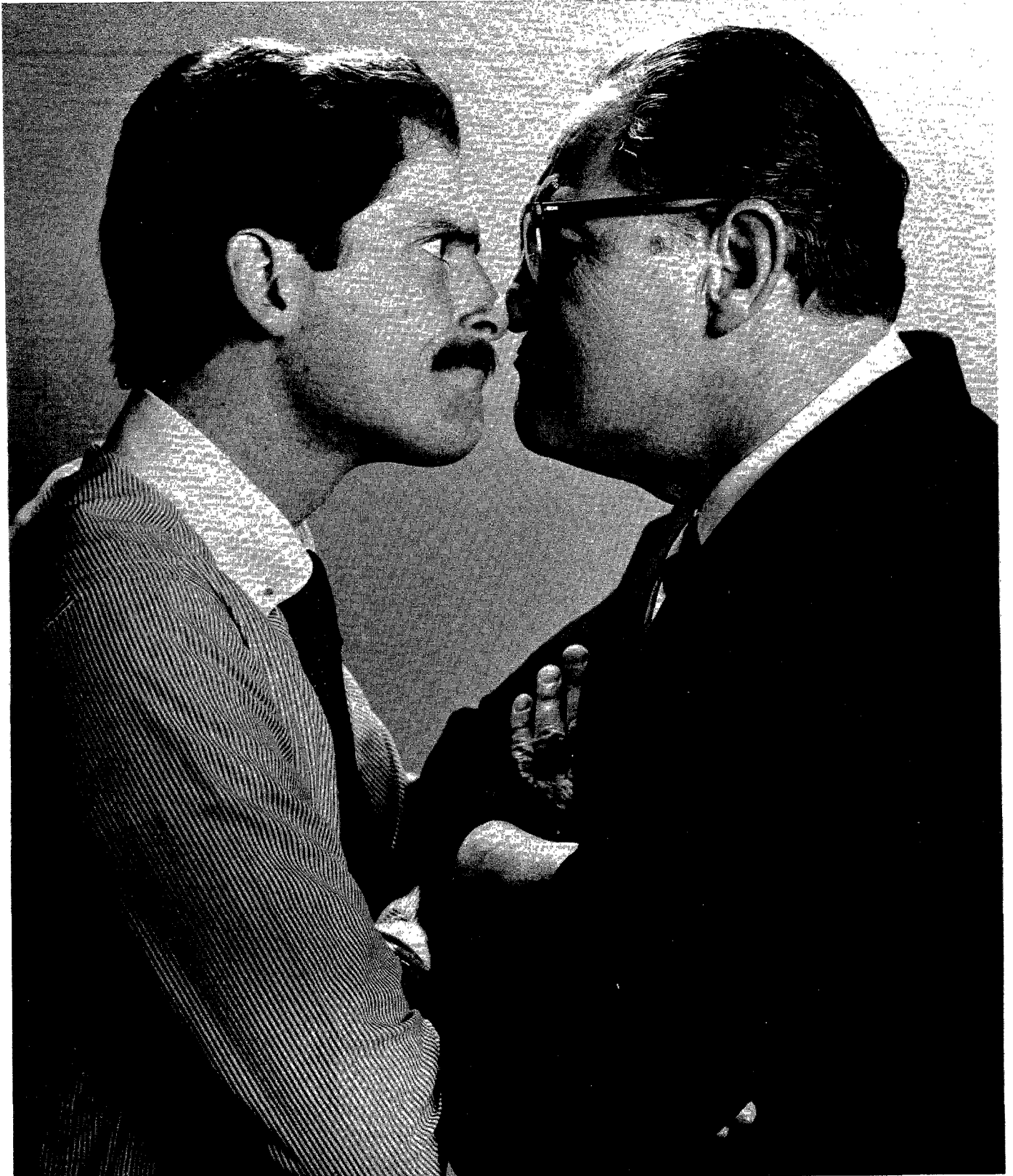


Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/December 1982



Interns and Supervisors View Each Other

According to readers, an article on the church's attitude toward social concerns "ducks the issue" and perpetuates indifference. The June editorial, "What's Wrong With Being a Pastor?" keeps drawing comment.

Overcoming indifference

Although I wish to express strong disagreement with Enoch Oliveira's article "Reform or Redemption: Must the Church Choose?" (September, 1982), let me first note my appreciation for several points he makes: the claim that the worship of God leads to action for others; the claim that the only sure path for the church is to follow Christ; the claim that the church must by precept and example summon humanity to reject egoism and embrace brotherly love; the criticism of revolutionary violence.

But why leave the impression, as the author does, that the gospel is not about social transformation? Should we not read again the record of Jesus' sermon at Nazareth? And why say that Jesus did not subvert the authority and position of the powerful and rich? Should we not read again His words concerning Caesar and Herod and the Jewish religious elite? And why call the hope that the present world order may be transformed an illusion? Should we not read again the many New Testament affirmations that the resurrection breaks the devil's power? And why, in listing legitimate moral concerns of the church should he mention gambling and pornography, but not oppression and injustice? The university student mentioned in the editorial introduction to the article is bothered by our indifference to despotism, tyranny, and social injustice. It is doubtful whether this article gives the student much assurance that we will soon overcome our indifference.—Charles Scriven, Walla Walla, Washington.

Ducking the question

I am among your host of readers who do not agree with everything you say, but consider your magazine "must reading" for its frequently provocative thinking. The article by Mr. Oliveira requires some comment. With all due respect for his administrative position, I think he succeeded admirably only in ducking the student's question. Perhaps I would have done the same.

In the late 1960s, as the situation in Southeast Asia was heating up, I adopted a position of peaceful nonintervention. A couple of local John Birch Society members—one a member of my congregation for a time—assured me that Jesus could be violent when He had to be. Witness His

attack on the sellers in the Temple. Subsequently, when student protests heated up around the United States, I fished into my pack for this quick illustration during a heated argument with an elderly person disgruntled with student activism. He assured me that Jesus' action in the Temple had nothing to do with active protest.

You continue on the beam, and are highly appreciated here. Hang on; it's a good work you do.—Carl F. Welser, Lutheran Church, Michigan.

Saviour and Advocate

Morris Venden's article "What Jesus Said About a Pre-Advent Judgment" (September, 1982) hits the nail on the head! We need to present the doctrines of judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary as he has done. Jesus Christ is not only our Saviour who died for us, He is also our Advocate and Lawyer who lives and intercedes for us in heaven today.—Harold E. Voorhees, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Fair treatment

I very much appreciated the article "What's Wrong With Being a Pastor?" (June, 1982). In more than thirty years in the pastorate, I have heard numerous references in workers' meetings to the importance of the pastor. But inconsistencies between such statements and practice do exist. Your comments are the first I have seen in print to cover the specifics of the problem so well.

Some conference presidents try to take the role of the local pastor, it seems to me. One has openly invited church members to come directly to him with criticisms of their pastor without necessarily saying anything to the pastor himself. Even worldly businesses don't normally follow such a practice. Shouldn't the church be even more fair? If a man is to pastor a church effectively, he must have genuine support from his superiors. The president who tries to do the pastor's job should become a pastor. Then he can handle all the problems he wants.

One of the complaints against hard-working, enterprising pastors that conference leaders and committees seem to take seriously is "He's not well organized." Usually the complaint comes from a well-paid professional person in the church

or a conference official with a secretary and excellent office equipment that is being paid for by the church we pastor. We pastors have to find a lady in our church who isn't working full time and train her to give us part-time, usually volunteer help. Yet we are expected to encompass every part of the church program without any complaints of our own.

When a church has problems with its pastor, the standard solution for many leaders is to move the pastor. His replacement is supposed to have all the answers. Unfortunately, the problem usually remains, and the next pastor soon moves as well. Thus pastors are downgraded; they suffer severe financial loss, and their families undergo extreme trauma. The problems are not solved, and fair-minded church members know it. Critical members are encouraged to try to oust the pastor again when their path is crossed. Surely, if pastors and their families feel secure and happy because they are being fairly treated, they will tend to love the church and do just that much more for it. The devil is directing his attacks in a special way upon pastors because he knows that is the best way to tear up the church.—Name Withheld.

Enough negativism

Having been a pastor and evangelist for a number of years, I too could write an article—or a book—on church problems (see "Things My Pastor Never Told Me," August, 1982). But the extreme negativism of this article turns me off. The inference is that if the writer had known the things he refers to he may not have joined the church. Perhaps he is only being honest. But I believe he could have accomplished his purpose without putting it into a form suitable for reprinting by those who would attempt to dissuade interested folks from joining the church. We already have enough of these.—Bob DuBose, Orlando, Florida.

Our purpose for printing the article, of course, was not to provide reasons for anyone not to unite with the church. We wanted to point out the importance of thorough instruction before baptism. Also, the fact that the author's church provided him enough love to weather the storms he found himself experiencing was, we thought, most positive.—Editors.

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MINISTRY (ISSN 0026-5314),
the international journal of the
Seventh-day Adventist
Ministerial Association © 1982,
is published monthly by the
General Conference of Seventh-day
Adventists and printed by the Review
and Herald Publishing Association,
6856 Eastern Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C. 20012, U.S.A.
Subscription price, US\$16.95 a year;
single copy price, US\$1.50.

For each subscription going to
a foreign country or Canada, add
US\$3.45 postage. Prices subject
to change without notice.

MINISTRY is a member of the
Associated Church Press and is
indexed in the Seventh-day
Adventist Periodical Index.
Second-class postage paid at
Washington, D.C. Editorial
Office: 6840 Eastern Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C. 20012.
Unsolicited manuscripts will be
returned only if accompanied by a
stamped self-addressed envelope.

Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/December 1982/Volume 55/Number 12



COVER: DAVID SHERWIN

Preaching the Whole Gospel/4. Human nature makes it easy for us to mistake a portion of God's plan of salvation for the whole. Norval F. Pease calls for the preaching of a balanced gospel.

Keeping the Pastor Number One/7. K. H. Mead. Here are suggestions for maintaining your pastoral role as the most important calling in God's church.

Interns and Supervisors View Each Other/8. Roger L. Dudley, Des Cummings, Jr., Kim White. A recent study indicates broad agreement on the purpose and benefits of the internship program. But the view of what is actually happening varies between interns and supervising pastors.

Reaching a City for Christ/10. John J. Carter. The Sydney Opera House is not the typical evangelistic setting, but then, extraordinary and innovative methods must be used to reach today's modern cities.

History Confirms the Divine Call/12. In this second installment of *The Called Church*, George W. Reid points out that the early leaders of our church were not conscious of how clearly this movement matched the prophetic specifications until the pattern was well in place.

Speak Ye Comfortably to Jerusalem/14. Roy Allan Anderson.

Prayer: The Greatest Evangelistic Agency/17. George E. Knowles.

Rome: An Early Persecutor of the Church?/18. Samuele R. Bacchiocchi. A new look at the evidence gives the picture of the Roman authorities' providing an environment of tolerance in which the early church could gain strength and expand.

Handbills That Perform/21. B. Russell Holt and Tom Hall.

No New Thing/24. B. Russell Holt.

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We often forget that the word *save* means "to keep," as well as "to rescue." The gospel is the good news about the grace of God in both its rescuing and keeping forms, for God is both Rescuer and Keeper.

Preaching the whole gospel

A preacher must not only understand the gospel himself; he must also know how to preach the gospel so his hearers will understand it.

This is true for several reasons. First, as ministers, we are in danger of taking it for granted that our members know Christ as a personal Saviour. Second, we may fail to communicate the good news because we understand it in theological terms that are incomprehensible to our hearers. Third, we may be adept at preaching some particular facet of the gospel, but fail to preach the *whole* gospel.

The doctrine of salvation falls naturally into five related themes: (1) the grace of God; (2) faith, the response of man to that grace; (3) justification; (4) sanctification; (5) glorification. Under each of these are various subheadings and alternate descriptions, but each aspect of salvation seems to fit into one or another of these five categories.

The grace of God is not the whole gospel. Neither is faith, justification, sanctification, or glorification. Any of these great truths, taken out of the setting of the entire doctrine of salvation, can produce a distorted concept of the good news. On the other hand, the preaching of a *complete* gospel tends to reduce the possibility of distortion and misunderstanding.

The preacher cannot afford the luxury of becoming a "specialist" on grace, faith, justification, sanctification, glorification, or on any variation or subdivision of these themes. He must see each of these great truths as part of the good news. In his

address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul said, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Have we, as preachers of the gospel, been equally thorough in explaining the doctrine of salvation to our congregations?

No two ministers will present these truths in exactly the same way. Some will begin with human needs and present the gospel as the answer to these needs. Some will preach the gospel by exposition, basing their sermons on portions of Scripture where the way of salvation is explained. There is room for variety and originality. We can never exhaust the subject. The important consideration is that *all* facets of the doctrine of salvation should receive appropriate coverage—not just one or two.

We need to preach on this greatest of all Biblical themes—salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let's not allow current discussions and even controversy over the relationship of different aspects of salvation to each other to discourage us from opening before our people the soul-stirring truths of God's plan for saving man. The more we study it, the more we become aware of its profundity, the more humble we become. As Paul explained to the Roman Christians in concluding the part of his Epistle dealing with the doctrine of salvation: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33).

Let's not be afraid of the word *saved*. Salvation is a Biblical term. The basic message of the Bible is "Jesus saves." Note again some of the familiar texts: "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21);

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (chap. 18:11); "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:15); "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5); "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31); "For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). Either directly or indirectly, the science of salvation needs to be the burden of every sermon we preach. Many people are sadly ignorant regarding God's plan to save man; they need instruction upon this all-important subject. Let's use the expressions "salvation by grace" and "salvation by faith." The words *grace*, *save*, and *faith* are the minister's basic tools in telling the good news.

The word *save* has two meanings. The first is "rescue." We speak of "saving" people from drowning or burning. The second is "keeping." We speak of "saving" money in a bank account. Likewise, when the Bible describes God's saving activity, it pictures Him as the great "Rescuer" and the great "Keeper." He rescues the sinner, but He does not then abandon to his own devices the one whom He has rescued. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24, 25). Our challenge is "to declare the Good News about the grace of

God" (Acts 20:24, T.E.V.)* in both its rescuing and keeping forms.

This divine grace was manifested through Jesus Christ. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved" (Acts 15:11). "For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (Rom. 5:15). The grace of Christ is our only hope of salvation.

The gospel story is a revelation of undeserved love. Jesus' love radiated from every act of His life, from every word that He spoke. His grace shone from the cross and characterized His postresurrection appearances. His grace continues to shine from heaven to earth as He applies the benefits of the atonement. And His second coming will be the final, climactic expression of His saving grace.

God's grace was also manifested through the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (verse 5).

We must not forget that the grace by which we are saved represents the undeserved love of the entire Godhead. This is made clear in Paul's letter to Titus, which contains some of the finest preaching material in the Bible on the doctrine of salvation: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (chap. 3:4-7).

The grace of God accomplishes two things. First, it makes provision for our salvation. This provision included the cross as the supreme manifestation of God's love. Second, God's grace calls each person to accept the provision He has made. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (Rom. 8:30). God "predestined" that all who should accept Christ in faith as their Saviour would be saved. Then he "called" sinners to accept this provision. What more could He do?

Faith is part of the human response to God's gracious provision and call. Luther insisted that salvation was "by faith alone." And he was correct that faith, not human merit or works, is the only claim the sinner has on divine grace. But he would have been equally correct to say that salvation is "by grace alone," for without divine grace, there would be no object for our faith to grasp. "By grace [God's] are ye saved through faith [man's]" (Eph. 2:8).

We must never forget that according to the Scripture, faith is part of a triumvirate including love and hope. Faith involves

acceptance, trust, commitment. Redhead says that faith is a "total response of the whole self to the will of God. It is the response of the mind in belief, the heart in trust, the will in conduct. It is to accept the fact that God goes all out for us, and then to be willing to go all out for Him."¹

Grace is God's hand reaching down to man; faith is man's hand reaching up to God. When God's hand grasps man's uplifted one, then and then only can the "rescue" that we call salvation take place. And God will never release His hold on our hand unless we jerk away. He respects our will. He waits for our uplifted hand, and He leads us only as long as we are willing to be led.

Justification is God's gracious act of accepting sinners, who respond to His grace in faith, as if they had never sinned. "He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son, by whom we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven" (Col. 1:13, 14, T.E.V.). This is one of Paul's descriptions of justification. You can find many more references to this great miracle throughout Scripture. Never should we let our people forget that justification through faith in Christ is the key to salvation.

