

# Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/September 1983



*Grief Recovery*

# Letters

## **Reactivating the Inactive**

My purpose in writing is to lift up praise for the article, "Reactivating the Inactive Member," (May, 1983). This is an excellent article and speaks to one of the toughest questions of church life.—United Church of Christ, Iowa.

## **Pieces really fit**

"Reactivating the Inactive Member," (May, 1983) was excellent. The pieces really fit. I read it on my break and then phoned the number given in the article to order the book by Dr. Savage. The article expressed what I have felt for a long time—that we are somehow failing in our ability to win back the inactive members of our fellowship. I am hopeful that we can put into practice at least some of the article's suggestions in our local parish.

I intend to share the article with several key people who I feel could benefit by it. What a privilege it is to serve the Lord and to be a part of His healing ministry!—Minister's wife, Colorado.

## **Stand your ground on the Word**

Lindsay J. Law's "Preach the Word" (May, 1983) is most timely (as if it were ever untimely)! During my forty years of ministry I have seen many churches lost to an attitude in which the credibility of Scripture is discredited. This has happened to denominations in which I have served, and I have also seen it happen in others. When the Bible is given second place the church is scuttled; the Holy Spirit is rendered impotent; and faith has no sure ground. I pray you will be able to continue to stand your ground on the Word of God; continue to be nurtured by the Spirit; and lead all people to truth.—Chaplain, Texas Department of Corrections.

## **Producers vs. consumers**

Eldred Johnston can more easily indulge his list of sermon requirements now that he is a consumer and not a producer ("The View From the Pew" July, 1983). Those in the congregation

who know what they want from a sermon should have to stand in the pulpit fifty-two times a year, as some of us do, and see whether they can score eight out of eight on Johnston's list each time.—United Methodist Church, California.

As a retired preacher, I agree with Eldred Johnston that it certainly does make a difference on which side of the pulpit one finds himself. In the multitude of things they do each week, preachers should not forget that most of their congregation sees them in action only once a week—behind the pulpit. The sermon is still one of the main ways a pastor makes an impact on his church.—Baptist Church, Georgia.

## **Society and divorce**

I read "Picking Up the Pieces" (July, 1983) with interest. I believe that pastors and churches need to be more sensitive to the needs of the divorced. Such seminars as described in the article can, no doubt, do much to help those who have experienced the trauma of divorce. However, I am concerned at the tendency to let society shape our Christian agenda and witness. In all our efforts to minister to those who have suffered divorce, we must never stop holding up the strong Biblical emphasis on the sanctity of marriage and the permanence of the commitment made when two persons marry.—Church of Christ, Kansas.

## **Different insights**

I have enjoyed reading MINISTRY for several years, but only yesterday did my eyes fall on the paragraph concerning gift subscriptions. This is a godsend to me, for I had anticipated losing the opportunity to read MINISTRY when I move shortly to a new location. Thank you for your ministry through a wonderful and challenging magazine. Our church appreciates the different insights.—Baptist Church, Texas.

Over the past few months I have been able to read your magazine, thanks to my

next-door neighbor, the widow of a Methodist minister. I and my wife have enjoyed a number of the articles. I saw in a recent issue that the magazine can be received free by ordained ministers. I appreciate this gesture of yours and would like very much to receive it myself. May God and His Holy Spirit truly bring about a great revival among our clergy.—Presbyterian Church, Tennessee.

I wish to commend you for your scholarship and the ecumenical spirit of your publication. I have been reading MINISTRY for several years and hope to continue to receive it.—United Church of Christ, Colorado.

Many thanks to you for sharing an exceptionally well-written and edited magazine. As much as we cherish and foster our reformed presentation of the Christian faith, we quite naturally have affection for all members of the "household" and delight in their witness too.—Lutheran Church, Michigan.

If you're receiving MINISTRY bi-monthly without having paid for a subscription, it's not a mistake. Since 1928, MINISTRY has been published for Seventh-day Adventist ministers, but we believe the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. We want to share with you our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help to you too.

We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use. Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy; requests should be on church letterhead.

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# Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/September 1983/Volume 56/Number 9



COVER: DAVE SHERWIN

**Grief Recovery—1/4.** Larry Yeagley. The author begins here a three-part series describing a support program for those experiencing grief. This first article discusses the need for such a program and points out important preparatory work.

**After Death: Resurrection or Immortality?/7.** Robert M. Johnston surveys the major views on what becomes of a person after he dies. Then he shows that the Bible presents resurrection as the Christian's hope for conscious existence after death, and while doing this he affirms the veracity of the Biblical claim.

**A Man Sent from God/12.** Vincent Q. Tigno, Jr. What is the Biblical model for the ideal minister? Is there one? How would you measure up? This article presents both comfort and challenge.

**Anniversary Date for Adventism/15.** Warren H. Johns. Recently charges have been made that the Adventist teaching of a pre-Advent judgment is unscriptural. This article rounds out the response begun in the May and July issues.

**Jesus: God's Supreme Revelation/18.** Elbio Pereyra. Here Jesus is seen in His role as the prophet par excellence.

**What Lies Ahead for the Church?/20.** James R. Newby. The current "wave" of narcissism has crested and will soon recede. Newby suggests what will comprise the next societal wave and calls for the church actively to direct it rather than merely to ride it out.

**Who Are the Christians?/22.** B. Russell Holt. A recent survey shows that a distinction exists in the minds of many Americans between their claim to be Christian and their life styles. Do the church and the ministry have a responsibility regarding this?

**Update on New Testament Archeology/24.** D. Brent Sandy. A growing interest in New Testament archeology has led to the publication of a number of books offering insights into the times of Jesus and the early church.

**To Help Them Cope/26.** Elva McAllaster. Yeagley's article in this issue suggests how to deal with someone's grief in a professional, directed way. This article approaches the same subject on a more personal level, pointing out how one may go beyond the inadequate "if there's anything I can do . . ."

**From the Editor/22**  
**Biblical Archeology/24**  
**Shepherdess/26**

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**Recommended Reading/31**

# Grief Recovery-1

*Simply leave people alone and they will get over grief. That seems to be the usual approach, but a devastating one, according to the author. Grief is an active process, and the sooner it is done, the sooner healing will take place. An experienced pastor and chaplain, Larry Yeagley begins here a three-part series of articles describing Grief Recovery—a proven support program to help individuals deal on a very practical level with their loss. □ by Larry Yeagley*

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*fourteen widows and I sat around a table. During introductions a young widow began hesitatingly to relate her heartbreaking story. Within minutes all fourteen were weeping simultaneously, proof that here was an environment in which it was safe to express feelings of grief.*

Since that November evening six years ago I have conducted forty Grief Recovery Seminars. More than eight hundred grieving persons have been supported by the five-week-group-therapy program and subsequent follow-up. The seminar format is deceptively simple. Through audiovisuals, group dynamics, didactics, and assignments, grieving persons are allowed to identify, own, and express their feelings about loss.

My ideas for Grief Recovery germinated as I began chaplain work in hospital psychiatric units. My informal surveys showed that 40 to 60 percent of the persons admitted were experiencing unresolved grief. I suspected that much of that pain could have been prevented, and that became my goal for Grief Recovery. For the content of the seminars I turned to the people who were actually experiencing grief. They were my textbooks. They opened their lives to me. We walked the painful valley of tears together. Grief Recovery, then, is the contribution of the hundreds of people who risked enough to hurt out loud.

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Larry Yeagley is chaplain of the Huguley Memorial Medical Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

## **Why Grief Recovery?**

In spite of scores of books on death and dying there is still much uncertainty about grief: what it is like and how to deal with it. Dozens of overpowering emotions strike at once when one experiences a loss. The victims of these emotions go reeling into isolation and confusion. They sometimes doubt their own sanity. Caught between the need to talk and not knowing whom to talk to, they sink into helplessness and hopeless despair.

Many grieving people are consumed by anger. Religious people scold them. Pastors sometimes label such anger "sin." Others call it "abnormal." But judgmentalism does nothing to ease their angry feelings.

When I was visiting Haiti I met an American missionary who asked me to contact his sister in the United States. Within a six-month period the sister's baby had died and her husband divorced her. She was angry about her losses, but her church friends told her that she lacked a strong faith. So she stuffed her feelings down inside and wore a faith mask when she had to be around church people. At night she took the mask off and wept alone.

She came to Grief Recovery. There she met others who were experiencing

the same feelings she had. She felt free to admit and express her anger, even her anger toward God. For the first time she realized that her emotions were normal and that expressing her feelings was therapeutic.

Today's fast-paced society has produced a condition of mobility and uprootedness. After several long-distance moves, families have very inadequate support systems. And when there are too few relationships to steady the grieving family, loss can strike at the very roots of family stability.

Grief Recovery provides a temporary support system. The steadying influence of the group facilitates healing and motivates the family to develop a permanent network of relationships. Sometimes members of the group become a part of that permanent network.

Grief is active; the sooner it is done, the sooner will come the healing. This principle is the heart of Grief Recovery. Every issue of loss and grief is openly discussed. Every feeling is taken seriously, and the expression of every feeling is allowed. The weekly assignments and the group discussions help people to face actively the painful reality of loss.

Active grief work that is initiated during the five weekly sessions is sus-

**W**hen a group realizes that long-term support is guaranteed they are more willing to allow grief to happen. They know that somebody will be there when the going gets rough.

tained during the follow-up time, which lasts from twelve to eighteen months, depending on the individual's circumstances. When a group realizes that long-term support is guaranteed they are more willing to allow grief to happen. They become actively involved because they know that somebody will be there when the going gets rough. It really isn't fair to conduct a Grief Recovery seminar without plans to stay with the group over an extended period.

Grief frequently consists of a huge mass of unfocused fears. As long as the fears remain unfocused the grieving person will experience anxiety and confusion. Left to himself the griever may be entwined in the mass of fears for an extended time and even become ill. During Grief Recovery a person hears specific fears and feelings identified in films and group interaction. Frequently I hear people in a group say, "That's it! You put your finger on it! That's what I've been feeling, but I've not been able to put it into words." Once a fear is isolated and identified it can be expressed and handled. It is no longer a part of the confusion.

When the pain of grief strikes it is very easy simply to withdraw as much as possible from life. As the result of pulling away from others at a time when support is so crucial, depression is often present. The group process has a built-in "CPR" mechanism that prevents withdrawal. By CPR I do not mean cardiopulmonary resuscitation. I refer to the resuscitation of the broken spirit. In Grief Recovery, CPR stands for the renewal of *communication, participation, and relationships*.

In a group where everyone is hurting and loss and pain are common denominators it is easier to communicate feelings and practical difficulties. Participation in group activities gives people the courage to try other ventures. Relationships are automatically enlarged by sharing one's time and oneself with a couple dozen people for five weeks. Getting out of the house becomes easier by the time Grief Recovery ends. Withdrawal is less likely to take over a person's life.

CPR in Grief Recovery occurs by the actual choice of a person with a broken spirit. The victim is fully conscious when it is being administered. He not only receives resuscitation, but also actively engages in revitalizing others in the group. This helps to take the focus off of self and renew the realization that there is still a purpose for life.

There are as many ways to grieve as there are people. Putting people into little psychological boxes called phases or stages is offensive to those who grieve. Allowing for these differences is a distinctive characteristic of Grief Recovery sessions. The person who does not care to express feelings is never made to feel out of place. The talkative person is never embarrassed. The group learns that incessant talking and silence are two different ways of reacting to a loss at a given time. Grief Recovery never uses harsh, confrontive techniques of group therapy to push people through grief. Respect for individual differences is developed in the group; *tenderness* and *sensitivity* are the terms that describe what occurs.

The grief support program being described in this series of articles is helpful because it sees grief as a healthy, normal process of bringing life back into focus again, as natural as a clear spring stream flowing down a mountainside, going on to larger things. Grief Recovery does not picture grief as illness. This would be erroneous, and it would dam up the grief and inhibit its flow.

Grief may be natural, but that doesn't mean it is simple or easy to experience. A professional counselor who sat through one of my lectures acted restless and bored. At the conclusion he said, "You seem to be cutting butter with a chain saw. I have yet to see the difficulties you pointed out. If you leave people alone they get over grief."

This gentleman had the philosophy that grief and the common cold are in one way alike. Ignore them and they'll go away. The problem is, this simply isn't true. The common cold can kill you if it is ignored. And grief can be devastating when adequate support is missing.

The alert pastor who provides group programs and one-to-one counseling for parishioners in grief will prevent unnecessary heartache for everyone concerned.

### **Preparation of the presenter**

Conducting seminars for groups of grieving people is no small undertaking. Dealing with people during acute grief requires sensitivity, knowledge of human behavior, and skills in group dynamics. A pastor should not hastily begin such a program. I would suggest careful preparation as outlined in this section of the article.

Basic to all preparation is the examination of motives for conducting Grief Recovery. Some pastors have urged me to teach them how to conduct Grief Recovery Seminars because their recently learned church-growth skills tell them that people make decisions for God at a crisis point. Others feel that this program would give their church good coverage in the press. These motives are obviously unethical. Pastors who conduct Grief Recovery with these motives will not hide that fact very long. The program will die.