"When God pardons the sinner, remits the punishment he deserves, and treats him as though he had not sinned, He receives him into divine favor, and justifies him through the merits of Christ's righteousness. The sinner can be justified only through faith in the atonement made through God's dear Son, who became a sacrifice for the sin of the guilty world. No one can be justified by any works of his own. He can be delivered from the guilt of sin, from condemnation of the law, from the penalty of transgression, only by virtue of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. Faith is the only condition upon which justification can be obtained, and faith includes not only belief but trust."²

Notice the specific points in this statement: (1) justification involves pardon, remission of punishment, treating the sinner as if he had never sinned; (2) justification is made possible through the merits of Christ's righteousness; (3) justification requires faith in Christ; (4) justification is not possible through works.

Why is this divine act of justification so important? *Simply because there is no other way of salvation!* Every person who enters the kingdom will be there because God

chose to treat him as though he had never sinned. And this amazing grace is available because of One who actually never sinned.

The following comment enriches our understanding of this experience: "Not just any sinner is justified; only the sinner who accepts and responds by exercising faith can claim justification. In doing this he turns his back on his evil past and opens his life to the leading of the Spirit. By this act of faith, of self-committal and self-abandonment, he is changed thoroughly. He is a new man in Christ Jesus. He is not righteous in the sense that he has matured into a righteous person . . . ; but he is righteous in the sense that his whole attitude, his whole mind and will, have moved away from self as the center of his attention to God."³

The experience of justification is sometimes spoken of as righteousness that is "imputed." This is righteousness—or "rightness," as the word really means—that we don't deserve. It is credited to us as a gift. This transaction involves forgiveness for past sins and present acceptance as if we were not sinners. Of all truths that we are commissioned to preach, this is the most exciting, the most dramatic. This is salvation at its most thrilling level! Here is the point at which God's rescue mission becomes breathtaking. It was because of this miracle that a persecutor named Saul became a forgiven, transformed Christian in one short moment. Here is the key to success in evangelism—not merely persuading people to go to church on Sabbath and give up their bad habits, but introducing people to a Saviour who can transform them from sinners to saints!

This experience of righteousness freely given, or imputed, to us is the basis of the expression "righteousness by faith," which has become common usage. It is a Biblical term, for Paul speaks of "the righteousness . . . which is by faith" (Rom. 3:22). But it describes only one part of the process of salvation. "Salvation by faith" is the better term to describe salvation as a whole. Salvation is an act of God. Righteousness—both imputed and imparted—is one of the *results* of that act. So if we are referring to God's saving act, let's call it salvation. If we are referring to the new character—imputed or imparted—let's call it righteousness. Often we use these terms loosely without clearly understanding their real meaning.

Jesus also referred to the experience of

Grace is God's hand reaching down to man; faith is man's hand reaching up to God. When God's hand grasps man's uplifted one, then and then only can the rescue that we call salvation take place.

becoming a Christian as the "new birth." He made it clear that being born again is not remodeling, recycling, reconstructing, reshaping, or renovating. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). Being born again is re-creation by the power and the grace of God.

In sanctification we come to grips with the keeping function of salvation. A sinner has been forgiven and has been born into the family of God. What then? The answer is clear: "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life" (Rom. 6:22, R.S.V.).† Sanctification means to make holy. The same gracious God who justifies the repentant sinner and accepts him as His child continues His work in his behalf. Paul declared, "And so I am sure that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished on the Day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6, T.E.V.).

Paul described how this process of sanctification works in his letter to the Colossians: "And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard" (chap. 1:21-23, R.S.V.). It was faith that originally laid hold on God's justifying grace, and it is the continuation of that faith that makes possible the experience of sanctification. It would seem reasonable to affirm that the degree of sanctification realized is in proportion to the faith exercised. Paul comments on "how very great is his power at work in us who believe" (Eph. 1:19, T.E.V.). Faith, though a divine gift and not a human work, is exercised by man's will to make the work of grace possible, both in justification and sanctification.

This experience of sanctification is sometimes called "imparted righteousness." The picture is that of a "rightness" not earned but "imparted," provided as a gift. Salvation, someone has said, is "a ladder fastened at the top." God came down the ladder to rescue and transform us. We do not climb the ladder to discover Him.

Sanctification is also described as Christian growth or "the new life." It is consistent that new birth should be followed by new life and continued growth. "Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly—by abiding in Him—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way."⁴

Discussions about which is the more

important, justification or sanctification, are really asking the wrong question. They are like asking Which is the more important, birth or life? becoming a Christian or being a Christian? the righteousness placed to our credit that saves us, or the righteousness imparted to us that keeps us saved? All of these are indispensable components of salvation. We need to remember—and we need to urge our listeners to remember—that as birth precedes life, so justification precedes sanctification. We are not sanctified in order that someday we may be justified. We are justified first—accepted and forgiven. Then the Lord, through His Spirit, transforms us. "The Spirit has given us life; he must also control our lives" (Gal. 5:25, T.E.V.). This is not to say that God's justifying grace works only once in a person's life. Justification is a permanent phenomenon in the Christian's life. In the order of their effectiveness in Christian experience, justification precedes sanctification. But this does not mean in any way that one is more important than the other. Each is incomplete—impossible, actually—without the other.

We are well advised not to belabor these minute distinctions. They may serve theology well, but our business is not to make theologians of our congregations, but to put our people in touch with the God who, through Christ, will justify and sanctify them. Saving faith does not demand that we understand all the mysteries of salvation. Indeed, experience has proved that salvation can be forfeited in the heat of theological argument.

Glorification, the final aspect of salvation, is another way of saying "eternal life." This is the Christian's hope. In that day the Christian not only will be reunited with those he loves but will also realize his fondest hopes for complete maturity and perfect love. "I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ saved me for and wants me to be" (Phil. 3:12, T.L.B.).‡

Ellen White presents a striking description of the second coming of Jesus in *The Great Controversy*. God's people find themselves in the presence of their Lord, and they cry with trembling, "Who shall be able to stand?" In His presence, their attitude is not one of self-assurance of confidence, but a humble realization of their own frail humanity. The answer does not come immediately. The angel's song is

hushed, and there is a period of awful silence. Finally the tension is broken by the voice of God saying, "My grace is sufficient for you." Even on the threshold of the eternal kingdom, salvation is by grace—unmerited favor. Not one of the redeemed "deserves" eternal life. No one has "earned" a place in the world made new. The divine message of the sufficiency of grace makes a difference in the waiting throng. The faces of the righteous light up, and joy fills every heart (see p. 641). This is the harvest, the climax of the plan of salvation. Redemption begins, and ends, with grace!

Do we, who preach to others, know from personal experience the meaning of grace, faith, justification, and sanctification? Is glorification a living hope to us? Has the Master found us "while we were yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8) and given us the assurance of sins forgiven? Does our Lord shape our lives daily through His Spirit—sometimes by sunshine, sometimes by surgery? Do we respond to His love and grace, and do we follow the guidance of His Spirit?

Religion, says James S. Stewart, is "not a vague abstraction, but a wonderful affection; not a tiresome argument, but a tremendous friendship; not an intricate and uninspired philosophy, but an inspired and thrilling love; not a drudgery at the grindstone of a dingy routine morality, but 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.'"⁵

Whether our people will grow in their knowledge of Christ as a Saviour depends largely on us and on our own growth in grace. To experience and communicate this good news is our most urgent responsibility and our greatest privilege.

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¹ John A. Redhead, *Learning to Have Faith* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955), p. 101.

² *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 389.

³ Sakae Kubo, *Acquitted!* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1975), p. 13.

⁴ *Steps to Christ*, p. 69.

⁵ James S. Stewart, *The Gates of a New Life* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic Press, 1976), p. 126.

Discussions about which is the more important, justification or sanctification, are really asking the wrong question. They are like asking, Which is the more important, birth or life?

How many times I've heard it said, "The church pastor is the most important person in our organization!" But sad to say, I've also heard it said of a president or departmental leader who has not been reelected, "Oh, isn't it sad? Pastor _____ has been dropped." (It's sadder still when the dropped pastor weeps at his "demotion.") I've also heard it stated, "We must find a place for Pastor _____." As if an appointment to a church pastorate wasn't a place! In such an atmosphere, can we blame the local pastor for becoming cynical when he sees a power struggle in the church, a ladder with rungs of promotion and demotion?

There is no grander, more exhilarating work than personally sharing God's grace with desperate, hurting people, to see them healed, to see them laugh again. Every minister, whether church pastor, administrator, or departmental director, should view this as his lifework. A departmental leader today, a church pastor tomorrow? That's not demotion; that's promotion! We need to give this philosophy more than lip service. We must really believe it.

The church pastor has an awesome role, but it's a role that by the grace of God he can fulfill when motivated by the Holy Spirit. The immensity of the task, however, demands that the pastor get his priorities straight. If he fails to do this, he will fail to see the importance of his work as a church pastor and come to believe that it is indeed more desirable to fill some other position. If the church pastorate is really the most important, most responsible, ministry possible in God's church, we need to keep this fact in mind and be sure that we conduct our ministry in such a way that we sustain the high nature of our calling. How can we do this?

After thirty-six years of ministry, I prayerfully submit the following suggestions from the school of hard knocks. Some of the blows I received in that school nearly put me out for the "count out." Often in ignorance or stupidity I blotted the record. But through it all God loved, forgave, and led. Here are my suggestions for maintaining the pastorate as the most important calling in God's church:

1. *Read daily the positive affirmations of God's Word.* "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). There is nothing worse than a pessimistic pastor. Pastor Robert Hare, pioneer Adventist preacher, prayed, "Take away my misty-optic and give me an opti-mistic!"

2. *Pray to your Heavenly Father as a friend.* Here is no room for formality. Know as you pray that when you need God, He is

Having served both as a pastor and a conference president, here is one individual who still sees pastoral work as the highest form of ministry within the church. When a departmental leader becomes a church pastor, we should view it, suggests the author, not as a demotion, but as a promotion!

Keeping the pastor number one

near. When we look for God, He is there. And wherever we may go, God can always be found.

3. *Develop your expertise.* Never be satisfied with past achievements. Constantly brush up your preaching style. Seek the advice of specialists on speech training, sermon preparation, et cetera. A classic inspiring sermon is remembered longer. It's not a shameful thing to be a professional.

4. *Beware of the ego trip.* Know that God can do without you, but that He doesn't want to.

The pastor on an ego trip loves his wife, but neglects her; loves his children, but hasn't time to play with them; loves his work, but doesn't know the meaning of relaxation. Possibly the greatest danger facing a minister is right here. He consoles himself that he is doing God's work, therefore his wife and children will understand. But it just doesn't work that way. It's an ego trip. The compassionate pastor who relates to his members, the discerning pastor who is alert to the youth of his congregation, the pastor who can talk about the joys of married love, is the pastor who knows from his own experience, from the security and love of his own home and family, what compassion, spiritual discernment, and quality of life are all about.

Sometimes it's more important to spend time with your family than to share your faith with others. The faith you share will

be diminished if it's not illuminated by constant family dialogue. Plan for holidays—a day each week or two—as well as vacations, and let nothing cancel these family appointments. Sure, there will be occasions when you just can't take this time, but if your priorities are straight, they will be few and far between.

5. *Take time for culture.* Those who truly love God become sensitive and aware of the beauty that surrounds us—the beauty of nature, of music, of art, of the fabric of history. There's much to explore, to discover, and make your own. My father taught me to look at a tree for an hour and still find beauty there.

6. *Relate to people everywhere.* Appreciate their point of view. Take an interest in their hopes and aspirations. Find common ground for discussion. Your pursuit of culture will help you here. The inverted Seventh-day Adventist social circle can be very limiting. And yet the genuine Seventh-day Adventist Christian will be a person of charm and quiet dignity and of fun and laughter, too.

7. *Remember that a one-to-one relationship is often more meaningful than mass encounters.* Nowhere is this more apparent than in working for youth. Follow Christ's example here. Suffer the children to come. Visit them in their homes. A pastor knocked on my door once. I greeted him with enthusiasm. He responded, "I haven't come to see you, I've come to see

K. H. Mead, prior to his retirement in 1979, served as president of the Tasmanian Conference in Australia.

your daughter." He was a very busy pastor. He conducted a baptismal class at the school. My daughter studied with the group, but this man gave individual studies to everyone in his class. I also happened to know that this concern and thoroughness carried over into other aspects of his ministry.

8. *Beware of being exclusive.* Early in my ministry I was taught a valuable lesson: Don't exclude the man of the house. "What if he throws me out?" I asked the mission leader. "The men seldom do," he responded. In fact, they never did, and many an "enemy" became a friend. If you are asked to study the Bible with a married woman, always, *always*, look up the man of the house. If he's way out in the backyard digging in the vegetable patch, go out of your way to say Hello. Discover his interests and relate as a friend.

9. *Don't take yourself too seriously.* A smile is far better than a frown, even if the laugh is on you. Easier said than done? Give it a try anyhow.

On the same theme, don't just play a role. Your calling is high, but your ordination doesn't make you any more important than anyone else, only a greater debtor. Don't stand on your dignity and demand attention because of your position. There is no need to confess your sins publicly, but on the other hand, it doesn't hurt a bit for people to see you as an ordinary person with the same fears, weaknesses, and doubts that assail all mankind. And if you're in the wrong, admit it. It will build you up, not tear you down. People will seek you out for advice and help if they sense you are a genuine, loving Christian.

I believe in the great truths that have made this church of the Advent a distinct and forceful movement. But never forget 1 Corinthians 13. Our people are desperate for the knowledge that God loves and forgives and gives to us all peace and happiness if we will only let Him. God's genuine servants will demonstrate this power by the conviction of their preaching and the practice of their daily life—not because they are perfect, but simply because they are genuine and sincere Christians.

10. *Forsake all to follow Him.* We need to remind ourselves daily of the total dedication of the disciples who left everything for their Master. It sometimes appears to our lay brethren that we are more interested in building houses here than preparing for mansions in heaven. What if we can't make ends meet on our budget? What if things are really rough? If this is our situation, there may be many factors, but perhaps we ought to take another look and rethink our priorities. Ours is a commitment, a giving, a life of sacrifice and service.

Ours is not just a job. It's a way of life. And in that role you, as a church pastor, are number one.

Roger L. Dudley, Des Cummings, Jr.,
and Kim White

A recent survey conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry reveals that there are both pluses and minuses to the church's internship training program. Based on responses from 124 interns and 89 supervisors, the survey indicates that the greatest weakness of the internship program seems to be the lack of experiences in which the supervisory pastor models ministerial behaviors for the intern.

Interns and supervisors view each other

The leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned with its total ministerial education program. This training program consists of several stages: (1) undergraduate college, (2) the internship or "fifth year," (3) seminary, and (4) postseminary training and experience prior to ordination. Research conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry (ICM) at Andrews University attempted to evaluate the second stage, the internship, which consists of a year or more of practical ministry in a supervised setting. The supervisors are pastors of experience who are expected to give practical guidance to the young ministerial candidate.

Roger L. Dudley, Ed.D., is the associate director and Des Cummings, Jr., is the director of the Institute of Church Ministry. Kim White is a Seminary student who assisted in the study.

The study

Two surveys were constructed to obtain data for this study—"Internship Assessment: The Intern" and "Internship Assessment: The Supervising Pastor." Each survey contained items concerning the number and type of activities engaged in during the internship, as well as attitudes toward the experience. Each survey also contained one open-ended question that allowed the respondent to give comments on his experience and/or suggestions for improving the internship program.

This study used as its primary sample all conference-sponsored students who were enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at the Theological Seminary and in residence on campus during the 1982 winter quarter. There were 158 such students. A secondary sample consisted of the pastors who served as these students' supervisors during their internship experience.

Although 153 of the students responded

(a 97 percent response rate), it was discovered that 29 of them had not served an internship. The information supplied by the remaining 124 students forms the basis for the view of the internship from the perspective of the intern.

Only 103 supervising pastors could be identified. Of these, 96 returned surveys, a 93 percent response rate. Seven of these were discarded because of incomplete information or lateness of return, leaving eighty-nine usable questionnaires. These form the basis for the view of the intern from the perspective of the supervising pastor.

The full twenty-page report with six detailed profiles and charts is available from ICM.* The following is a summary of the major findings.

The perspective of the intern

On the average, interns engage in typical ministerial tasks: preaching, giving Bible studies, visiting homes, committee work, church schools, and youth ministries. The profile presents the picture of an active pastor-in-learning.

Nevertheless, there do seem to be some gaps in the pattern of activities. For example, 47 percent of the interns had either limited or no experience in working with an evangelistic series, and 69 percent had never preached an evangelistic sermon. This appears to be a weak area.