Helping people who grieve because they hurt and you love them is the most acceptable motive of all. At some point the Holy Spirit may be successful in leading a grieving person to God. The pastor's care and love may well be a factor in that relationship, and it would certainly be proper to praise God for that event. But the question that needs to be asked is "Would I make this effort to help grieving people even if I knew they would never decide to follow God's will?"

I suggest that the presenter study at least ten good books on the topic of grief. (The third article of this series includes a bibliography.) Taking a weekend intensive or a semester course on death and dying at a university would be advisable. Seminars on grief counseling are being offered in some larger cities.

A good preparation for dealing intensively with grieving persons is volunteer work with a local hospice. These medi-



# **G**rief Recovery never uses harsh, confrontive techniques of group therapy to push people through grief. Respect for individual differences is developed in the group.

cal-care programs for persons with life-threatening illnesses usually offer a fairly adequate training program. Working with one grieving family at a time gives a backlog of experience and confidence to approach a group.

The personal grief of the presenter must be resolved before he attempts the very taxing work of conducting Grief Recovery for a group. Dealing with a group of grieving persons is most difficult when personal grief is fresh. Preoccupation with his own acute grief would prevent the group leader from giving full attention to the pain of others.

The presenter must also be able to consider his personal mortality before conducting grief recovery groups. If this is not done the group's open expression of grief feelings will cause unbearable pain.

The potential presenter should develop skills in group dynamics. There are some well-written books on the topic, and becoming part of a growth group where group functions are learned firsthand would also be advisable.

My best preparation was talking to people who had been through a major loss at least six months earlier. After talking to ten or twelve such persons I was sensitized to the fears, feelings, and needs of grieving people. I continue to do personal interviews with people in grief. It keeps my tools sharp.

Anyone who works with grieving people needs to have a good support system. If this is not available the presenter may build a wall of aloofness that will reduce his effectiveness as a presenter. Aloofness is simply a defense mechanism that is built when the presenter has been touched by the pain of others over and over again without the chance to express that pain. Conducting Grief Recovery Seminars drains the presenter emotionally, physically, and spiritually. It is necessary to have a balanced life style to avoid burnout.

These suggestions on preparation may sound overwhelming. That is not my intent. If the suggestions are implemented slowly over a reasonable length of time, rewards will be realized. With-

out this thorough preparation I could never have sustained my involvement in this program over the past six years.

## **Preparation of the community**

By *community* I mean the public that you wish to serve. This may be your parish. It could be all the churches of a particular denomination within one city. Community can also be the entire populace. It is necessary to define your community before any promotion is done.

Once community is defined you are ready to determine whether Grief Recovery is needed in that community. This can be done by consulting the leading mental health agency or the information and referral service. These and other agencies probably have lists of available programs in your area. Contacting funeral directors and area clergy will be another good gauge of interest. The president of the area medical society may sense a need for such a program. If your community is your parish a survey of all the parishioners would be adequate.

After the need for the program is determined, prepare a brochure. If you are opening the program to the general public you will find distributing the brochures to such key places as funeral homes, libraries, hospitals, physicians' offices, and industrial complexes very helpful. Ask area clergy to insert an announcement of the program in their church bulletin or newsletter, as well.

About two weeks before Grief Recovery begins you may be able to get radio or TV time. I have usually been able to get time on community-calendar programs in both media. Newspaper coverage is indispensable. Some papers will welcome feature articles. Some will do nothing more than sell you ad space.

No program can be a success without public exposure of the presenter. I have spent many hours speaking to church, civic, and medical groups, high schools, and colleges, along with local nursing agencies and hospices. This has been time-consuming, but it has generated interest in the program. Eventually your public-relations agenda will become eas-

ier as satisfied participants steer new individuals into the program.

## **The screening process**

Screening participants is a *must* in my estimation. I once conducted a program in a distant city. Because screening was not done, only 40 percent of the group were actually suffering from a recent loss. The other 60 percent were professionals who wanted to pick up skills and persons who wanted to prepare for a loss in the future. I will never make that mistake again.

To screen, be sure that your advertising requests preregistration by telephone. Tell callers that the program is designed for persons who have experienced a loss. Tactfully ask a caller what his loss is. If he has not had a loss, simply explain that you do not think it is fair to expose grieving persons to observation. Don't hesitate to do this. You *must* create an environment that is conducive to adequate grieving.

If the presenter cannot personally do the screening, somebody should be trained to do it thoroughly. For each participant the screener should record the name, address, telephone number, and the nature of the loss. Send a confirmation letter that includes the time, date, location, and directions.

Occasionally a caller will be having a very difficult time with grief. It may be a week or more before the program begins. When I sense urgency in the person's voice I invite him to see me personally before the program begins. This often releases a lot of pressure and prepares him for the dynamics of the group.

When all the preparation is done and you are ready to welcome your first Grief Recovery group you will be a bit nervous. This is healthy. Recognizing your own weakness will cause you to rely more completely upon the strength of God. Ask for that strength and then trust God to heal the brokenness of those who attend.

(The next part in this series will describe in detail each of the five sessions of a Grief Recovery Seminar.)

# After death: resurrection or immortality?

*Scripture answers the age-old question of what happens after death by pointing to Jesus. He is our example in this as in all things. Much current Christian thought on this subject is an attempt to combine Greek ideas of an immortal soul with Scripture's emphasis on resurrection.*

□ by Robert M. Johnston



*What happens to me after I die? Man has been asking this ultimate question since the beginning of time and has been able to come up with only a few options. The first one is simply that there is nothing beyond death; this life is all there is. Throughout most of history this option has been a relatively rare opinion; belief in*

some form of a future life is even more universal than belief in God or the gods. (Jainism, for example, is theoretically atheistic, yet it believes in the transmigration of souls.)

Evidently the Sadducees of New Testament times believed in no future life, for they did not think it was taught in the five books of Moses, their only Bible, but they did believe in the existence of God. Hence Jesus' rebuke to them in Matthew 22:29: "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God."\*

From time to time certain anthropologists claim to have discovered a tribe, such as the Arunta tribe of Central Australia, that has no belief in survival after death, but later investigators do not confirm the earlier observations. The

denial of an afterlife seems to be mostly limited to relatively sophisticated philosophers or their hearers.

This first option seems to have been characteristic of the late Greco-Roman philosophy, often coupled with hedonism, especially in the case of Epicureanism as it was popularly understood. Despair stands out in the epitaphs that can still be read on the mausoleums of the wealthy along the ancient Roman roads: "I was not, I became; I am not and I care not." "Eat, drink, enjoy yourself, then join us." "While I lived, I lived well; now my little play is ended, soon shall yours be; goodbye and applaud."

These hedonists of despair have their modern counterparts, such as the late Bertrand Russell, who wrote in his autobiography: "What else is there to make life tolerable? We stand on the shore of an ocean, crying to the night and the emptiness; sometimes a voice answers out of the darkness. But it is the voice of one drowning; and in a moment

the silence returns. The world seems to me quite dreadful; the unhappiness of many people is very great, and I often wonder how they all endure it. To know people well is to know their tragedy; it is usually the central thing about which their lives are built. And I suppose if they did not live most of the time in the things of the moment, they would not be able to go on." Such bleakness has been intolerable to most people who think about it.

The typical person throughout most of the world and most of history has adopted a second option. It is some variation of the ghost idea, a vague and gloomy half existence continuing on immediately after death. For this reason most people have not looked forward with relish to death. The earliest Greek conception of the existence beyond was that of a life so thin and gloomy that it was thought better to serve as a hireling upon earth than to reign in Hades. The Semites had a similar conception about Sheol, the abode of the dead, as seen in

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# ne of the central affirmations of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. In fact, this was the core of the apostolic preaching.

the Gilgamesh Epic, in which the hero traverses land and sea trying to find an escape from death, only to lose the antidote when it is almost in his grasp. Quite possibly this was the notion held by the average Hebrew. One can hardly call it a cheerful hope.

It is true that pagans sometimes felt that the afterlife held something better for a select few fortunate ones. Hesiod sang of the Islands of the Blessed, which were reserved for a few favorites of the gods. Early Egyptians built tombs as dwelling places for kings, nobles, and heroes. The Teutons had a Valhalla for their warrior heroes. But all the rest became only shades.

A third option developed from this vague conception of a shadowy afterlife. Under the impulse of ideas imported from elsewhere came the classical idea of natural immortality. About the seventh century B.C. the ideas of the transmigration of souls (reincarnation) and spiritual monism moved into Greece from the East. These notions became doctrines of the Dionysian cult and the Orphic brotherhood and of the Pythagoreans. These movements in turn powerfully influenced the thinking of Plato, the most influential philosopher of all time. The Platonists taught the preexistence and immortality of the soul, which is temporarily imprisoned in the body until it is liberated by death. The influence of Platonism and the mystery religions greatly popularized the idea of natural immortality in some paradisiacal state, and even penetrated Judaism.

Elsewhere the notion of a blessed existence for a few elite dead became popularized and broadened to include larger groups. For example, in Egypt the Osiris cult opened up this more cheerful immortality to all who lived justly in this life and who knew how to say all the right things when they stood before Osiris, judge and king of the realm of the dead.

Finally, there is a fourth option, the idea of resurrection. This idea is unique and peculiar to Biblical religion; there is no real parallel in paganism. Similarities in Zoroastrianism, for example, are probably of late origin and reflect influ-

ences emanating from Judaism. The resurrection of the body stands in striking contrast to the idea of natural immortality of the soul. Immortality of the soul divides man into parts, and hope is placed in something innate within man. By contrast, resurrection of the body depends on seeing the man as a whole, a unit, and hope is placed in a gracious act of God.

Popular piety, both among the majority of Christians and in much post-Biblical Judaism, tries to combine immortality of the soul and resurrection. The idea is that at the last day a resurrection of the body will reunite it with the soul, which since the person's death has been enjoying heaven (or suffering in hell) and apparently getting along quite nicely without the body. Somehow the two ideas do not quite fit together. They seem foreign to each other, and in fact they are.

This hybrid idea requires us to deal with the question in two parts: (1) the so-called intermediate state and (2) the final state of the dead.

It is in the light of Christ that confusion about these matters becomes clear. In the first centuries B.C. and A.D., Judaism was confused by a mixture of ideas about human destiny. These ideas came from many sources, each favored by one of the various Jewish sects of the time. But according to 2 Timothy 1:10, Christ Jesus "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The typical desire in the classical period of Hebrew history was for long life and health (just as it is in classical Chinese thought). The Hebrews used the Semitic term *Sheol* (see Isa. 14:9-11), but in the Bible this is an ambiguous term simply meaning "the abode of the dead," however conceived. In most places it refers to the grave, but in highly figurative and poetic usage (as in Isaiah 14) it cannot be literal. It is a place of darkness (Job 10:22) and silence (see Ps. 88:11, 12). Yet coupled with that prospect, or in spite of it, was trust in the Lord (see Ps. 16:9-11). In Job 19:25, 26, however it is translated, we see an

important new insight coming out of the mist: resurrection of the dead is linked with the expectation of the Messiah.

Especially as the chastisements of the Lord fell upon Israel and Judah, righteous ones were led to look for their hope to a future divine intervention and the setting up of the kingdom of God by the Lord's Anointed, a concept that was attached no longer to a prolonged temporal life, but to the resurrection of the dead. This hope is foreshadowed in Isaiah 25:8; 26:19, and especially in Daniel 12:2. Thus the way was prepared for the New Testament teaching. Coupled with a growing understanding of God's plan revealed through the prophets was an expectation both of the resurrection and of the Messiah.

The New Testament agrees with the Old that this life is short. In the spirit of Psalm 39:4-7, James compares life to the morning mist that is burned off by the rising sun (James 4:14). Only God is immortal (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15, 16). God has inherent and intrinsic immortality; others must receive it from God (see John 5:26).

The dead are spoken of as sleeping (1 Thess. 4:13), but one of the central affirmations of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. In fact, this was the core of the apostolic preaching: "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32). The assertion that Jesus rose bodily from the dead is neither theory nor philosophical concept, but a claim of historical factuality. It is a claim that depends upon the credibility of the witnesses who announced it. The apostle Paul claimed there were more than five hundred such witnesses (1 Cor. 15:3ff.).

Can they be believed? They do not seem to have been hallucinating. Jesus appeared to them on multiple independent occasions. Some of them were not disposed to believe (Matt. 28:17), but doubters like Thomas (John 20:26-29) were persuaded in spite of stubborn skepticism. Neither do the witnesses seem to have concocted an outlandish hoax. Not many people are willing to die for something they know to be a lie. But



**I**f Jesus can live again, so may we! Christ's resurrection opens up eternal life to believers in Him. Such is the bold claim He made: "Because I live, you will live also."

these witnesses were willing to die for their belief in Jesus' resurrection, and they did die for it, beginning with the apostle James (Acts 12:2), and including all the apostles, save perhaps one. As Revelation 12:11 puts it, these witnesses overcame the devil "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." There seems to be no reasonable alternative to confessing that the claim of these witnesses regarding the resurrection is true.