A second weak area is in lay training. Only 27 percent taught witnessing courses to members fairly often or regularly, and only 20 percent participated on the same basis in taking lay members with them for in-field training.

The most obvious deficiency in the internship program, however, is the lack of direct teaching being done by the supervising pastor. Most pastors did hold staff meetings with their interns at least occasionally (half of them weekly). But 49 percent spent two hours or less per week with their protégés. This is hardly enough time for the effective development of a minister.

This deficiency is highlighted in the section that details activities modeled by the supervising pastor. In general, pastors did not do a great deal of *showing* interns how to perform successfully certain tasks vital to the ministry. In 43 percent of the cases the pastor never demonstrated giving a Bible study, and in 32 percent more of the cases, he did so only occasionally. Combining "not at all" and "occasionally," it was found that in 70 percent of the cases hospital calls were not modeled. In 66 percent, the pastor did not demonstrate how to appeal for a decision, and in another 23 percent, did so only occasionally. Only 14 percent of the interns witnessed their supervising pastor getting decisions on a regular basis.

The reverse of the learning situation calls for the pastor to observe the intern performing certain tasks and then offer

helpful critiques. This too is a weak area. For example, 24 percent of the pastors never heard their interns preach a sermon. Also, 93 percent did not critique the conducting of a Bible study by the intern at all or did so only occasionally. In a similar fashion, 92 percent did not participate to any significant extent in observing and critiquing the intern while he was appealing for a decision.

Most of the students felt that the internship was quite a valuable learning experience, but it appears that most learning had to be done on their own on a trial-and-error basis. Perhaps this is why the students tended to be somewhat neutral in assessing the competence of their instructors.

The open-ended question supported this analysis. While the most often listed comment was positive, most of the other comments focused on the lack of professional guidance in education for ministry. In giving suggestions, thirty-three interns commented that supervisors should spend more time with interns modeling and training in all aspects of pastoral ministry.

The perspective of the supervising pastor

Some differences in emphasis are to be expected between the profiles of the interns and the pastors when it is recalled that only eighty-nine of the pastors who supervised the 124 interns are represented in the profile.

Nevertheless, the two groups seemed to agree in general on the nature of the internship activities. The pastors saw assisting in evangelistic meetings, preaching in evangelistic meetings, teaching witnessing courses to members, and taking along lay members for in-field training as areas in which they have not frequently assigned interns to a learning experience.

There is a tendency for the pastors to remember assigning more positive activities than the interns remember having been assigned to them. On the negative side this shows up as 30 percent of the interns performing "general flunky" duties fairly often or regularly, but only 13 percent of the pastors assigning them that often.

In the area of professional guidance in education for ministry, there are some interesting comparisons. While 50 percent of the interns reported weekly staff meetings and 16 percent monthly ones, the

corresponding figures for the pastors were 67 percent and 23 percent. However, the pastors reported even fewer hours in supervision each week than did the interns.

The pastors agreed with the interns that they did not supply much opportunity to learn from observing. Occasional modeling or none at all was reported by 67 percent of the pastors for conducting Bible studies, 60 percent for hospital calls, 48 percent for making home visits, and 61 percent for making appeals for decisions. While these figures were lower than those reported by the interns, they were in the same general direction.

Perhaps no learning experience is more valuable than having the pastor observe the intern in a pastoral task and then critiquing him. Only 6 percent reported that they never did this with preaching a sermon (the figure given by interns was 24 percent). But 88 percent admit that they did not critique the giving of a Bible study at all or only occasionally (93 percent given by interns), and 84 percent did not participate to any significant extent in observing and critiquing the intern while he was appealing for a decision (92 percent given by interns).

This theme is borne out by the open-ended question in which fifteen pastors suggested that more opportunity for supervision, modeling, and reflection on progress should be incorporated into the program. Another eleven called for more training and guidelines for supervisors.

The major weakness of the internship program seems to be the lack of experiences in which the supervisory pastor models ministerial behaviors for the intern and in which the pastor observes and critiques ministerial behaviors performed by the intern. This is particularly true in regard to conducting Bible studies and making appeals for decisions.

Other weaknesses in the program revolve around the limited experience of interns in evangelistic meetings and in the training of lay members, especially by working with them in in-field ministry.

As the church reorganizes its program for educating ministers, it should also find better methods of screening and training the pastors who will supervise its interns.

* Write the Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104 and enclose \$4 for duplicating, postage, and handling.

Most of the 124 students felt that the internship was quite a valuable learning experience, but it appears that most learning had to be done on their own on a trial-and-error basis.

Skeptics declare that it is impossible to gain and hold a large crowd for a series of meetings in a modern Western city. The recent successes in Sydney, Australia, prove that it is possible!

Reaching a city for Christ

Westerners are leaving Christianity at the rate of 7,600 a day. The great cities of the Western world are fast becoming barricaded bastions of religious indifference and secured strongholds of materialistic secularism. Thus it is little wonder that simple, direct evangelistic methods that worked thirty years ago are not working effectively today. Perhaps our failure to keep pace with changing thought patterns is a basic reason why Adventist Church growth in the West has slowed almost to zero.

Paul Hogan is an Australian entertainer whose television program, *Hoges*, attracts an audience two hundred times greater than major religious programs such as, *Hour of Power* and *The Rex Humbard Show*. The ratings indicate that Hogan is much more popular than gospel presenters, who find it impossible to get on prime time. Hogan seems to score his most stunning successes when he pokes fun at organized religion, which he portrays as being quite unnecessary and irrelevant to the secular materialist. Today, in the minds of millions, the Bible is an antiquated collection of pious myths whose ludicrous account of origins has been debunked by the scientific method. Yet Adventists too often continue to fight the good fight of faith in rusty armor that was designed for the era of faith, when in fact we are living in a time of militant skepticism. Atheism worldwide is on the march. In 1900 atheists numbered 0.2 percent of the world population; now they number 20.8 percent.

Our problem of communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to secular society is compounded by our retreat to our own denominational "cities of refuge." In Adventist institutions a particular brand of language is used that further isolates us from the world. We talk about "the message," "righteousness by faith," "the

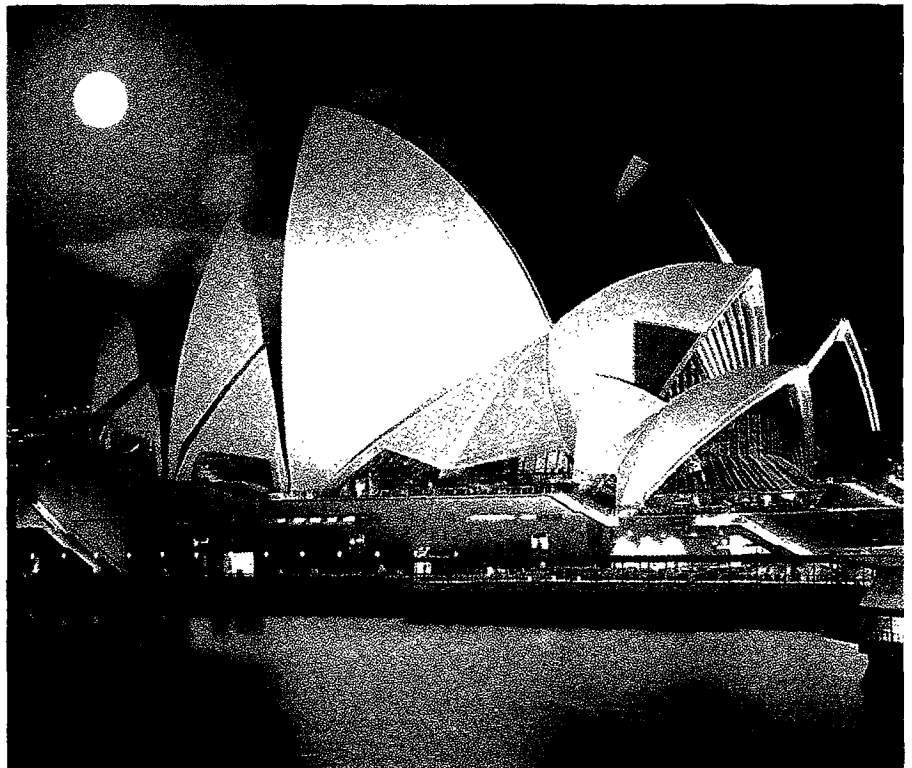
Spirit of Prophecy," "the remnant church," "the servant of the Lord," "the third angel's message," et cetera. We who live in this rarified atmosphere of denominational insulation may find it increasingly difficult to talk to the man on the street in a way that is understandable, acceptable, and persuasive. Therefore, it is imperative that we discover the means of reaching people where they are or, to put it another way, to scratch where they are itching. The following represents an attempt to communicate the Word of God to a secure, sophisticated, and secularized society—people for whom Jesus died.

Getting a crowd

There is little point in preaching a soul-stirring gospel sermon to a theater of

empty seats. Our first task as Christian communicators is simple, fundamental, and formidable—to get a crowd. *Big crowds will not come to hear the gospel preached in most Western cities that today represent our biggest mission field.* In Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, certainly; but not in Sydney, Australia. I have had 110,000 attend my 21 successive night series in Port Moresby, but I know from experience that to have a gospel sermon as the opening address in Sydney or Melbourne is as successful as the launching of a lead balloon. One famous American evangelist had an opening audience of thirty thousand in Sydney, but only with the help of hundreds of buses carrying the converted from churches up to four hundred miles away. Unfortunately, very few of the unchurched attended. This

The Sydney Opera House, where Evangelist John J. Carter preached to seventeen thousand people on the opening night of his crusade.



John J. Carter, an evangelist in the Greater Sydney Conference, is engaged in a continuing crusade in the prestigious Sydney Opera House.

lack of response from the secular man is the same in most Adventist campaigns that follow the direct gospel approach.

Many Adventist administrators and laymen are reluctant to accept the actual reality of this situation. This state of affairs is a bitter pill to us who somehow feel that people should be interested in what we are interested in. Furthermore, opening an evangelistic campaign on a gospel note seems the only right and spiritual thing to do. After all, did not Jesus say, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32)? The unpalatable fact of the matter is that the secular materialist is not very interested in Jesus or His cross. A wise fisherman will use bait that is attractive to the fish rather than to the fisherman. After the man of the world has been won to an interest in the Word, then the time comes when Jesus can be uplifted before him. "There is a time for everything" (Eccl. 3:1, N.I.V.).* If our aim is genuinely to attract the growing multitude of secular materialists to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we must devise different methods.

Tutankhamen—soul winner extraordinary

A method that works well is the archeological-prophetic approach. People are actually interested in antiquity, ancient places, and the wonders of the past. Witness the crowds that formed long queues to see Tut's treasures during the recent Egyptian display in America. People are also interested in the occult, that strange world of the supernatural, which includes, of course, prophetic utterances. Combine archeology and prophecy, and you have a crowd raiser in a modern, fully Western city. This method attracted more than nine thousand people to the opening program in Melbourne, while seventeen thousand attended a similar program in Sydney. In addition, some ten thousand bookings were turned away from the opening Sydney program because of capacity houses and the unavailability of extra sessions. Had our faith been larger, we would have had at least twenty-five thousand attend this opening program!

The advantages of this evangelistic method are as follows: 1. The material presented establishes the credibility and authenticity of the Scriptures. 2. The material presented is not "churchy," and appeals to the secular man. 3. This method is in harmony with the Biblical principle that truth is progressive (Prov. 4:18). It starts with basics—"The Bible is true," "There is a God who is interested in you," et cetera—and lays a solid foundation for the saving truths of Scripture. 4. It leads easily into the great prophetic outlines of the Word. 5. It attracts great numbers of unchurched people, as well as regular churchgoers. 6. It attracts a more professional audience. In contrast, I have observed that when opening topics feature

the spirit world or even health, society's fringe dwellers and cultists tend to be attracted. 7. It ensures a good crowd. That may not be everything, but it certainly is a good start.

This crowd-getting, faith-building initial approach is followed by successive programs on archeology and prophecy that gradually become more heavily Bible-oriented. These programs include the following: 1. "My Visit to Petra." The rose-red city of human sacrifice. See and hear: "I Saw Divine Predictions Fulfilled." 2. "Wonder Cities of the Past," "Gods of Gold and Graves of Ashes" (Daniel 2). 3. "Ebla—City of the Gods." Just unearthed, one of the most sensational archeological discoveries of the twentieth century. Amazing evidence of the dependability of the Bible. 4. "The Jew, the Arab, and Jerusalem." The curse of the rabbis and the forbidden prophecy (Daniel 9). 5. "The Dead Sea Scrolls." Mr. Carter has just returned from Qumran, having explored the caves where the famous Dead Sea scrolls were found.

These meetings in turn are followed by more "religious" meetings, such as: 6. "Visitors From Other Worlds." The amazing wonders of our inhabited universe (the Second Coming). 7. "Wonderful World of Tomorrow—What and Where is Heaven?" 8. "Blood on the Moon." Special feature: "My Visit to the Lost Dead Sea Cities." 9. "When the Red Horse of Bible Prophecy Runs Wild." 10. "Who Will Suppress the Bible?"

Following lectures deal with the prophecies of Daniel 7 and 8, the Antichrist, the change of the Sabbath, justification by faith, et cetera.

Church sermon or ...?

The Sydney Opera House presentations are not churchy. We do not have hymns, choirs, or gospel singers, at least not during an extended period of settling in. We would not in our most desperate moments contemplate conducting our program in a church. To do so in some areas may work well, but not in large secular cities. Religious clichés are definitely out. The speaker is never called "pastor." We are out to win the unbeliever to Christ, so we will not put ecclesiastical hurdles in his way.

The speaker is introduced by a modern-style orchestra, the music being in keeping with church standards, and presents a

relaxed-style address called a report. During the early meetings pictures flash on a giant screen.

During the third presentation New International Version Bibles are passed out by the usherettes to each person in the hall. It is our definite conviction that the Holy Spirit works through His Word (2 Tim. 4:2). The audience is invited to notice an amazing story recorded in "an ancient Hebrew manuscript." The people accept the Bibles without reservation, and from henceforth they are a regular feature of the meetings. The programs are not religious. We believe that they are intensely Christian and appeal to believers as well as nonbelievers.

Television commercials are the backbone of the advertising campaign. They consist of thirty-second commercials that were filmed on location in the Middle East by Producer Warren Judd, of the Adventist Media Center, and feature the speaker inviting the people to have their questions answered at the program. The booth announcer urges the people to book their seats by "phoning Sydney 745-4000." Twenty-five thousand bookings were received in the first three days of the advertising campaign, which began seven days before the opening program. So heavy was the flood of incoming calls following two tightly scheduled commercials that the exchange became overloaded and blew its fuses.

Other advertising consisted of distributing 700,000 colored handbills designed by Alan Holman, of the Adventist Media Center. Newspaper ads were inserted by advertising specialist Pastor Bert Metcalfe in the large daily newspapers.

After four months of weekend and midweek meetings, the Opera House is still crowded to the doors. Opera House officials, initially skeptical concerning the whole venture, state that they have never seen such large crowds consistently attend a program.

For this remarkable response from secular, sinful, materialistic, but beautiful Sydney, the evangelistic team of laity and ministry unites in saying, "To God be the glory!"

Perhaps just such a program could work in your city.

* Texts credited to N.I.V. are from *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Copyright © 1978 by the New York International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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In October we began a series of articles emphasizing the uniqueness of the mission and message of the SDA Church. If we are a called church, then we must be cognizant of the evidence for this call.

History confirms the divine call

Does history really confirm any kind of statement about purpose in human experience?

Adventists and many other conservative Christians insist that it does. On this premise, Adventists interpret prophecy in the historicist mode, a method currently out of fashion with both the preterists of much of the scholarly world and with most futurists as well.

Can we trust our methods?

One of America's leading historians of religion, responding to questions in a plenary session of the American Academy of Religion, was asked some months ago whether he saw evidence of divine guidance in the history of the church. He denied such evidence and hastened to warn against the danger of reading one's own views into history. His answer reflects a widespread concern among scholars, many of whom endorse the philosophic rationalism of the past two centuries. On the one hand, the historian's warning is certainly an appropriate one, for there is a recurring temptation to read one's own biases into the past. But is this danger so grave that the past must stand speechless?

Whether in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or wherever man discovered the art of writing, he set the dividing point between prehistory and history. This discovery meant data could be accumulated much more efficiently, but raw data is not history. Much of the meaning of information comes from the network of relationships among facts. It can be tapped only by constructing a philosophy of history to link pieces of information having uneven

importance. All philosophies have a subjective element, so in every case history is, to a certain degree, an organizing construct.

This subjective element has troubled historians and religious thinkers for centuries, for it raises the question of whether we are not all largely self-deluded. Philosophers and scientists of the nineteenth century pursued the Holy Grail of absolute truth, unconstrained by human values and entirely coercive as authority. Today, their successors concede that such a goal is almost certainly unattainable. But curiously, much of the older methodology continues in place as though complete objectivity were still the goal. Recent philosophical studies of how ideas are molded by the process of thinking and its statement in words have dealt heavy blows to nineteenth-century objectivism.¹ Polanyi has persuasively shown that the same perspective even erodes the presumed objectivity of the scientific method.² But if we recognize and control excess subjectivity, there is much to be gained from a thorough search of the past.

Legacy of the Enlightenment

Western thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was swept by the Enlightenment, a movement that spawned a series of thinkers who attempted to reconcile patterns from the Age of Faith (of which Luther and Calvin were late stars) with the increasing body of non-Biblical information coming from expanding scientific studies. Such men as Voltaire, Rousseau, Lessing, and Paine, along with others, concluded that traditional Christianity could not be reconciled with the new discoveries. Being unwilling to dispense wholly with the idea of God, most of them

chose to consign Him to an inactive role in current human affairs.

Indeed, the Enlightenment virtually drove the supernatural and the idea of Divine Providence from human affairs. Today, the effect of that continuing legacy drains the past of meaning, reducing modern man to an existential creature of the moment, largely without meaningful heritage or hope for the future.³ But such a rationalism is foreign to the Scriptures: the Bible writers argue profoundly that the human drama is very directly the workshop of God.

Perhaps nowhere in Scripture is God's activity in human affairs more clearly presented than in apocalyptic prophecy, particularly in Daniel. Here each of the major prophetic sweeps concludes with the triumph of God's plan. In Daniel 2, the stone fills the entire world; in chapter 7, the greatness of the everlasting kingdom is given to the saints; in chapter 12, we see a people serving God and being delivered from the final cataclysm. Similar passages occur in the Revelation, often featuring the joyous shouts of triumph from redeemed saints. In short, the Bible both presumes and overtly claims human experience to be the workshop of both God and man. History indeed speaks of His purposes.

Can we say that history, defined as a secular report of human activities within an environment, tells anything about God's will regarding a specific people—the Seventh-day Adventist movement, for example? The Enlightenment tradition would secularize history, but to the Biblically oriented believer, history speaks of God's work as well as man's. In fact, the entire Biblical perspective reviews man's actions in light of God's purposes.

George W. Reid, Th.D., is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*.

While these purposes are evident, scattered throughout Scripture, they are highlighted in apocalyptic prophecy. Here we see the drama of God versus Satan reflected over and over again in the struggles of man. We watch the ebb and flow of earthbound events from the heavenly perspective. As with the study of history, it is also true that interpreting these sweeping, universal prophecies runs the hazard of reading immediate events or one's biases into the scriptural passage. Witness the litter of interpretative carcasses along the pathway of past interpretations.⁴ We do well to be cautioned by this, but it need not prevent our pursuing a method clearly outlined in Scripture, where the image of Daniel 2 is interpreted by the prophet to apply to then-current Babylon and its successors. In Daniel 8:20, 21 the ram and the goat are specifically said to represent Media-Persia and Greece. In seeking reliable understanding, it is important that our interpretation meet all the criteria demanded by the prophecy without straining to improbabilities, and also that it be faithful to the sequential time placement indicated by its location in the sweep of a prophetic view.

Let us consider how the nineteenth-century Adventist movement fits the Biblical specifications of two significant passages. We need to keep in mind that the master key to timing stems from a clear understanding of the 2300-day prophecy, pinpointing the year 1844 as its climax. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this point on the Millerite mind-set. Its effect was to confirm special significance for the Adventist movement as the religious group commissioned by Heaven to proclaim God's final message.

Philadelphian parallels

Seventh-day Adventists have long believed the message to the Philadelphian church in Revelation 3 describes the powerful evangelical revival that swept the world in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁵ In America this was called the Second Awakening. It was responsible for an almost explosive expansion of churches across the eastern half of North America, and established the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians as the leaders among American denominations. Because of its unique last-time message, the Adventist branch of this sweeping revival is especially identified with the Philadelphian message.

Following as it does the message to Sardis, reminiscent of the Reformation and its later decline into Protestant scholastic and rationalistic doldrums, the Philadelphia message is timed well to fit nineteenth-century events. Although the early Adventist movement was particularly guided by William Miller, a Baptist lay preacher, it was in fact a truly interdenominational, ecumenical movement dedicated to prophetic study and the

strong conviction of Jesus' soon return.

The prophetic features of the Philadelphia church strike the reader as starkly plain: (1) Philadelphia follows in sequence after the Reformation period (Rev. 3:1-6); (2) the Philadelphia church has little strength (verse 8); (3) it is the object of scorn from unsympathetic brethren (verse 9); (4) it faces a special hour of trial (verse 10); (5) it holds and cherishes the special promise of Christ's soon return (verse 11); (6) it carries a final note portraying the descent of the New Jerusalem (verse 12).

A historical scan of the early Adventist movement reveals a series of obvious fulfillments that could hardly have been orchestrated to create similarity. Miller's Adventist movement, in fact, arose as one of the major branches of the Second Awakening in America, and similar groups developed independently and simultaneously in other parts of the world. It is uniquely similar to the entire passage cited from Revelation 3.

The Philadelphia church's "little strength" parallels the shoestring, unorganized nature of the Adventists. In addition, they were severely criticized by other denominational groups, and by the early 1840s many Adventists were being expelled from their local congregations. Unquestionably, the disappointment of 1844, both in the spring and again on October 22, constituted a bitter experience indeed, but, paralleling verse 11, the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist movement held fast to the hope of the soon-coming Advent with its anticipated New Jerusalem. Clearly the Adventist movement moves through history in amazing step and counterstep with Revelation 3:1-12.

An additional set of parallels is evident in the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. Approaching from the historical perspective, we find an early Adventist proclamation of impending judgment, matching the introductory theme of the first angel (see chap. 14:6), followed by an appeal for believers to withdraw from other religious bodies, partly in response to their own rejection by those bodies, but also as a result of the organization of a distinctly Adventist fellowship of churches. When the Sabbath message was accepted as a special identifying sign of God's people, the mark-of-the-beast doctrine came to the forefront. There is no evidence that early Adventists were conscious of how

clearly their movement matched these prophecies until the pattern was well in place.

Certain other passages in Revelation come to mind that foretell just such experiences as those through which Seventh-day Adventists have passed. Prophecy even describes the specific content of what was preached. Revelation 10 forshadows in uncanny detail the experience of the Millerite Adventists, right down to the great disappointment of 1844 and the renewed commission, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings" (verse 11, R.S.V.).^{*} Adventists accept that assignment, fully persuaded that with its completion Jesus will return (see Matt. 24:14). Another scriptural passage identifies the familiar Adventist hallmarks "the commandments of God, and . . . the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 12:17).

In a cursory way, we have set the elements of several Biblical prophecies alongside events in the Adventist experience. The comparison yields an impressive number of ways in which the two synchronize. Such evidence fires the dynamic of Adventism, impelling the church forward into the most remote parts of the world to fulfill the prophetic task. Jesus Christ, the Author of all things and Redeemer of men, is soon to return in majesty to inaugurate His kingdom of glory. Fulfilled past prophecies give urgent voice to the present and assure the certainty of future triumph. History, indeed, offers convincing evidence that the gospel work, espoused by Seventh-day Adventists as their chief concern among all earthly enterprises, is truly the work of God.

* Scripture quotations marked R.S.V. are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

¹ Pioneered by the Vienna Circle of logical positivists, but including also such thinkers as Ayres. For a very useful survey of philosophical development, see Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1969).

² Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1958).

³ Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live?* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revel, 1976). See also the film series based on this book.

⁴ L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4 volumes (Washington: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946-1954).

⁵ E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950. pp. 355-374.

In a cursory way, we have set the elements of several Biblical prophecies alongside events in the Adventist experience. The comparison yields an impressive number of ways in which the two synchronize.

Our world is full of fear, and many are tortured and tormented by a nameless dread. They need wise and understanding counselors, people who know the inner meaning of comfort.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem

Christianity came into the world at a time when philosophy and reason reigned supreme. The religions of the Greeks and Romans were little more than a hotbed of controversy. The universal argument even in the marketplace was love and peace, but there was little love and less peace. It was in many ways a restless, loveless world. Comfort was something almost unknown except for the wealthy, who alone could afford the conveniences that made comfort possible.

Then one day a man named Jesus stepped into this jungle of ideas and debate. He challenged every concept of mere human wisdom. He dwelt among men as the greatest teacher the world has ever known. But he did more than teach; He lived His message. He did not argue with the philosophers; He just loved them. He also loved the poor and the outcasts.

He was God in the flesh. Men either hated Him violently or loved Him passionately. Some called Him an imposter, a blasphemer, a devil-possessed madman, but others knew that He was the Son of the Living God. To those who hung upon His words He said "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:28, 29).

It was soul rest He came to give. Those who heeded His counsel and were later baptized by His Spirit turned the world upside down. He gave life a new dimension. And just before He left to go back to His Father—the great God of the uni-

verse—He said, "I go unto my Father" (John 16:10), yet "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). And again, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:26, 27).

His teaching, full of comfort and compassion, set in motion the influences that built the Christian church. It brought a new understanding between men and nations, and wherever His gospel has gone the results are overwhelming. Love and peace, which the pre-Christian world discussed philosophically, became a tremendous reality in the lives of all who accepted the teachings of our Lord.

In this tension torn world of today we, too, need a ministry of comfort. Our world is full of fear, and many are tortured and tormented by a nameless dread. They are unable to analyze their problems. Conquered by an inner tyranny, they have no security. They long for someone to uncover their hidden complexes and set them free. They need wise and understanding counselors, people who know the inner meaning of comfort.

One of the prophetic titles of Christ is "Wonderful, Counselor." How gloriously He fulfilled that prediction! True, He was the "mighty God," whose word controlled the winds and the waves, and in whose hands the bread was multiplied to feed the hungry thousands, but He was more often the Counselor, calmly talking to a single soul, unraveling the tangled skein of life and setting him free. A wonderful Counselor indeed! He had compassion on the ignorant and on them that were out of the way. And compassion is the basis of all true morality.

People suffer from all kinds of complexes. Unable to understand themselves, many otherwise good people are often spiritually abnormal and maladjusted. They need someone to extricate them from the contradiction of their own natures. And when they find someone who can understand them, they are drawn to him as to a magnet. That is why the people flocked to Jesus. He understood them. He took time to study their needs. He was a Friend to the friendless. He had a simple but wonderful technique for helping the afflicted and oppressed.

Jesus set men free

"The afflicted ones who came to Him felt that He linked His interest with theirs as a faithful and tender friend, and they desired to know more of the truths He taught. Heaven was brought near. They longed to abide in His presence, that the comfort of His love might be with them continually."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 254, 255. It was His friendly sympathy that won their hearts and lifted their spirits. "In leading souls to Jesus, there must be a knowledge of human nature and a study of the human mind," says Ellen White.—*Review and Herald*, October 10, 1882.

This knowledge of human nature, together with the knowledge of God, is the greatest knowledge known to man. Much more training and infinitely more ability is required to understand a mind than to read a balance sheet. Of the Master it was said, "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John 2:24, 25). Moffatt's translation reads, "He knew all men, and required no evidence from anyone about human nature; well did He know what was in human nature."

Jesus came as a fresh revelation of incomparable moral power. He came to recreate men mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. "I am come that

Roy Allan Anderson was for many years editor of *MINISTRY* and secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association. This article is adapted from his book, *The Shepherd Evangelist*, now out of print. Used by permission.

they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He said (John 10:10). In His ministry life touched life, flame kindled flame. Yet He was not a personality that overpowered people. "His word was with power," but His power was that which lifted man. It raised them from the dust of discouragement, disillusionment, disease, and even death. When He moved among the multitude, He was "full of grace and truth." He spoke words of grace and knew how to speak them graciously. "All . . . wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22).

Grace is more than a duty done. It is a way of doing duty. Gracefulness can be cultivated. But graciousness is the unrestrained expression of a self-forgetful soul. Jesus was not cloistered in some inaccessible place; He moved among the people; all kinds of people—churchmen and outcasts alike. "Friend of publicans and sinners," they styled Him. And that was true, for He was their Friend.

He came to set men free from their narrow, restricted ways of thinking. And as His ambassadors, we are to follow in His steps. The Pharisees were a very particular group. Forms and ceremonies, traditions and codes, what they ate and how they washed, constituted a large part of their religion. How revolutionary it must have sounded when Jesus said, "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man" (Mark 7:15). He was not, however, giving men a license to eat and drink anything and everything. He Himself refused a palliative drug when dying on the cross. But He was emphasizing that a man is defiled more by what he thinks and says than by what he eats and drinks.

Mind's influence over body

The mind has a greater influence on the body than many realize. Not only right combinations of food, but right combinations of thought, are part of true health reform. *You Are What You Eat* is the title of a book on the subject of diet, and that is right as far as it goes. But the Scripture says, "As he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7). People do the things they do because they think the things they think.

Millions today belong to a generation that has virtually turned its back to God. Many are in the grip of fear, tortured and tormented by their own thoughts. Having either lost God out of their lives or not knowing Him, they now know not where to turn for security.

One writer puts the case very clearly when he says: "Only the 'initiated' can understand the nameless fears, the ghosts, and goblins that look into the windows of minds so distressed. They may be imaginary and we may laugh at them later, but they are real enough while they last."

Then he illustrates the point by the story of an old man who, suddenly discovering himself in a cemetery one night and making a headlong exit, fell over tombstones and scratched himself badly among the briars and bushes. Next day, someone hearing his story, smiled and said, "Don't you know ghosts can't hurt you?"

"I know that, but they can make you hurt yourself."

All need guidance

It is not the *real* problem, but the *apparent* problem, that most frequently distresses these unfortunate souls. To scold people, or even worse, to ridicule them for their imaginary fears, does not solve the problem. What they need is some kind, sympathetic soul wise enough and kind enough to help them analyze their problem, one who is patient enough to help them lay a new foundation on which to erect a temple of peace. Such a counselor and comforter must be spiritually healthy, intellectually sound, physically fit, and socially faultless.

But the nerve-racked and the physically broken are not the only ones who need such counsel. Our youth also need guidance. The three most important decisions in a young person's life are to decide for or against God, to decide his vocation, and to decide who is to be his life companion. These discoveries are not easy. And the last is not the least important. We set them in this order because they usually follow this sequence. Youthful navigators are not always aware of the treacherous seas through which they are sailing. They need a pilot, someone to guide them, some kind soul who can help them make these adjustments in life. Every church needs a clinic for vocational and social counsel. And such counsel should be accessible, capable, reliable, and reasonable. The pastor may not be qualified to meet all these requirements, but he should be sufficiently acquainted with the problems to know where to secure the help his people need.

Then there are the aged who need guidance. With technological changes occurring so rapidly, it is hard for older people to keep abreast of new developments. Then, too, many have not had the educational advantages of the younger generation. Another cause for maladjustment is the rapid transition from an agrarian to an industrialized society. Many

people, older ones in particular, began life in a rural area. But today they find themselves in an urban area, an environment quite different from that of their former training and experience. At the very time when science has made it possible for more people to grow old, changes in the basic patterns of our culture are bringing greater hardship to the aged.

Many lonely souls have lost their life companions. Now the future holds little interest for them. They listen for the voices now silent, and in the stillness of the night their prayers ascend to God for help and comfort.

As His ambassadors, we should deal kindly with the aged, the lonely, and the sad. These defeated personalities, tormented by tensions and conflicts, need to know the abiding presence of God. They need our special care. But often those who are in most need of love and sympathy receive the least. Maybe it is because the neediest are frequently so situated that they can contribute the least. So the natural outcome is that they are neglected. But the privilege of the pastor is to help these unfortunate souls to become a part of the fellowship of service.

Ten suggestions for counselors

1. *Never appear impatient.* Jesus was busy, but never too busy to talk to a troubled soul. Although it is wise to budget your time, souls are more precious than time. It is better to save a life than to save a minute. How many sensitive souls have been crushed by the fussy and fidgety attitude of the one to whom they have come for counsel! To be looking at your watch every minute or two while talking to a troubled soul is unpardonable. The Master, who could stay all day with a needy soul and all night with a ruler of the synagogue, was the one who said, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? The Scripture says, 'He that believeth shall not make haste.'"