If so, there can be no more important event in history and no more sensational news to announce to the world. If He can live again, so may we! Christ's resurrection opens up eternal life to believers in Him. Such is the bold claim He made: "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19). "I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (Rev. 1:18; cf. 1 Cor. 15:12-20).

This eternal life does not belong to unbelievers (John 3:16, 36), for it is received only as the gift of God (Rom. 6:23). There are conditions to living eternally: "To those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life" (chap. 2:7). "Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:26). "He who does the will of God abides for ever" (1 John 2:17).

Above all, life in Christ depends upon a mystical union with Him; those united in such a relationship with Him have eternal life in principle and in earnest. "For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:3, 4). The gift of eternal life belongs to believers as a heritage as soon as they believe, but they do not enjoy the inheritance until their resurrection. That is the paradoxical insight of the fourth Gospel's phrase "The hour is coming, and now is . . ." (chap. 5:25-29; cf. verses 21, 24; 6:47; 11:25, 26; 1 John 5:13).

While awaiting the resurrection, the sleeping dead are not in heaven, but in Hades, which must (like Sheol in non-

figurative passages) mean the grave. Peter declared: "Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. . . . For David did not ascend into the heavens" (Acts 2:29-34).

The destiny of the righteous, those who believe in the Lord, is resurrection and transformation, as the apostle Paul makes clear in 1 Corinthians 15:49-54 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. Their resurrection is on the model of Christ's resurrection, and He is corporeal (Luke 24:36-43). We must not suppose that the resurrection body is of the same order as the weak and corruptible one we all now possess. Christ "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

There will, however, be two resurrections, and the second one will be temporary. "The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28, 29). "There will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15). The first resurrection results in immortality; the second resurrection is terminated by the second death (read Rev. 20:4-15).

The Apocalypse refers to this second death as a lake of fire (verses 10, 14), elsewhere in the New Testament called *gehenna* (Greek *geenna*, found in Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47). It is called "the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41), but we need not suppose that *eternal* always means "unending," for the Biblical meaning of that word is relative, not absolute. Thus Jude 7 speaks of the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah as "a punishment of eternal fire." Actually the term *gehenna* comes from the Hebrew *Gê Hinnom* ("Valley of Hinnom") a literal valley to the south and southwest of

Jerusalem. There in times of national apostasy the people made human sacrifices of their children to the heathen god Molech. Reforming kings desecrated the site by making it into a city dump where malodorous fires were constantly burning, fueled by refuse and the corpses of criminals. On the farther wall of the valley were sepulchres and burial caves, still to be seen. Thus *Gê Hinnom* became an apt metaphor to describe the indescribable destruction that will ultimately put an end to sin and sinners.

Such is the vision of the twofold final destiny of human beings developed in Scripture. Though it is unique in the history of religion, it is far more satisfying than any of its rivals. It resolves theological, religious, and scientific difficulties.

One theological difficulty that troubled many of the ancients was the ethical question, Why should the body be punished for the sins of the spirit, and vice versa? Those who held to a dualistic view of the nature of man never could arrive at a satisfactory solution to this conundrum. The Biblical view explains still another difficulty: the origin of the soul. Is it somehow infused into the developing body sometime between conception and birth, or is it generated by the parents along with the body? The Biblical view of man as a psychosomatic unity avoids all such puzzles.

The dualistic view of man has historically created such religious problems as an unhealthy asceticism leading to abuse of the body, Gnostic depreciation of the material body, morbid dread of an endless hell, and vulnerability to spiritism and other cults (see Isa. 8:19, 20). Again the Biblical view eliminates such problems.

The Biblical view even resolves modern scientific difficulties. Brain research has confirmed the unity of mind and body, a result that holds no threat for the Biblical view. As one recent writer has pointed out: "Discoveries in biopsychology raise to new levels of credibility an ancient but underappreciated aspect of Christian thought—the holistic view of human nature assumed by the Hebrew people."—David C. Myers, *The Human*

**T**he holistic image implied by the resurrection doctrine is deeply consistent with the holistic anthropology of the Old and New Testaments—and with the emerging scientific picture.”

Puzzle, p. 42. “The holistic image implied by the resurrection doctrine is deeply consistent with the holistic anthropology of the Old and New Testaments—and with the emerging scientific picture as well.”—*Ibid.*, p. 86.

All this is now well known to Christian psychologists, Biblical scholars, and theologians. Among themselves they freely accept it and take it for granted,

but it is not as well known by the people in the pews. Thirty years ago when New Testament scholar Oscar Cullmann published his little book, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead? The Witness of the New Testament*, the reaction in Europe was typified by one letter writer who complained that “the French people, dying for lack of the bread of life, have been offered instead of

bread, stones, if not serpents.”

The writer had it wrong. Courageous scholars like Cullmann offer what the Christ of the New Testament offers—bread instead of air!

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

## Prominent Christians in support of conditionalism

Conditionalism is the belief that man is not immortal by nature, but that immortality is granted as a gift conditional upon the acceptance of God's grace granted through the sacrifice of Christ. Conditionalists deny that there is an eternally burning hell, although generally they do not deny the existence of a literal heaven and hell. According to Scripture, the reward of the righteous is eternal life, and the reward of the wicked is eternal death, or extinction (John 5:28, 29; Rom. 6:23).

The following selected names have been excerpted from among the many given in LeRoy Edwin Froom's *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1966). Information for ordering this two-volume set can be found on the opposite page.

### First and second centuries

Apostolic Fathers: Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Barnabas, Hermas, Polycarp of Smyrna.

Ante-Nicene Fathers: Justin Martyr (partly conditionalist), Theophilus of Antioch, Melito of Sardis, Irenaeus.

### Fourteenth century

John Wycliffe. Called the Morning Star of the Reformation; translator of Scripture into English.

### Sixteenth century

Martin Luther. Some of his statements clearly conditionalist, others not so clearly.

William Tyndale. Graduate of Oxford and Cambridge, translator of Scripture.

Michael Servetus. Martyred in 1553 in Geneva because of his rejection of the Trinity, infant baptism, and immortality of the soul.

### Seventeenth century

John Milton. Blind poet, author of *Paradise Lost*.

John Canne. First to introduce marginal notes into the English Bible.

John Locke. Christian philosopher in England.

### Eighteenth century

Joseph Priestley. Devout chemist, discoverer of the element oxygen.