2. *Be sympathetic.* Troubled souls need sympathy—sympathetic ears as well as sympathetic speech. And sometimes all that is needed is a sympathetic audience. "You will never know how much you have helped me," said an afflicted soul at the close of a three-hour interview. Yet all I did was to listen sympathetically. I scarcely uttered a word, but it was evident the yoke had been made easy and the burden light. It was the Saviour's sympathy that gave

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Him access to hearts. In *Testimonies*, Volume 9, p. 30, we read, "The true heart expression of Christlike sympathy, given in simplicity, has power to open the door of hearts that need the simple, delicate touch of the spirit of Christ."

Deep sorrow came to a Christian home one night—a little girl less than two years old passed away. Next morning, the older sister, then about six, ran to her Sabbath school teacher, who lived not far away, and through her tears she said, "Oh, teacher, something dreadful happened last night—little sister died. And I came here so you could cry with me." She knew where to go for real comfort and sympathy. It is a wonderful gift to be able to weep with those who weep.

3. *Be a good listener.* Listening is an art every counselor must cultivate. It seems easier for some pastors to preach than to listen because preaching is preacher-centered whereas listening is parishioner-centered. Patience, courage, and confidence are required to be a good listener. "One of the greatest values of a counselor is that he knows enough to keep silence," so wrote a friend the other day. And he is right. A counselor needs to be at home with silence.

The art of real counseling is the ability to ask the right questions at the right time and in the right way. But the only reason for asking questions is to get the answers. The answer may give you the clue to the problem. "I did nothing but listen," replied one who was surprised at the reversal of attitude on the part of the one he was trying to help. Not only was that the best thing to do; it was the *only* thing to do. Training oneself to listen creatively is vital to success.

To be able to listen passively (in silence), then actively (by wise questioning), then interpretatively (by explaining underlying causes), one is able to give the reassurance so needed in the time of trouble.

4. *Be observant.* Watch for indications. The clue to the whole problem might be revealed in some little act or attitude. Knowing how to penetrate the heart is a science, but a science worth studying. "Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenance of His hearers"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 255. He studied and could always put His finger on the determining factor. Remember, in dealing with people, that the only reliable law in human nature is that there is no reliable law. So be ready for anything.

5. *Be big-hearted.* Remember that all troubles are big to those concerned. Don't minimize the problem and set it aside as of little consequence. It is right to analyze it and help the troubled soul to see it in the right light, but to exhibit a superior air and give the impression that the whole thing is insignificant is to fail. Had it not been big to him, he would never have brought it to the pastor. An attitude of indifference only

wounds and sets up a barrier. And a kind counselor will give the impression that, for the moment at least, it is the most important and critical thing in the world. He will never indicate by act or even a glance that it is beneath his notice. Jesus declared that our heavenly Father is interested even in the funeral of a sparrow.

6. *Never appear shocked.* No matter how strange and bewildering the situation, never give the impression that it is particularly unusual. Human nature will act in strange ways at times, but a counselor can afford to be blind to some things. Hanging on the wall of my study is a picture drawn by my artist brother before he lost his life serving his country. He pictured a little girl cuddling a broken doll in childish affection. It's a poor wreck of a doll—no hair, only one leg and half of one arm. But it nevertheless holds a big place in her heart. Underneath are the significant words, "Love Is Blind." How true!

7. *Show readiness to share the trouble.* Remember, unshared troubles sap the soul. David said, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old" (Ps. 32:3). How often it is that when one begins to explain his difficulties he actually explains them away. Sharing them makes them transparent. Haunting fears vanish when one tries to put them into words. Their very vagueness is their strength. Because they are ill defined, they appear terrible. But they are often destroyed when they are shared.

8. *Never break a confidence.* Nothing is more distressing than one who cannot keep a confidence. There may be times when information should be shared with others. But never divulge a confidence without *first obtaining permission.*

"Now, what am I to do with this incriminating information?" I said after one woman finished unburdening her heart.

"Oh, don't say a word," she said.

"But if I keep silence, the problem will never be solved," I replied.

"Oh, please keep my confidence. Don't let anybody know," was the plea of her soul.

"I gave you my word," I said, "and you can hold me to that promise as long as you like. But this information I should share if we ever expect to help the situation." Then I made a suggestion. "We shall pray over the matter now," I said, "and I will leave it with you to tell me when I can release it."

Both of us prayed. Next day she was back and said, "I have been praying over the matter, and I see it all now just as you do. You can use the information where and how you feel you need to."

I did. That information saved a double tragedy. But until I had permission to open up the story, my duty was to guard her confidence. The ability to keep a confidence inspires confidence.

9. *See beyond the present problem.* The true shepherd-counselor sees a person not in his present state, but as he can be under the grace of God. He sees in the one who comes to him not a downtrodden, discouraged, sin-smitten soul, but rather one that can, under the impact of divine grace, become a saint of God; and as a true physician, he begins to apply the balm of Gilead to the wounded heart. "In every human being, however fallen, He beheld a son of God, one who might be restored to the privilege of his divine relationship. . . . In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in 'the beauty of the Lord our God.' Psalm 90:17. Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust. Revealing in Himself man's true ideal, He awakened, for its attainment, both desire and faith." *Education*, pp. 79, 80.

10. *Recognize the dignity of human personality.* While sensing the gravity of the problem or even the apparent hopelessness of a situation, be sure never to imply by word or even the tone of voice that the individual is beyond hope. One of the great secrets of the Saviour's success was His ability to inspire hope in the downcast and the sin-laden. No matter how far sunken one may be in sin and debauchery, the counselor must determine to inspire confidence. Of the Saviour's work we read an amazing and a revealing statement: "In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they were still men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard." The Spirit of God can awaken in hearts that seem dead to all holy influences the desire to reach out for a new life. We must study how to inspire confidence in oneself and especially in the living God.

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Jesus was busy, but never too busy to talk to a troubled soul. Although it is wise to budget your time, souls are more precious than time. It is better to save a life than to save a minute.

Prayer: the greatest evangelistic agency

By now everyone knows that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has committed itself to 1,000 Days of Reaping. But everyone may not realize that 1,000 days of reaping demands a thousand days and nights of prayer on the part of each of us.

Prayer is the most effective evangelistic agency we have. Prayer changes people and circumstances. It changes not only the one prayed for but the one praying as well. And it opens the way for God Himself to do things He would not otherwise do. "It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 525.

Revival and prayer have always been inseparably linked together. A lack of prayer has always resulted in a lack of power. If spiritual activity is to be redemptive and produce lasting results to the glory of our Lord, it must be an outgrowth of prayer, not a competing activity that stifles prayer. "As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. . . . Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 362.

Prayer is our connection with God's omnipotent power. God has promised, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). The "land" is composed of nations, families, churches and individuals. Here, then, is a promise of healing for families who will pray and seek His will. How much the world and the church and each of us individually need the healing touch of God!

"Lord, teach us to pray," was the response of the first-century disciples when they witnessed the Saviour's prayer life. But it must also be a need that twentieth-century disciples feel keenly as well. The fact that those first disciples were not ashamed to ask for help in prayer makes it easier for us to ask.

During a recent visit to Australia I heard enthusiastic church members tell of help that had come to them through dedicating an hour a day to prayer. More than one testified that an hour of private or family prayer had become a delightful and rewarding reality in their lives as the result of devoting small segments of time, approximately five minutes, to such areas as praise, waiting, confession, Bible study,

watching, intercession, petition, thanksgiving, singing, meditation, and listening.

A devotional hour of prayer and Bible study could be the most glorious discovery in the life of many a believer. Even ten minutes a day dedicated to prayer would be a giant stride for many! If you could have seen the enthusiasm of our Australian believers who had discovered the joy of a satisfying prayer experience, you would be motivated to find what they had found. You cannot obtain this "secret" by writing to the General Conference or to *MINISTRY* for further details or information. It is a matter of "taste and see."

Besides personal, private prayer, the 1,000 Days of Reaping must be bathed in corporate prayer. In churches, brothers and sisters in Jesus need to pray together for themselves and for souls. In every institution where Adventists work together it would be good to meet together in groups of two or three each working day during the 1,000 Days of Reaping for ten minutes of intercessory prayer.

Both public and personal evangelism are strengthened by intercessory prayer. Prayer is the cutting edge of evangelism, its most valuable asset. While Spurgeon preached and invited men and women to accept the Saviour, a hundred of his members interceded in prayer with God in a room beneath the rostrum! "The hearts of our church members should be drawn out in prayer for those who are preaching the gospel."—E. G. White, Letter 49, 1903.

Souls are won one by one and likewise need to be prayed for one by one whether the message is being preached to one or to thousands. "In times past there were those who fastened their minds upon one soul after another, saying, 'Lord, help me to save this soul.' But now such instances are rare. How many act as if they realized the peril of sinners?"—*Gospel Workers*, p. 65.

Do you realize the peril of sinners? Do you know what it means to fasten your

mind on a soul? Never since the time our Lord challenged those first disciples to reach the world with the message of salvation has there been a greater need than today for intercession in prayer.

World population now exceeds four billion! Based on language, customs and cultural background, this total world population is comprised of some 26,000 people-groups speaking 6,000 languages. More than 16,000 of these people-groups still do not have access to a Christian church of any kind! For political or religious reasons several entire countries are closed to Christian missionaries. But prayer can reach anyone, anywhere. Its only limitation is the free moral choice of the individual.

What happens when we pray? Daniel, chapter 10, gives some insight. Daniel prayed earnestly for his people. As far as he could tell, three weeks passed, and there seemed to be no change in anything. But from the time he began to pray things had begun to happen behind the scenes, where human eyes could not penetrate. The angel Gabriel was dispatched to the court of the Persian king to impress him to make decisions necessary for Daniel's prayer to be answered. When the angel's influence was not enough, Michael [Christ] Himself visited the court of the king. And the king yielded to influences set in motion by intercessory prayer! Daniel's prayer was answered and God's people were delivered.

God is ready and willing, but what about you and me? "If my people. . . shall humble themselves, and pray . . . then will I hear . . . and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

People outside the church know God has visited His people when they see genuine repentance manifested by tears, restitution, reformation, and resultant joy.

One Thousand Days of Reaping demands one thousand days of prayer, because prayer is the greatest agency of evangelism.

George E. Knowles is director of the General Conference Lay Activities Department.

Christians have traditionally believed that Roman persecution of the church began soon after Christ left this earth. However, another look at the evidence suggests that Christians in the first century were relatively free from persecution by the Romans; it was the Jews who treated them with contempt. In fact, the restraining influence of Stoicism may have caused the Romans to protect the infant Christian church.

Rome: an early persecutor of the church?

It is generally assumed that the Roman government largely ignored Christianity until A.D. 62, that is, up to approximately the first half of Nero's reign, treating it at best as one of several Jewish sects. This article argues instead that Rome early recognized the basic differences between the politically-oriented Jewish Messianic movements and the nonpolitical nature of Christianity, and that Rome's basic policy toward Christianity during this period was one of tolerance.

Tiberius and Christianity A.D. 14-37

The trial of Jesus during Tiberius' reign represents the first major confrontation between Roman authorities and the Founder of Christianity. The Gospels and Acts unanimously exclude any direct Roman interest in Jesus' condemnation, placing the initiative for Jesus' trial and condemnation exclusively upon Jewish authorities.¹ The fact that Pilate intervened ruthlessly against those suspected of sedition against Rome while he exonerated Jesus from the grave charge of political insurrection suggests that he detected in

Jesus' Messianic movement no anti-Roman political motivation. (See Luke 13:1; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.3.1; 18.4.1.)

Luke indirectly supports this conclusion by his account of Pilate's policy toward the first Christian community of Jerusalem. The Roman governor could hardly have ignored the conflict that erupted between the popular new Messianic movement and the Jewish religious authorities. The latter tried to suppress the new movement by jailing the apostles (Acts 4:3; 5:18) and by stoning Stephen to death (chap. 7:57-60) without due authorization of the Roman governor. Luke places the responsibility for this persecution entirely upon the Sanhedrin, giving the impression that the Romans were indifferent to what was happening (see chaps. 4:5, 15; 5:17, 27, 40, 41; 6:12; 7:57).

It was customary for governors to report to the emperor any new developments in their provinces,² and according to Tertullian (about A.D. 200), Pilate sent Tiberius a report.³ Tertullian's account, as well as various forgeries purporting to be letters from Pilate to Tiberius, pictures Pilate's report as dealing not only with the trial and condemnation of Jesus but also with subsequent events indicating His divinity.⁴ On the basis of this report, Tertullian says, Tiberius proposed to the Senate the consecration of Christ—His inclusion among the deities of the Roman pantheon and His admission to the cult of the empire.

Some scholars have rejected the histo-

ricity of Tertullian's account, primarily because they believe that Christianity could hardly have attracted imperial attention at such an early date (about A.D. 35).⁵ Recent studies, however, have argued in its favor.⁶ The existence of such a report is presupposed by Tacitus' accurate knowledge of Pilate's condemnation of Christ as well as by Justin Martyr's reference to the *Acts of Pilate* and by the various apocryphal versions of the same Acts produced at a later date. Moreover, Tertullian could hardly have fabricated the story of Pilate's report and of Tiberius' proposed consecration of Christ, when he mentions these events incidentally and when he urges magistrates to "consult" their records to verify his account (*Apology*, 5). Pilate's report and Tiberius' proposal are dated by Eusebius in his *Chronicon* to A.D. 35.⁷ The violent anti-Christian persecution, which, according to Acts, was stirred up at that time in Palestine by the Sanhedrin, could explain why Pilate deemed it necessary to inform Tiberius about the events that led to the establishment of Christianity and its conflict with Judaism.

If Tiberius really did propose to the Senate to accept Christ among the Roman deities, he could well have been motivated by both superstitious and political considerations. The mysterious "wonders" surrounding Christ's death and resurrection, which the Emperor learned from Pilate, and presumably also from his Samaritan chronographer, Thallus,⁸ could well have

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favorably predisposed him toward Christ, especially in view of his superstitious faith in astrological signs and his skepticism toward the traditional religion.⁹ Politically, Tiberius may have seen the possibility of offsetting anti-Roman sentiment among Jewish masses through a legal recognition and consequent penetration of Christianity—a pacifistic movement that taught: “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” (Matt. 22:21).*

Tiberius’ proposed *consecratio* of Christ was, however, rejected by the Roman senate, presumably because the senate was jealous of its own prerogatives in the matter. Tertullian views this negative decision of the senate as the genesis of anti-Christian legislation. The emperor “held to his opinion” and neutralized the possible negative consequences of the Senate’s refusal by “threatening wrath against all accusers of the Christians” (*Apology*, 5). The “accusers” Tiberius had in mind were presumably the Palestinian Jewish authorities who had launched a bitter attack against the followers of Christ (Acts 8, 9). Roman officials had not yet taken punitive actions against Christians.

How did Tiberius’ action affect Christians, especially in Palestine, the epicenter of the conflict? Josephus informs us that Vitellius, the Roman Governor of Syria, “came into Judea, and went up to Jerusalem” (about A.D. 36) and “deprived Joseph, who was also called Caiaphas, of the high priesthood, and appointed Jonathan the son of Ananus, the former high priest, to succeed him” (*Ant.* 18.4.3.). The removal from office of Caiaphas by Tiberius’ legate may well account for the sudden change from a situation of “great persecution” (Acts 8:1) to one of “peace.” “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up” (Acts 9:31). Vitellius’ action could represent the implementation of Tiberius’ policy of tolerance.

Caligula and Christianity A.D. 37-41

During the reign of Tiberius’ successor, Caligula (A.D. 37-41), the situation for Christians remained practically unchanged. We have no indication that Caligula had any dealings with Christians. But the severe conflict that developed between the Jews and the emperor on account of his senseless effort to install a statue of himself within the Temple of Jerusalem may have indirectly contributed to peace for the Christians (see Josephus, *Ant.* 19.5.2,3). The Jewish authorities, concerned at this critical time about their own survival could not afford planned actions against Christians. Presumably, during the reign of Caligula the Christian mission reached out beyond the Jews in Palestine and Antioch to convert Romans, such as the centurion Cornelius (chap.10:24,34,35), as well as Greeks (chap. 11:20).

Claudius and Christianity A.D. 41-54

The reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54) can be characterized as a restoration of Tiberius’ policy of religious tolerance. To the Jews, Claudius restored their religious privileges by edict in A.D. 41 and placed Judea directly under a Jewish king, Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44). Claudius’ policy toward Christians can be deduced primarily from the actions taken by his magistrates when dealing with them. For example, Luke suggests that the temporary cessation of direct Roman control over Judea during the reign of King Agrippa I marked the immediate resumption of persecution against Christ’s followers: “Herod the king laid violent hands upon some. . . . He killed James the brother of John with the sword; and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also” (chap. 12:1-3). The situation changed at Agrippa’s death (A.D. 44). Judea returned under direct Roman control and, according to Luke, the Palestinian church experienced no significant persecution until Paul’s arrest (about A.D. 58).¹⁰

Luke makes it evident that in the diaspora the Roman administration favored the expansion of Christianity by restraining or hindering the Jewish persecution of the church. In Cyprus, for example, scene of the first Christian encounter with Roman authorities outside Palestine (about A.D. 46-47), the proconsul Sergius Paulus, in spite of the dissuasion of a Jewish prophet Bar-Jesus, “summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God” (chap. 13:7). The curiosity of this Roman official for the Christian message, which he accepted, suggests not only a favorable disposition toward Christianity but also some prior knowledge of it, possibly through government channels.

Other sources suggest that government circles knew of Christianity. About the middle of the first century, the historian Thallus, a Samaritan Hellenist attached to the imperial court, endeavored to explain as a natural phenomenon (solar eclipse) the three hours of darkness that accompanied Christ’s death.¹¹ A Roman inscription prior to A.D. 38 mentions a certain *Incundus Chrestianus*, a servant of Tiberius’ sister-in-law, Antonia Drusi.¹² The name *Chrestianus*, a frequent misspelling of *Christus*, suggests a Christian affiliation. More significant is the possible conversion

to Christianity of Pomponia Graecina, niece of Tiberius and wife of Aulus Plautius, the conqueror of Britain. Her conversion is suggested by Tacitus’ reference that she was accused of “foreign superstition” (*superstitio externa*),¹³ a charge frequently leveled against Christians. Another indication is provided by the burial of a Christian descendant, *Pomponius Grekeinos*, in the catacomb of St. Callistus. Such indications suggest a knowledge of and interest in Christianity among some persons of the imperial and senatorial circles.

This conclusion is supported by Luke’s account of the action taken by certain Roman officials toward Christian leaders. The proconsul of Achaia, Junius Lucius Gallio (brother of Seneca), ignored the charge leveled by the Jews in Corinth against Paul, of “persuading men to worship God contrary to the law” (Acts 18:12), declaring the matter to be merely “questions about words and names and your own [Jewish] law” (verse 15). Similarly in Ephesus, civil authorities took measures to protect Christian preachers. While the town clerk exonerated Paul’s associates, Gaius and Aristarchus, from the charge of sacrilegious acts against Artemis (chap. 19:37), the “Asiarchs . . . who were friends of his [Paul], sent to him and begged him not to venture into the theater” (verse 31). The Asiarchs were the representatives of the provincial cities to the *commune* of Asia and thus they represented the closest link between the provincial administration and the Roman government. That the Asiarchs and the Ephesian magistrates would advise and protect Paul and his associates from the fanaticism of the crowd reflects an understanding on their part of the harmless nature of Christianity and an implementation of the tolerant Roman policy toward it.

Nero and Christianity until A.D. 62

Roman policy toward Christianity during the first half of Nero’s reign (until A.D. 62) appears to have been basically a continuation of the Tiberian-Claudian tradition. Note, for example, the way Roman officials handled the arrest of Paul, as well as the execution in A.D. 62 of James, “the Lord’s brother,” not to be confused with James, the brother of John, who was martyred by Herod in A.D. 44 (Acts 12:1,2). The arrest of Paul in Jerusalem in

The Stoic idealism that influenced Roman emperors and administrators may provide a clue to the early Roman tolerance toward Christianity, as well as to Christian respect for the Roman government.

the late spring of A.D. 58 was for security reasons. The Roman tribune, Claudius Lysias (chap. 23:26), rescued Paul from an infuriated crowd that was attempting to lynch him because they falsely believed that he had profaned the Temple.

It is noteworthy that, according to Luke, neither the tribune Claudius Lysias nor the procurators Felix and Festus or King Agrippa II took seriously the charges of profaning the Temple or sedition (Acts 23:29; 24:5,6). Presumably, these Roman officials knew of the nonpolitical, irenic nature of the Christian Messianic movement. Felix, for example, had a "rather accurate knowledge of the Way" (verse 22). On the basis of this knowledge, the procurator adopted a diplomatic course of action, putting off the trial indefinitely, while at the same time keeping Paul in prison with "some liberty" (verse 23) in order "to do the Jews a favor" (verse 27). The same desire motivated his successor, Festus, to advise Paul to be tried in his presence in Jerusalem before the Sanhedrin (chap. 25:9). These compromise measures reflect the imperial government's concern to avoid antagonizing Jewish religious sentiments, thus fueling unrest and revolts. Yet, even these political considerations did not induce Festus to hand over Paul to Jewish authorities for condemnation. His awareness that Paul "had done nothing deserving death" (verse 25), apparently restrained him from granting to the Sanhedrin the right to try the apostle.

Further mention must be made of the execution of James and other leaders in A.D. 62. According to Josephus, the high priest Ananus was able to have these church leaders prosecuted and executed during the time between the sudden death of Festus and the arrival of his successor, Albinus (*Ant.* 20.9.1). The fact that the high priest took advantage of the temporary absence of a Roman procurator to act suggests that this official's presence prevented such actions. In fact, the new procurator Albinus, while yet in Alexandria, wrote to Ananus, strongly condemning him for his course, and Agrippa for the same reason had him deposed from the high priesthood. By moderating and restraining Jewish persecution, Roman authorities favored the expansion of Christianity.

Paul's Roman imprisonment and trial offer further insight into the attitude of Roman authorities toward Christianity. Luke speaks of the freedom the apostle enjoyed while a prisoner: "And he lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (Acts 28:30,31). Paul implicitly confirms Luke's account when he speaks of the gospel among praetorian guards and "Caesar's household" (Phil. 1:13; 4:21). If Paul's first trial

took place in A.D. 62, as numerous scholars maintain, it is conceivable that the praetorian prefect Sextus Afranius Burrus and the stoic Seneca were influential in determining Paul's first acquittal, since they were Nero's key advisers until that year and part of his *consilium*.¹⁴ The late Christian tradition of an alleged correspondence between Paul and Seneca suggests the possibility that Seneca became acquainted with Paul, especially since Seneca's beloved brother, Gallio, did hear and acquit Paul in Corinth in A.D. 51 and since Paul himself claimed to have had Christian friends within "Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22).

Roman tolerance toward Christians ended in A.D. 62. The change in Nero's policy is indicated and/or was influenced by several concomitant events: the mysterious death of the prefect Burrus; the removal of the restraining influence of stoic advisors such as Seneca; Nero's repudiation of his lawful wife, Octavia, in order to marry his Jewish mistress Poppea; and the emperor's break with the senatorial class.

The stoic idealism that influenced Roman emperors and administrators may provide a clue for the early Roman tolerance toward Christianity as well as for Christian respect for the Roman government. Although Christianity and Stoicism differed profoundly in their religious conceptions, they were strikingly similar in their view of moral values, civil rights and duties, and belief in the nondeity of the emperor.¹⁵ These common ideals may have influenced Roman officials to reject the popular anti-Christian charges of sedition and sacrilegious acts and to understand that the Christian movement posed no threat to the security of the state. On their part Christians refrained from attacking Roman policies. The apostolic writings urge submission to and respect for "governing authorities" as being "instituted by God" (Rom. 13:1). The only anti-Roman Christian voice is to be found in the book of Revelation. This reflects the new political climate in which the theocratic demands of the later first-century emperors (Nero, Domitian) collided frontally with the exclusive Christian acknowledgment of the lordship of Christ.

In the second century when Christians faced the contempt not only of the masses but also of intellectuals and magistrates, they remembered and appealed to an early

Roman tolerance. Melito of Sardis, about A.D. 175, argued that Roman intolerance toward Christianity began with Nero.¹⁶ This argument, often repeated by the Apologists,¹⁷ can hardly be treated as a fabrication of second-century Christian apologetics.

Thus it seems that until the earlier part of Nero's reign (about A.D. 62) the Roman government favored the expansion of Christianity by restraining anti-Christian hostile forces. Paul apparently sensed that the restraining function of the Roman government was soon to cease, when he wrote: "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way" (2 Thess. 2:7).

* Scripture quotations in this article are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973.

¹ See Mark 14:1; Luke 23:1-25; John 11:47-50; 18:38; 19:6; Acts 3:13, 14, 17. On the responsibility the New Testament attributes to the Jews for the accusation and condemnation of Christ, see Samuel Sandmel, *Anti-Semitism in the New Testament* (Philadelphia, 1979); Gerard Sloyan, *Jesus on Trial* (Philadelphia, 1973).

² Evidence of extensive correspondence between governors and emperors is provided by *The Letters of Pliny*. The letters inform Trajan about practically all new developments in the province of Bithynia, and ask for guidance on a great variety of questions.

³ Tertullian, *Apology* 5, ANF III: 22; cf. chapter 22. Justin Martyr, in his *I Apology*, twice (chaps. 35 and 48) appeals to the "Acts of Pontius Pilate" to substantiate his account of Christ's crucifixion. It is hard to believe that Justin would challenge the Romans to verify his account by reading the *Acts of Pilate*, if such a document was not in existence or not readily available. The existing versions of the *Acts and Letters of Pilate* are an obvious Christian forgery, but probably they are based upon a genuine historical tradition.

⁴ Speaking of the darkening of the sun at the time of Christ's crucifixion, Tertullian says, this account "you yourselves [Romans] have . . . still in your archives" (*Apology* 21, ANF III: 35). Eusebius also explicitly says that Pilate "gave an account also of other wonders which he had learned of him [Christ], and how, after his death, having risen from the dead, he was now believed by many to be a God" (*Church History* 2, 2, 2, NPNE 2nd Series I: 105).

⁵ For example, J. Beaujeu, in his article "L'incendie de Rome en 64 et les chrétiens," *Latomus* 19 (1960): 33ff., rejects the historicity of Tertullian's account, treating it as a pious Christian fabrication of the late first century. E. Volterra at first rejected but then accepted the authenticity of Tertullian's account (see, *Scritti in onore di C. Fezzani* [Milan, 1947], vol. I, pp. 471ff.). F. Scheidweiler believes that the letter from Pilate to Tiberius mentioned by Tertullian must have been

Although Christianity and Stoicism differed profoundly in their religious conceptions, they were strikingly similar in their view of moral values, civil rights and duties, and belief in the nondeity of the emperor.

"an apocryphal Christian document" that was known to the writer ("The Gospel of Nicodemus," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Edgar Hennecke [Philadelphia, 1963], I, p. 444).

⁶ An extensive and cogent discussion is provided by Marta Sordi in "I primi rapporti fra lo Stato romano e il Christianesimo," *Rendiconti Accademia Nazionale Lincei* 12 (1957): 58-93; and "Sui primi rapporti dell'autorità romana con il Christianesimo," *Studi Romani* 8 (1960): 393-409; and *Il Christianesimo e Roma*, Istituto di Studi Romani 19 (Bologna, 1965), pp. 21-31. Marta Sordi argues convincingly in favor of the historicity of Tertullian's account regarding Pilate's report and Tiberius' proposal to the senate. She views the negative decision of the senate as the juridical basis of the later persecution of Christians. Vincenzo Monachino defends basically Sordi's view in *Le persecuzioni e la polemica pagano-cristiana* (Rome, 1974), pp. 21-24. See also G. Papini, *Il Cesare della crocifissione* (Rome, 1934), pp. 40ff; C. Cecchelli, *Studi in onore di Calderini e Paribeni* (Milan, 1956), pp. 351ff.

⁷ Eusebius, *Hieronymi Chronicon*, in *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 47, ed. R. Helm (Leipzig, 1956), pp. 176-177. Eusebius' *Chronicon* is used by the seventh century Byzantine author of the *Chronicon Paschale* to establish the consular A.D. 35 date for Pilate's report, under the consulate of Gallus and Nonianus (*Chronicon Paschale*, ed. L. Dindorf in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* [Bonn, 1832], p. 430).

⁸ On Thallus, see below, note 11.

⁹ The Roman historical Dio Cassius gives the following account of Tiberius' interest in astrology and magic: "Tiberius, moreover, was forever in the company of Thrasyllus and made some use of the art of divination every day, becoming so proficient in the subject himself, that when he was once bidden in a dream to give money to a certain man, he realized that a spirit had been called up before him by deceit, and so put the man to death" (*Roman History* 57, 15, 7-9, trans. Earnest Cary [Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1924], p. 153). Suetonius says that Tiberius was indifferent toward gods and religions, devoting himself rather to mathematics and magic (*Tiberius* 69). Tacitus also informs us that Tiberius was instructed at Rhodes in the science of the Chaldeans (*The Annals* 60, 20). On the influence of the astrologer Thrasyllus upon Tiberius' policies, see Frederick H. Cramer, *Astrology in Roman Law and Politics* (Philadelphia, 1954), pp. 92-108.

¹⁰ It is noteworthy that Luke connects the death of the persecuting king with the Christian expansion: "He [Agrippa I] was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:23, 24). Presumably with the return of Judea under direct Roman control, the Sanhedrin was prevented from taking action against Christ's followers.

¹¹ Thallus' explanation is reported by Julius Africanus, whose text has been preserved by the Byzantine historian George Syncellus (c. A.D. 800) and has been published by E. Schurer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu-Christi* (Leipzig, 1909), Vol. III, p. 494. The significance of the fragmentary testimony of Thallus is noted by F. F. Bruce, who remarks: "It is worth noting that about the middle of the first century A.D. the traditional story of the death of Christ was known in non-Christian circles at Rome."—*The Spreading Flame* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1958), p. 137.

¹² *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin, 1863-1893), Vol. VI, n. 24944.

¹³ Tacitus, *The Annals* 13, 32. On the charge of "superstition" used against Christians, see, for example, Tacitus, *The Annals* 15, 44; Suetonius, *Vita Neronis* 16; Pliny, *Letters to Trajan* 10, 96.

¹⁴ Tacitus describes Burrus and Seneca as Nero's key advisers until A.D. 62 (*The Annals* 14, 52).

¹⁵ For a perceptive comparison of the similarities between Stoicism and Christianity, see J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (New York, 1896), p. 173.

¹⁶ Cited by Eusebius, *Church History* 4, 26, 8.

¹⁷ See Tertullian, *Apology* 5; *Ad nationes* 7; Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica* 2, 29, 3.

Handbills that perform

Are you having trouble finding a printer who will print evangelistic handbills just the way you want them—and at a price you can afford? Are you tired of the same old two-color design you've been using since college? Are you having problems obtaining lists of the residential occupants in your town? And have you given up trying to get your church members to hand-address 10,000 envelopes? If you answered Yes to any of the above, we have help for you. Russell Holt recently interviewed Tom Hall about the services available to ministers at Media, Incorporated.

Q. *The card that you just handed me says, "Media, Incorporated: Specialists in Lithography and Direct Mail." What exactly is a "specialist in lithography and direct mail"?*

A. Basically, we are specialty printers and mailers. Because we want to help our church, we have developed a service for pastors and evangelists that we think can really help them prepare effective handbills and get them into the hands of people.

Q. *Could you explain in more detail just what you can do for a pastor or evangelist who wants to use your services?*

A. Sure. First of all is the handbill. Some pastors and evangelists feel that four-color is too expensive for them to use. And it may be, if they go to their local printer. One advantage of our service or a similar one (I'm not the only person in the

United States doing this) is that we provide a handbill that is sharp, colorful, professional, and that has proved appeal—and at a price that is far less than anything comparable printed locally.

Here's how. We have developed a variety of attractive, four-color handbills that can be adapted somewhat according to each person's needs. Local information regarding subjects, time and place of meetings, speaker, et cetera, can be placed into our standardized-format handbills to create a "custom-design" piece. And because the artwork, mechanicals, and other expensive preparation have already been done, the cost is much cheaper than it could possibly be if printed from scratch.

Another advantage of our service, I feel, is that the pastor or evangelist is working with handbills that are fairly well proved in their ability to get results. We don't expect a pastor to be a printing expert or a design specialist. But even if he doesn't really

understand printing or how to design a good handbill, by matching his meetings to one of our handbills, we can help him have a brochure that will be right for him and that he can afford.