Edmund Law. Bishop of Carlisle, wrote *Considerations on the State of the World With Regard to the Theory of Religion* (1745).

### Nineteenth century

Richard Watson. Secretary of Wesleyan Missionary Society, and systematizer of Wesleyan theology in his two-volume *Theological Institutes* (1824).

Robert Hall. Famous Baptist preacher and author of six-volume *Works*.

Richard Whately. Anglican archbishop of Dublin. His conditionalist work *A View of the Scripture Revelations Concerning a Future State* (1829) had eight editions.

F. W. Farrar. Anglican dean of Canterbury, prolific author. His *Sermon III of Eternal Hope* (1878) advocates conditionalism.

H. L. Hastings. Advent Christian author.

John H. Pettingell. Congregationalist, his *The Life Everlasting* (1882) being a landmark volume on conditionalism.

Henry Ward Beecher. Noted Congregationalist preacher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, who also was a conditionalist.

Lyman Abbott. Congregationalist who took the place of Henry Ward Beecher.

John Darby. Plymouth Brethren expounder on prophecy.

Charles H. Parkhurst. Pastor of Madison Square Presbyterian church, New York City.

Emmanuel Petavel. Swiss theologian, author of *The Problem of Immortality* (1891-1892).

William E. Gladstone. Prime minister of Great Britain.

### Twentieth century

William Temple. Archbishop of Canterbury.

James Moffatt. Translator of Moffatt's Bible, Free Church of Scotland.

Emil Brunner. Some conditionalist thoughts expressed in his *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*.

Oscar Cullmann. Professor at University of Basel. Author of one of the most significant conditionalist works of the twentieth century, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?*

David Elton Trueblood. Quaker professor of philosophy. See chapter 20 of his *Philosophy of Religion* (1957).

# Death the ultimate concern

Pastors are particularly concerned with death, as it is one of the major issues with which religion deals. Two basic alternative understandings have arisen within Christianity as to what happens when someone dies—beliefs in the natural or the conditional immortality of man. Every pastor needs to consider carefully these alternatives in order to give appropriate guidance and comfort to those who look to him for spiritual leadership.

L. E. Froom's two-volume set, *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers*, is a most meticulously-researched reference work on this topic. Froom traces these alternatives—and the corollary belief, eternal torment—from their sources through their historical development to their eschatological function. He is very thorough in dealing with both the Biblical and the historical materials.

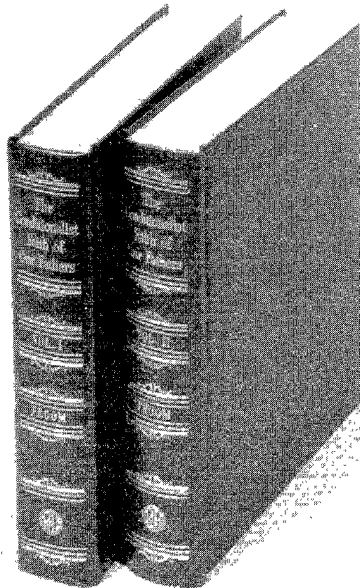
And while he has written a solid work, Froom's style is readable rather than technical.

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# A man sent from God

*As in times of old, God still chooses the most unlikely candidates for His ministry. Today there is a place in God's army for all kinds of men—the poor and the rich, the educated and the uneducated, the gifted and the average. □ by Vincent Q. Tigno, Jr.*

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**M**ost of the men God used to found His church would never be allowed into the ministry today.

John the Baptist, a preacher? You can't be serious! Look at his résumé. The man's sole asset seems to be a stentorian voice that can penetrate the wilderness. Hardly enough to qualify him

for the ministry. And he has no diplomacy. Imagine calling people "vipers" in public! Think what that will do to the public relations image of the church.

He's too independent anyway; no

team player. He stands up to anybody, even a king. An attitude like that is guaranteed to rock the boat and bring problems to a committee. And his personal appearance is a matter of concern too. He despises pontifical robes or even a conservative three-piece suit, and goes around in strange clothes made of animal skins.

Furthermore, the fellow is simply not sociable. We've gotten a number of complaints that he won't eat and drink with the people (Luke 7:33). He lives out in the desert. How can he win the love and confidence of the people, how

can he effectively minister to them, if he doesn't visit them in their homes or mingle with them in their parties? Worst of all, the man's faith and theology look a little shaky. One day he boldly declares Jesus to be the promised "Lamb of God" (John 1:29); a few days later he sends two of his followers to ask whether Jesus is indeed the one or whether they should "look . . . for another" (Luke 7:19).

Nevertheless, "there was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (John 1:6).

Simon Peter? You mean the fisherman from Bethsaida? Can he preach? We've

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**T**he Lord doesn't pick men and send them forth because they are tactless, self-serving, rough, or ignorant! But He has sent men forth in spite of these liabilities.

had reports that at least one time when he tried to preach, many in the audience thought he was drunk (Acts 2:14, 15). It's up to the board, but the man doesn't even have a high school certificate. He's sort of strange too, isn't he? Didn't he try to walk on water once?

What about his tendency to lie when put on the spot (Matt. 26:69, 70)? Do you think a liar should be a preacher? And he's prone to rash promises and braggadocio. One time he vowed to go to jail with Jesus or even to the death chamber, and then at the first sign of trouble he disappeared and tried to hide his identity. He also assaulted a man, didn't he (John 18:10)? It's a good thing the victim didn't press charges! That *would* have jeopardized the church's group liability insurance. Besides, we can't have a minister who goes around beating up people! He has two friends who want to be ministers as well, I understand. James and John Zebedee. People call them the "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). It sounds to me as if all three would make better prize fighters than ministers!

Nevertheless, *"Jesus saith to Simon Peter, . . . lovest thou me? . . . He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs"* (John 21:15).

Saul of Tarsus? Wait a minute! Isn't that the man who used to carry out contracts for the Jerusalem mob? What on earth is happening to this church? What guarantee do we have that he is really a born-again Christian? A lot of these criminal types use religion to con their way into society. They say that the man is quite intelligent, too. In fact, he graduated from the university *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa. That makes him doubly risky. It's safer to have men with average IQ's, you know. They don't cause as many problems for administration.

Nevertheless, *"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, . . . that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry"* (1 Tim. 1:12).

God sent a man! Not just one or two or three, but many men with serious

character flaws and things in their past that should have been cause for grave concern. What are we to understand from this? Isn't God particular? The ministry is a high calling, isn't it? A holy office? A profession for the well-educated, the trained, and the polished?