We feel that four-color is an absolute necessity in today's direct mail communication. One large national advertiser has said simply, "Black and white is for budgets; color is for results." The average person today is constantly deluged by information and mail pieces. He has become more sophisticated and less impressionable. Our piece, then, must be simple, yet professional in appearance. We feel that its purpose must be to assure the reader that he can find the answers to the problems of daily living—and that he will find them at these meetings. We have only a few seconds to grasp his attention, so the piece must be striking and speak to enough needs to be sure that it will touch one of his. However, we don't want to include too much copy—just enough to whet his appetite and instill confidence in the program and the speaker.

We think our handbills do that.

Q. But you are a mailer too, isn't that right? You don't just print a handbill and deliver it to the pastor or evangelist.

A. That's right. The second part of our service is to provide mailing. We will determine the ZIP codes needed to be covered and the dates of the mailings. We then work with the post office to see that the brochures are delivered on time.

Q. But you're located in North Carolina. Suppose I'm holding meetings in Minnesota or California. You can't help me there, can you?

A. It doesn't matter where you are in the United States, we can handle it from North Carolina! Right now we're working with twenty or thirty evangelists across the United States on a regular basis, as well as many, many pastors who are running Daniel seminar series.

Q. Do you mean that all the evangelist or pastor has to do is to select the handbill he wants to use and give you the information to be printed on it along with the ZIP codes to be covered? Then he doesn't have to worry about a thing as far as the post office is concerned?

A. Well, it isn't quite that easy! He does have to worry about the mailing. He has to check on his end with the local post office at certain intervals and make sure that they are following the instructions we send them. There's always a certain element of headache in mailing, and the pastor needs to do everything he can to be sure the post office is following through. Don't take anything for granted. But we send a letter to the pastor or evangelist outlining just what steps he is to follow in checking up on

the post office. It's all spelled out for him.

Q. Give our readers an idea of what your service costs. Suppose I'm a pastor in a small Midwestern town. I select one of your handbills, have it printed with my information, and want you to mail it to the three thousand homes in my town. What would that cost?

A. It's not easy to say, because we have so many different handbill styles and so many different prices within those styles. Actually, with four-color work, a person would have to buy a minimum of five thousand handbills for us to be able to print them economically. Most of our handbills are running from a low of \$105 per thousand on up to \$200 per thousand.

Q. And that price includes the total package—printing, mailing, and all?

A. That's right.

Q. Does a pastor or evangelist have a chance to approve the handbill before it's printed?

A. If we have enough advance time and he requests a proof, we can do that. Most of the time we don't send a proof; we just proofread it ourselves.

Q. You have a service involving Bible study



enrollment cards, don't you, in addition to the handbill service?

A. Yes. We've been having terrific success with Bible study enrollment cards through the mail. I've been surprised at the results. Many church members say, "I'd like to give Bible studies, but I don't have anyone to study with." This is a way to obtain contacts—someone who writes back and says, "I'm that individual; I'd like to study the Bible. Come and see me!"

Q. How does this work?

A. Again, the church gives us the ZIP codes to be covered. But the post office is refining ZIP codes to the point that in many cases they can pinpoint an exact carrier's route, even to which side of the street an address is on! It's called carrier route presorted, and it goes at a less expensive rate because we presort the computer cards in the exact order a carrier walks that particular route. Then the cards are sent to him already addressed in that order so that he doesn't have to do any sorting; they're all ready to go.

With this system we can pinpoint very specific areas to cover, which is an advantage for a church that is sending out Bible study enrollment cards. This system allows you to be very selective in whom you wish to reach.

Q. Is the cost feasible on this? Could a church send out ten thousand or twenty thousand in its immediate area, for example?

A. With the total package, the cost would be perhaps ten cents apiece—\$100 per thousand—on such a mailing. That includes everything. Of course, these aren't usually mailed all at once. If they were, the church could be covered up with the returns all at once. We usually send out a certain number each month.

Q. How can a pastor or evangelist learn more about these services and how to use them?

A. We have a pastor's package that will explain the whole program and how it works. We'll be happy to send it to any pastor or evangelist in the United States who asks for it. Just write: Media Incorporated, P.O. Box 18464, Greensboro, North Carolina 27419.

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Seminary needs books

The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Far East, in Manila is attempting to increase its library holdings. This important institution for ministerial training possessed only 350 books when it began operation in 1978; currently the library houses some 10,000 volumes. This is a respectable increase, but still far from adequate for its needs. Dr. Leslie Hardinge, president, is appealing to readers of *MINISTRY* to consider donating surplus books from their personal libraries to the Philippine seminary or perhaps even bequeathing their entire library to the institution through a will.

Sack mail is the most inexpensive method of mailing books to the Philippines. (Your local post office can provide details.) However, before you mail books it would be well to write Dr. Hardinge for information regarding the items and materials that are most needed. His address: Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Far East, P.O. Box 1834, Manila, Philippines.

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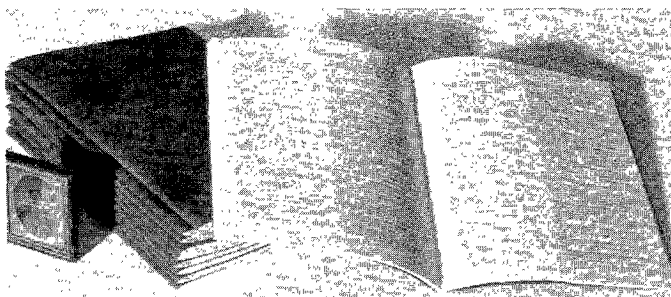
mine the degree of interest; (3) cultivation of key interests through monthly telephone Bible studies, followed by area discussion groups; (4) decisions, as individuals are ready, in reaping meetings; and (5) cultivation of new members through telephone counseling.

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No new thing

Our church has become increasingly complex, compared with former years. This may be the inevitable result of growth in a complicated and modern world, but somehow we must retain the clear goals of an earlier age.

The hour comes in every reformatory movement when, with its founding fathers all sleeping in their graves, and a new generation of leaders in responsibility facing new and unprecedented conditions, it must review its founding purpose and determine anew that nothing shall deflect from that original course and objective. It comes, as it were, to an inevitable fork in the road. It must either go on with undeviating purpose, or swerving from that course, begin from that moment to lose its distinctive character and impelling force. . . . That we as a people have reached such an hour of review and reaffirmation, will become increasingly clear to all who give it thought. . . . [The] pioneers of this message gave their all, their very lives, that this last gospel message, based on the full threefold commission of Revelation 14, might come into being. And now these men are gone. We constitute the new generation, or group, that has come onto the stage of action. These precious truths have been bequeathed by them to us as a sacred legacy, but without that untransferable personal experience which made them mean so much to them. We must now go on with the banner of truth, or we shall go back. We must complete the task they so nobly began. We must consummate the movement they initiated, else we shall retrograde and lose our distinctive purpose in the world."

The impassioned words of a church leader who believes that recent theological discussions, attacks on the Spirit of Prophecy, and financial difficulties à la Davenport have brought the Adventist message to a perilous hour of decision? No.

These words, which seem so applicable and up-to-date to our ears in the 1980s, are almost half a century old! They come from a November, 1933, *MINISTRY* editorial by Editor L. E. Froom. As I chanced upon it and read his words, I was impressed again with Solomon's observation "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. 1:9).

In that nearly-fifty-year-old editorial Froom speaks of "dangers," "tendencies," and "perils" that beset the church. He

warns of confusing mechanics with essentials, and accessories with fundamentals. Then he lists five things that, in his opinion, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is *not* here to do, as well as four things it is here to do. In my opinion we would do well down in 1982 (almost 1983) to review Froom's counsel. First, the five things the church is *not* here to do:

1. "We are not here to build up an intricate system of dogmatic and systematic theology, with its philosophical ramifications."

2. "We are not here to build up costly and complicated organizations."

3. "We are not here to build up vast institutions."

4. "We are not here to build up a great educational system competitive with the world, and designed to match its philosophy."

5. "We are not here to vie with the vast humanitarian enterprises functioning impressively all about us."

One may or may not agree with each of Froom's observations. The point that struck me, however, was this: If in 1933 the editor of *MINISTRY* felt it necessary to warn the church against theological intricacies and attendant philosophical ramifications, if he felt it appropriate to warn against "costly and complicated organizations," "vast institutions," "a great educational system" that competes with the world, and humanitarian enterprises that vie with the world's, would he not feel a much greater urgency to do so today? For whatever reasons, we seem to be much more advanced in all these areas than we were nearly fifty years ago.

On this point, a comparison of certain items of the 1933 *Statistical Report* with that of 1981 (the latest available) is enlightening. According to this source, no Adventist educational institution offered instruction beyond the college level in 1933. A theological seminary for the church existed on paper only; a year-old action by the Autumn Council to establish a school of theology had encountered difficulties. In 1933 we had 3,329 church buildings worldwide, valued at some \$9.6 million. Figures for 1981: 19,981 church buildings valued at more than \$1.9 billion. In 1933 the church had 70 union confer-

ences and missions, 455 local conferences and missions, and 3,392 ordained and licensed ministers. In 1981 we had about the same number of union conferences and missions (79), even fewer local conferences and missions (383); but the church employed 14,476 ordained and licensed ministers—more than four times the number of ministerial workers there was in 1933!

The institutional world of Adventism in 1933 included 69 publishing houses and branches; 112 hospitals, sanitariums, and treatment rooms; 2,064 primary schools; and 207 colleges, academies, and intermediate schools. These institutions employed 7,460 workers of all categories. By 1981 we had 50 publishing houses; 166 hospitals and sanitariums; 224 treatment rooms, clinics, and dispensaries; 3,921 primary schools; and 913 universities, colleges, and secondary schools. And these institutions employed 64,001 workers. Primary schools in 1933 enrolled 71,579 pupils and utilized 2,807 teachers. Beyond the primary level, 2,325 teachers instructed 23,481 students. For 1981, primary schools had 408,426 students and 16,983 teachers; beyond the primary level there were 11,119 teachers and 152,767 students.

One may argue, of course, that such figures simply reflect a growing work and that growth inevitably results in greater complexity and cost. One might also argue that the world we live in today is incredibly more complicated and expensive than the world of 1933. Still, Froom's cautions seem valid. For whatever reasons, we seem to be increasingly preoccupied with theological intricacies rather than with the simple, everlasting gospel. Our church could be (and should be) less complicated and expensive to operate.

Froom concludes his 1933 editorial with four things the church is here to do:

1. "We are here to give a specific message to men just prior to, and as the preparation for, the second coming of Christ."

2. "We are here to complete a given task before our deliverance."

3. "We are here to proclaim the hour of God's judgment now in solemn session."

4. "We are to protest and warn against the moral fall of Christendom."

Of course, the church was doing many other things than these even back in 1933. Certainly, today it is carrying out the activities of 1933 on an even greater scale and has added many additional tasks. But in all our activity, we would do well to keep

in mind that the problems of today are not really new problems; they are simply old ones in new dress. And this being so, perhaps we do not need new solutions as much as we need to apply the old ones.—B.R.H.

Lead your people heavenward

From time to time I try to visit various churches, not only to worship and to meet my own spiritual needs, but also to get ideas to share with our ministers around the world. Here are a few suggestions I have gleaned:

1. Why not have all the visitors—both Adventists and non-Adventists—stand during the pastor's welcome in the eleven o'clock hour? Read a poem or a paragraph or two specially prepared to welcome them to the services and urge them to come back. This recognition creates good will and makes an impression upon a visitor's mind that will not be soon forgotten.

During this same welcome period, have everyone in the church shake hands and introduce himself to those whom he does not know who are sitting around him, both in front and behind and at the sides. During this time those on the platform can also come down and mingle in the audience for just a few seconds, shaking hands with individuals, especially focusing on those they do not know and who are visitors. This will break down walls of coldness and prejudice, bring in a warm feeling, and set up a responsive attitude in the heart for what comes later in the worship service.

2. During the taking up of the tithes and offerings we are admonished to be joyful givers, but the act of giving our offerings and tithes to God is anything but joyful in most churches I have attended! As a matter of fact, it is the most solemn portion of any church service. Watch the faces of people as the offering plate is passed. Their faces show concern, seriousness, soberness, and at times even grief! One would think that instead of an offering plate, an open coffin were passing by, in which lay their dearest friend or relative! Why not, instead of some musical selection on the organ or piano during this time, make it a joyful occasion by having the whole congregation sing while the offering is being taken? I experienced the thrill of this in a church in Soweto, South Africa, the largest black township in the country. Our neat, clean church had no musical instrument because they couldn't afford one, but the voices of the people as they sang sounded more beautiful than any organ. Of course, they didn't have songbooks, but they knew the songs by heart. Perhaps your congregation could be taught to memorize a song so that the people would not have to be holding songbooks

and hands could be free to pass the plate and put in the offering. Memorizing a song could be managed if necessary, or even different songs dealing with salvation through our Lord and the consecration to which He is entitled on the part of those who serve Him.

In other churches I have heard passages of Scripture read during the taking of the offering. In fact, at the last church I visited, the Emmanuel Seventh-day Adventist church in Brinklow, Maryland, the local elder read I Corinthians 13 while the offering was taken. Selected passages from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy can be used that lift a person's heart in worship to God. This helps each to realize that the offering is a part of worshipping God. I suggest that no strange remarks, no "strange fire," be offered to God during this time. This is no place for negative statements, but rather positive ones connected with giving to the Lord. Following the offering in the church I just mentioned, when the deacons came forward, they knelt and held the plates high as all sang "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow." This was a memorable experience.

3. I believe that we can create a greater worshipful atmosphere in our churches if we participate in more congregational singing. We don't need to wait until the new hymnal comes along to do this. Our people need to be taught literally hundreds of hymns. Why not try a new one every

Sabbath? What would be wrong with having a congregational song following the closing hymn and benediction as the ministers walk out? A song such as "God Be With You" unites hearts, helps us to think of others, and creates a deeper respect and love for one another. Too often our worship services are a passive performance rather than an active participation on the part of the worshipers before the Lord God.

4. At another church I attended, testimonies of God's leading and blessings were given during the missionary period. One member, an engineer at a radio station, came forward and related how God had healed him of a physical disability. A dear lady mentioned a minor, but very meaningful, experience. She could not get her door unlocked one rainy and cold evening. She offered up a short prayer, and then tried the lock once more. The key turned easily! She felt sure the Lord had blessed in answer to her prayer. Members gave four or five such testimonies during the missionary period at this church. The experience seemed to warm the whole congregation and bring in a spirit of fellowship.

Sabbath morning services should be a time when God's people come together for worship and praise of God, for spiritual strengthening of their own souls, and for reaching out in fellowship to strengthen their brothers and sisters in the Lord. This is no time for us to give our people abstract discussions that leave them unfed and unsatisfied. This is no time for humanistic philosophy masquerading as Biblical preaching. There is far too much of this kind of preaching in Seventh-day Adventist churches today. Sabbath morning services are a time to lead our people heavenward, to provide them with solid spiritual food that will nourish them until the following Sabbath and give them strength to face the battles of life on a day-to-day basis.—J.R.S.

Church is boring

On the evening of March 4, 1982, the emcee of TV's popular "Family Feud" program posed to the contestant this question: "What is the most boring place you go to?" Her ready answer? "Church." And it turned out to be the number one answer, based on 100 people surveyed!

Is this what has happened to the church? What church, whose church, is the most boring place to go? Yours? Mine? Can it be that those living when the most striking prophetic fulfillments of all time are bursting around us are finding the source of this truth and light "the most boring place"?

If so, it is a paradox stranger than fiction! If so, somewhere there are a lot of inept pastors! If so, somewhere there has

been enormous slipping away from the kind of incisive truth that a church of long ago demonstrated! If so, the church is failing to convey the excitement of the greatest thing in the world!

Of course, some people are bored in church because their lives are centered in the very things that are incompatible with the church and its standards. Such, no doubt, feel under pressure in church and attend only because some outside influence dictates that they be there. With such an attitude and motive, church can hardly avoid being considered boring. But surely no one who comes to our places of worship earnestly seeking information about God and blessing for his hungry soul should receive only boredom in return!—W.B.Q.

Women meet in Manila

During the recent Annual Council in Manila, two days were devoted to meetings dealing with the needs and interests of ministers' wives. We think you'll appreciate this special report.

One of the most exciting parts of Annual Council for me is the opportunity to meet with other ministerial wives, especially during the specially arranged women's meetings. The recent Annual Council in Manila was no exception. On Wednesday, October 6, the first session convened in the beautiful Visayas Room of the Philippine Plaza Hotel. Special guests included Filipino ministerial wives and students from Philippine Union College, as well as women faculty members and wives of other workers in the Manila area. I asked Miriam Wood to capture on paper the highlights of our two days of meetings; I think you'll find her report inspiring.—Marie Spangler.

The women's meetings at the Annual Council session in Manila in October, 1982, reflected the problems and concerns of Adventist women in the changing, turbulent world of the late twentieth century. Though the primary focus was centered on challenges faced by the ministerial wife, the material presented can be fully applied to all Adventist homes. Mrs. Marie Spangler, director of the meetings, planned and conducted a tightly packed two-afternoon seminar on such wide-ranging topics as "The Changing Role of the Minister's Wife," "Challenges of the Modern Home," "Coping With Loneliness," and "Nutritional Update." Speakers were chosen for their expertise and experiential knowledge of their subject matter.

In her opening remarks Marie Spangler challenged the group to find new ways of solving old problems, and to develop new and positive attitudes. "As women in a unique role, the role of ministerial wives, we need constantly to reassess our commitments and our goals," she stated.

It seemed most appropriate that the devotional speaker for the first session should be Elinor Wilson, wife of the president of the General Conference. On the previous day Mrs. Wilson had been presented with a dress in the Filipino style, made for her as a gift by certain church members in the area. The beautifully embroidered, cream-colored, floor-length

dress accented her graceful carriage as she gave her own welcome to the women of the session.

Using the theme "Status or Stature?" Mrs. Wilson urged the importance of seeking true values and of being what one seems to be. "I can think of nothing more important than to live by genuine, not spurious, standards," she declared. She further stated that persons in leadership roles face the temptation to seek recognition and honor, and this is especially true when secular society strongly endorses this mode of life. "We need to take as our goal to grow up into the stature of Christ," she concluded.

Jeanne Larsen, now working with her minister husband, Ralph, at Philippine Union College, presented the topic "Team Ministry." She traced the beginnings of ministerial wifehood in the Adventist Church, including the concept that wives were expected to work as a full team member, to sublimate all personal goals, and to be totally competent in every area of living. "But the role is not so clearly defined at present," she stated. "Because of the need for wives to work outside the home, because of the greater educational level of ministerial wives, and because of the pressures of society in general, it is important to decide what values to retain and what to reject." She pointed out that teaching, nursing, and secretarial work were once considered the only "acceptable" jobs for ministerial wives.

"Probably the most devastating goal a ministerial wife can have is to feel that she must do everything to perfection," Mrs. Larsen remarked. In their team ministry she and her husband have arrived at some unique solutions to problems. For instance, when the children were still at home the entire family arose one hour early to do housework. They always came home to a clean home, and Sundays could be used for family fun. Other specific suggestions were collaborating on sermon preparation, coordination of social obligations, emotional support, and particularly for the wife, acting as a healing influence in the congregation.

Dorothy Emmerson, who, with her husband, Kenneth Emmerson, retired from the General Conference two years

ago, presented "Caring and Sharing." She told of her new-found joy as a volunteer Bible instructor in her new home town of Walla Walla, Washington. "After a retirement home is put into perfect order it is time for a new interest; I looked about me and realized that although I had never given Bible studies, this was a great need. I can now state that I wish I had been a Bible worker all my life."

Mrs. Emmerson stressed the need to be sensitive to the physical, emotional, and social needs of those to be helped. This may even involve helping someone in debt, or balancing a checkbook, or even staying night and day for a week with someone who is trying to break the cigarette habit.

"Health That Brings Life" was the lecture given by Pat Jones, associate dean of the School of Nursing at Philippine Union College. As she discussed "levels of wellness" she explained that one may possess a high level of wellness, a moderate level, a low level, or actually be in a state of illness. Dr. Jones indicated that sometimes the part of the world in which an individual lives has a bearing on the level of wellness that he is able to achieve. By the use of a projector and graphs the speaker illustrated her points.

"God intends for His children to achieve the highest level of wellness," she said. "That is what health is all about. We are to have as our aim constant movement toward the highest level. It is important for a truly healthy Christian woman to understand her deep feelings and emotions and face them as a part of the total picture of harmonious functioning."

As the last speaker for this first session, Miriam Wood discussed some of the serious challenges facing ministerial homes today. For instance, divorce is becoming more prevalent—a condition once unheard-of in this group. Another problem to be dealt with is the resentment felt by a number of younger ministerial wives. "It is not accepted automatically that the wife of a minister is simply a pale reflection of her husband, though this was the unquestioned view several decades ago."

Mrs. Wood suggested that Adventist colleges take definite steps in building curricula that include information regard-

ing the role of a minister's wife, and should provide counseling for young women who are romantically interested in future ministers. "Certainly the church cannot and would not wish to get into the marriage-broker business, but the fact remains that it is better to let young women know ahead of time that to marry a minister means to share him with others for the rest of their lives together," she said.

Another challenge faced by ministerial wives is the need for expertise in counseling young people involved in the "new morality," drugs, et cetera.

Jeanne Zachary, a librarian, opened the second session of the seminar on Thursday afternoon with her devotional on the importance of growth. Comparing the human being to a plant, she stated that the much-used term *sanctification* could really be substituted for the word *growth* in Christian living.

Dr. Miriam Tumangday, psychologist and director of guidance services at Philippine Union College, addressed the group on the topic of "Challenges of the Modern Home." She gave the following reasons for the breakdown of many homes: mobility, depersonalization of the human being, sexual revolution, affluence, and the growing neglect of children by parents. "It is vital that parents portray genuine Christian virtues, not spurious ones, if they wish their children to emulate them," she asserted. "Some well-meaning parents actually make it almost impossible for their children to become good Christians." In discussing methods of child-rearing, she listed (1) authoritarianism, (2) *laissez faire*, and (3) democratic methods.

One of the qualities most needed by ministerial wives—and all other women—is that of adaptability. In discussing this point, Genevieve Bothe, secretary, stated that adaptability means being able to adjust to life's demands without undue stress. Pressures and stress need not necessarily be thought of as totally negative; they can be beneficial in helping the human being realize his potential, if they are reacted to properly. "We need to learn to escape from the wear and tear of daily living by changing our environment for short periods of time, and to conquer destructive emotions, which produce negative physical reactions," she said. "Our response to stress shows how genuine is our dependence on God." She also suggested that Jesus renounced His "rights" and thus reduced stress, while always contending for the rights of others. If we follow His example we will adopt the policy, not of CONfronting, but of CAREfronting.

A problem faced by many ministerial wives is that of loneliness, since the husband and father is often out of the home so much. Dorothy Emmerson, in discussing "Coping With Loneliness," told the group that she had kept a record of her husband's absences during the forty-four years of their marriage, beginning with the

time when they were young missionaries, during his overseas army service, on through various positions, and concluding with his sixteen years as treasurer of the General Conference. "We have spent only eighteen years together," she reported.

Her suggestions for coping were as follows: (1) Do things with the children if they are still in the home. (2) If you work outside the home be sure that it is in a setting where you meet many other people. (3) Become involved with church work. (4) Relax with friends. (5) Keep well and healthy, being especially meticulous about regular meals. (6) Make your home as safe from intruders as possible. (7) Develop new interests of your own. (8) Have some private time just for yourself. (9) Keep in contact with a traveling husband by letter and telephone. (10) Realize that it is only natural to feel lonely, and do not feel guilty as long as you maintain a cheerful exterior.

Fern Calkins, nutritionist, concluded the afternoon's presentation with "Nutrition Update." She described the interest that she had developed a number of years ago in preparing simple, healthful foods that taste good and are good for one. "I decided that there is a great need for an intelligent and consecrated approach to cooking," she asserted. "Simple and natural foods prepared in a simple and natural manner is the goal to be reached. Avoid extremes."

An outgrowth of Mrs. Calkins' study is the popular *It's Your World Vegetarian Cookbook* published by the Review and Herald. Of interest to the group were the slides that Mrs. Calkins presented delineating the results of various statistical studies in California regarding the health and life expectancy of Adventists and non-Adventists.

One of the most appreciated features of

the two-day seminar was the special music. Among the groups who sang were the North Philippine Union office trio, a choir from Philippine Union College, and the Women's International Club from the PUC campus. This last group represented citizens of countries all over the Far East. Their song, "Heaven Is My Home," seemed especially poignant because of the wide range of nationalities with one common goal, one common belief. Charlotte Dennis, a vocal soloist from the General Conference, also contributed to the beauty of the session.

On both days a unique feature was the "oxygen cocktail" presented by Dorothy Nelson, health educator and airplane pilot. As she directed the group in standing and taking deep breaths, she stated that it is just as possible to suffer from spiritual oxygen deprivation as from physical deprivation.

Summing up the two afternoons of study, Marie Spangler presented to the group two definite challenges and concerns. First, she asked for suggestions as to how the changing role of the ministerial wife can be handled. What should be retained? What should be discarded? She asked that definite suggestions be sent to her on this topic, via MINISTRY.

Second, Mrs. Spangler informed the group that she hopes to set up an international organization for ministerial wives, so that all groups can contribute and can strengthen and enhance the concept of team ministry all over the world. She welcomes suggestions as to how this idea can be implemented.

Expressing the sentiment of those present at the two-afternoon seminar, one person said, "I just wish that the women's meetings had been planned for every day of the session, all day long."

Prayers from the parsonage

Christmas. There is a lull in squabbles between siblings; feuding neighbors observe a truce; and enemy armies declare a cease-fire. We contrive a little peace, if only for twenty-four hours.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

So great is our longing for peace that we misinterpret the angels' words. We forget that peace is impossible until God and man are reconciled.

Those who ignore You will find only substitutes for the peace You promise. Those who misunderstand You will never

comprehend Your disciples. Those who hate You will war against whoever loves You.

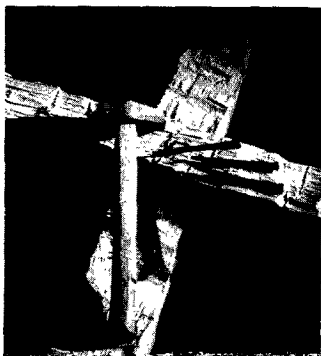
"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34).

The Prince of Peace armed with a sword? Yes, because people are suspicious of differences, critical of individuality, resistant to new ideas, intolerant of high ideals.

Lord, I accept Your gift of peace. If possible, so far as it depends on me, I will live peaceably with others. But I realize that I can neither prevent nor correct all the problems in this world. May I proclaim Your gracious nature to all men so that many may be reconciled and find the peace that only You can give.

Cherry B. Habenicht

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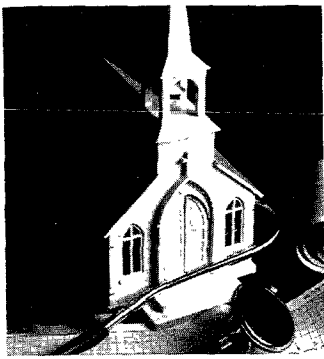
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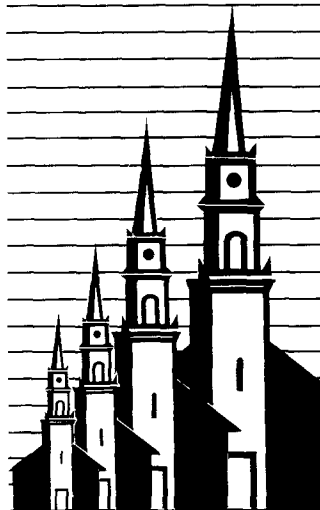
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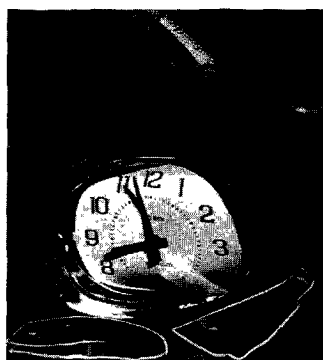
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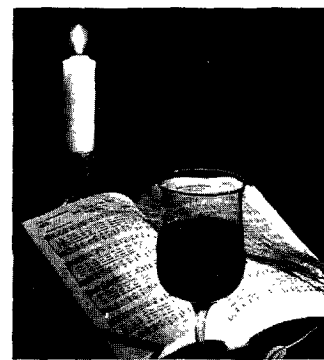
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Recommended reading

A new book by Martens sees one central message in the Old Testament. Other books featured this month discuss a theology of preaching, the sexual revolution, and the stages of a pastor's life.

God's Design: Focusing on Old Testament Theology

Elmer A. Martens, *Baker Book House*, 1981, 368 pages, \$12.95. Reviewed by Herbert Kiesler, associate director, *Biblical Research Institute*.

In the light of the current crisis in Old Testament theology, Martens' book invites us to consider a new approach. Unlike those who distinguish between various theological strands in the Old Testament, Martens sets out to prove that there is but a single central message in the Old Testament—God's design for building the kingdom on earth as in heaven. This design incorporates four essential components: deliverance, community, the knowledge of God, and the abundant life. This fourfold design, according to Martens, is articulated in a passage such as Exodus 5:22-6:8.

The author sees God's design operative in the New Testament, as well, with a certain progression or unfolding God's purpose throughout Old and New Testaments with theological implications for today's believer.

Martens' book is to be commended for its Biblical orientation. On the other hand, we question the author's insistence upon a single or central theme in the Old Testament. Such an approach can hardly do justice to the varieties of Old Testament viewpoints. A more fundamental problem lies with Martens' choice of Exodus 5:22-6:8 as the key to the content of the Old Testament, for Martens leaves us in doubt as to whether another passage could serve the same purpose.

A Theology of Preaching

Richard Lischer, *Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee*, 1981, 112 pages, \$4.95, paper. Reviewed by Norman A. Yeager, pastor, *Plymouth, Michigan*.

This book on the relationship of theology and preaching will renew the desire to preach theologically sound sermons in the light of the Bible's teaching concerning the role of preaching. Lischer builds a sound theology of preaching based on the centrality of the Resurrection—the Resurrection gives authority to preaching and makes it possible to call men to the hearing of the gospel.

The oral word of God is a word of power. It is through His Word that God accomplishes His ends. Thus, it is important that

the preacher understands the power of preaching. This is why the written sermon does not have the power of the spoken one. The sermon is "the word of God for a particular time, place and people" (page 79). This means there must be commitment on the part of the preacher. He must understand that the sermon works; not always at the moment it is preached, but as people hear at some point are confronted with situations that will bring forth responses in harmony with the Word of God.

The Christian in an Age of Sexual Eclipse

Michael Braun and George Alan Rekers, *Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois*, 1981, 224 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by Thomas A. Davis, acting editor of *Your Life and Health*.

This wide-ranging book written by a pastor-psychologist team, goes beyond the problems of sex and looks into the spiritual, philosophical, political, and psychological forces that have shaped the sexual attitudes and beliefs of America.

The authors hold that the sex abuse and perversion found in our present culture is the result of subtle (and not so subtle) forces. In their examination of these forces, the well-nigh universal philosophy of humanism is indicted. They also fault the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) movement, and the National Organization for Women (NOW) as influences tending to pervert sex and the home.

Several chapters are devoted to analyzing Biblical statements touching the question of sex. The authors show that Paul is often misunderstood and accused of sexism because of some of his observations in this area. In a concluding remark upholding Biblical standards of sex, the authors point out that "historically every alternate to biblically based morality has failed. Not only has each failed, but cumulatively, they have had a disastrous global impact on the well-being of human life" (p. 186).

Passages of a Pastor

Cecil R. Paul, *Zondervan*, 1981, 128 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by Myron Widmer, pastor, *Walla Walla, Washington*.

If tensions of the ministry are harrassing you, you are not alone! Psychologist Paul has vividly captured in numerous case-scenarios the inherent stress factors in the

progressive stages of a pastor's life. Dr. Paul concludes that tensions arise from the pastor's attempts to fulfill Christ's commission to a sin-sick and resistant people and to fulfill his own needs, along with those of his family. Caught in the middle of all three, the author suggests a penetrating self-evaluation identifying personal needs, sources of pressures, and patterns for coping.

Recently Published

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah (New International Commentary on the Old Testament). F. Charles Fensham, *Eerdmans*, 1982, 256 pages, \$12.95.

The Daily Study Bible—Old Testament. (Genesis, vol. 1; Genesis, vol. 2; Exodus; Leviticus; Samuel; Psalms, vol. 1; and Daniel now available.) *Westminster Press*; 1981, 1982; \$10.95/\$5.95.

How to Operate a Cassette Tape Ministry. John Hack, *Broadman Press*, 1981, 128 pages, \$3.95, paper.

Managing Today's Church. Robert N. White, editor, *Judson Press*, 1981, 192 pages, \$12.95.

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