Similar thoughts must have crossed the mind of Samuel when God selected David. "David instead of Saul? Is this a precedent for mediocrity in the ministry? The youthful shepherd whose cheeks flush at the sight of every attractive girl? Are You sure, Lord? The young fellow has a proneness to violence! Mark my words, someday he might even commit murder!"

Indeed, why *did* the Lord opt for the "foolish" and the "weak" to comprise His ministerial force (1 Cor. 1:27)? The key is found in 1 Samuel 16:7. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." No, the Lord doesn't pick men and send them forth *because* they are tactless, self-serving, rough, or ignorant! But He has sent men forth in spite of these liabilities. God looks not at the considerations we usually examine; instead, He looks into the innermost recesses of a man's heart. There He can objectively read whether that man can be used or not. And what does God look for primarily? *Above all else, the Lord wants to see whether a man will go into the ministry to glorify God or to glorify himself!* "He must increase, but I must decrease," declared John the Baptist (John 3:30). "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," added Paul (1 Cor. 2:2). "There is none other name," Peter proclaimed as he directed the crowd to the Christ (Acts 4:12).

Theological degrees can be secured; languages and philosophies can be learned; homiletics and preaching styles can be developed and cultivated; but only God can effectively deal with the human heart, which is the wellspring of all thoughts and actions. "The heart is deceitful" (Jer. 17:9). Therefore, it's very easy to be in the ministry for the wrong reason. Many small men seek

large responsibilities and high office in order to be somebody. The ministry is a high office in which it is very easy to say, "I will be like the most High" (Isa. 14:14). The ministry is a fertile ground for producing an overdeveloped ego. It can be exhilarating to stand above the crowd and hear the people roar, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (Acts 12:22). It can be heady to preside over a group of sycophants. It can be pleasant to be escorted to the head table and lavished with the usual servile deference. It can be exciting to be handed the "Man of the Year" plaque.

God looks into a man's heart, and when He sees it is in the heart of that man to serve Him for no other purpose than to glorify Him, the Lord will take care of the rest. He will assume the responsibility for that man's fitness. He will mold, train, and equip that man for the "work of the ministry" (Eph. 4:12). He will put him in His training school—the University of Divine Providence. That man will make mistakes, probably many of them, because he is but a man. Yet the Lord will send him forth into the game of life as a valued member of His team. Periodically, He will summon him to the sidelines for further instructions. Then He will send him back out on the playing field to do his best. At the end of the game that man will bring home the trophy, and he will present it to the Lord, to whom it rightly belongs.

The early disciples established a precedent that would pay the modern Christian church to follow as it endeavors to appoint ministers. The early disciples spent considerable time in sincere and fervent prayer crying out, "Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew which of these . . . thou hast chosen" (Acts 1:24). What a tragedy that modern committees are satisfied with the standard two-minute invocation because the business agenda is long and needs to be completed as quickly as possible! The early disciples "cast lots" because they wanted to be really sure that the outcome was God's will and not the result of influential lobbying by a segment of the

**T**ribulation was their ticket to triumph; grief their portal to greatness; scars were the price of their scepters; their crowns were cast from crucibles of affliction.

church. Some Bible students believe that Judas Iscariot finagled his way into the ministry through his impressive qualifications and clever pulling of strings. If so, it did him little good. Fitness for God's work is more dependent upon the unction of the Holy Spirit than natural abilities and the training provided by literary institutions.

For what purpose does God send forth a man? Different men are called for different roles and ministries, yet the purpose is but one—to prepare the way of the Lord, and to proclaim the good news of salvation (Matt. 3:1-3; Mark 16:15). There is no other objective. Therefore, if any man wants to be in God's service, he must be there for no other purpose than to glorify God. If a man wants to make a name for himself or erect a monument to himself, let him do so outside of the ministry. In the day of ultimate reckoning, many who have occupied a place in God's work will approach Christ with their statistical reports labeled "Many Wonderful Works" (Matt. 7:22, 23). But they will be turned away. In the first place, they already have had their reward (chap. 6:1, 2). Those men whom God has sent have not yet received their rewards. Their rewards won't be dispensed till the second coming of Jesus (Rev. 22:12). John the Baptist died alone in Herod's gaol; Peter and Paul died alone somewhere in Caesar's prison system; all the other apostles died in equally remote and lonely places. Unsung, unheralded, unrecognized by the secular as well as the religious institutions of their times, they slid into unmarked resting places, known only to God.

"Whom shall I send?" (Isa. 6:8). God's work on earth is not yet completed. God still needs men to go on missions for Him. The battleground is still formidable and forbidding. The great majority of the modern world today is not Christian. Secularism, atheistic communism, materialism, and a host of "isms" of every sort are marching up and down the length and breadth of the earth under various guises and colors, and each time they pass they pick up a sizable

following. Men of God are sorely needed to stem the tide!

To stop the onslaught, God needs Christian heroes! That means the Christian ministry must be more than just an array of trained professionals. Christian organizations must be more than just a cartel of professed experts with charts and computers. Seminars and structured sessions must not supersede genuine sessions of prayer. The men of God, in days of old, gave the forces of darkness a real battle and a fight. Under God's mighty power, they caused kings and rulers to shake on their thrones and tremble inside their royal robes. They did not purposely and deliberately court persecution, but neither was their primary purpose to have their pictures taken with the high and the mighty for the sake of public relations. Under the power of the One who sent them they

Such a preparation period is painfully puzzling and protracted. From Pharaoh's palace, Moses had to settle into a dreary internship in the dry desert. Forty years of obscure training can test the most formidable fortitude. From the high point of transfiguration mountain's magic moment, Peter, James, and John descended into the sinister shadow of Gethsemane, where they heard the Master's sympathetic comment: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). Some hours later they would experience from a distance the agony of Golgotha's gory details. Paul flinched from the blinding flash of the Damascus road encounter, and all through the rest of his earthly life would carry a "thorn in the flesh." John the Baptist had his own "bitter cup" that none but the lonely and the brave would know by experience. In actuality, God's

**F**rom Pharaoh's palace, Moses had to settle into a dreary internship. From the high point of transfiguration, Peter, James, and John descended into the shadows of Gethsemane.

caused nations and peoples to repent in sackcloth and ashes; under divine direction, they led three thousand souls into the kingdom in one day without props or gimmicks! They had hardly any "silver and gold" (Acts 3:6), but under God they enriched the lives of many for eternity.

The men whom God sent were men of clay, beset with the frailties of humanity, but under God's tutelage, wise direction, and enabling grace and power, they turned in a golden performance. They were put through the winepress of human woe; tribulation was their ticket to triumph; grief was their portal to greatness; scars were the price of their scepters; their crowns were cast from crucibles of affliction. But this made it truly meaningful: Christ led the way! The Man of Sorrows had trodden the winepress first and alone.

men are subject to discipline all their lives. All of them have had to walk in life's inclement weather, subject to its blows, but built up in the spirit. Betrayed by friends as well as enemies, they bounded back, the true bearers of God's banner.

In these final stages of His work on earth God still sends forth men. And there is a place in God's army for all kinds of men—the poor and the rich, the educated and the uneducated, the gifted and the average, the strong and the weak. It is God who equips and empowers. Some will be sent to do big things; others will carry out small errands. But whatever their background and whatever their task, they are all men of God, God-chosen, God-trained, God-sent! The only requirement is that they be willing to follow and to give all the glory to God.



# Anniversary date for Adventism

*The church of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is faced with a problem: How does it account for the apparent delay of Christ's second advent? More than one hundred years ago a small group came up with an answer that still merits a close look. □ by Warren H. Johns*



Anniversaries and birthdays are meaningful only to the ones experiencing them. Holidays and memorial days hold significance only to those who are intimately connected with the celebrated events or to those who are the descendants of the ones originally involved in the events. Three summers ago I was attending some

meetings in Paris, and early in the morning of July 14 I heard the continuous rumble of what I thought at first was heavy construction machinery going past our hotel. Soon I discovered that hundreds of tanks and army vehicles were streaming down the wide Boulevard de la Grande Armée, in preparation for the celebration of the French independence day. I followed the procession to the Arc de Triomphe (Arch of Triumph), where I witnessed a most impressive military display. What a thrill to see the French president, Giscard d'Estaing, saluting the crowd from a military vehicle less than 100 feet from where I stood! However, had I been in the United States at the time, the date of July 14, which commemorates the storming of the Bastille in 1789, would have passed by totally unnoticed.

Likewise July 4 is meaningful only to an American, and July 1, Dominion Day, only to a Canadian citizen. The twenty-fifth of Kislev, commonly known as the first day of Hanukkah, brings on a warm

glow only to those of Jewish descent. In the same manner the date October 22, 1844, holds significance and hallowed memories only to Seventh-day Adventists, and we would not expect it otherwise. We will review here why this date holds such importance to us as a church, but at the same time we would not expect that it would occupy a similar place for others. Of these we simply ask for a willing ear.

October 22, 1844, marks the birth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, although its formal organization did not take place until nearly two decades later. But this date is more than the beginning of a church; it is the beginning of a movement, a movement so broad that it links Creation with the Second Advent, yet so small in its beginning that it was composed of a handful of families living in New England in the 1840s. It is more than a date; it is an event—not simply an event composed of earthly happenings, but an event of cosmic significance involving the heavenly sanctuary.

The date 1844 is at the terminal end of the Bible's longest time prophecy, the 2300-day/year prophecy of Daniel 8:14.

The story does not begin simply with Daniel the prophet, however, but it begins much earlier in history. Whenever this planet of ours has experienced a spiritual crisis, God has sent a prophet or given a prophetic blueprint for His people to follow. Through Noah, His special messenger, the Lord gave a 120-year prophecy that ended with the destruction of the old world in a watery grave. The ark became the cradle for a newly born church headed by Noah, "a preacher of righteousness." Israel's escape from Egypt marked the termination of a 400-year prophecy given to Abraham (see Gen. 15:13; cf. Ex. 12:40, 41). Having been baptized in the Red Sea, "the church in the wilderness" was born, and its birth was marked by a time prophecy. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

Daniel the prophet was called to meet another crisis. His homeland was in shambles, his people were in disarray, like sheep without a shepherd, and the former pride of Israel, the Temple, had become not much more than a rock heap. Daniel was in constant mental

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**L**argely from a study of Daniel 8:14, Miller projected the literal return of Christ to be in the fall of 1844. He interpreted the cleansing of the sanctuary to mean the final cleansing of the earth by fire.

agony as he tried to contemplate what it would take to resurrect and reconstruct the Temple and its services. During the third year of Belshazzar's reign (about 550 B.C.) Daniel was given a prophetic vision, or blueprint, portraying to him a temple that exceeded both the time and space limitations of his finite understanding. The new temple with its new order was not to be Palestinian nor was it to be sixth century B.C. It was to be eschatological, not contemporary to Daniel; it was to be cosmic, and not local.

The conversation which Daniel overheard (while presumably still in vision) was as follows: "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" (chap. 8:13). The answer came back: "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (verse 14). A superficial glance at this prophecy might suggest that it was to meet fulfillment in the reconstruction of the Jerusalem Temple, perhaps under Zerubbabel. But this prophetic dialog must be viewed within the context of the whole chapter. The "vision" mentioned here includes the Persian, Greek, and Roman empires that were symbolized by the "ram," the "he goat," and the "little horn." Since the vision encompassed the existence of the Roman empire as well as the preceding Persian and Greek empires, the work of cleansing the Temple could not apply to the Jerusalem Temple. There was no rebuilding or refurbishing of the Temple during Roman times, although there was such during the Persian and Greek periods. God wanted Daniel to look beyond his own nationalistic aspirations; in fact, one of the reasons the Lord has given His people apocalyptic messages is to widen their vision beyond their narrow nationalistic concerns.

The specific time period, the 2300 days (literally "2300 evening-morn-

ings"), does not fit into any events or combination of events in Daniel's time when interpreted literally. Like the 70 weeks of the neighboring chapter (Dan. 9), the 2300 days can best be explicated on the basis of one prophetic day equaling one year of time—the "year-day principle," which is illustrated in passages outside of the apocalyptic (see Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6). Thus God wanted the prophet to look far beyond the horizon of his own time and gave him the 2300-year prophecy for that purpose.

Daniel still was torn between focusing on the temporal (the Temple lying in ruins hundreds of miles to the west of him) and the cosmic or eschatological. The timing was crucial to him: Would 2300 days, or more than six years, be tacked on to the end of the 70 years already predicted by Jeremiah for the Babylonian captivity? At the close of the prophetic dialog over the 2300 days, an angel visitor of no less stature than Gabriel himself uttered these words to the puzzled prophet: "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision" (verse 17).

However, more than a decade later Daniel still did not understand. He was grappling with the meaning of Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy as it related to the 2300 day/years (Dan. 9:2). According to the ensuing narrative, Gabriel himself appeared before the prophet a second time with the words: "Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision" (chap. 9:23). In the intervening years no new vision had been granted Daniel; therefore, Gabriel was referring to the puzzlement over the meaning of the 2300 day/years described in the previous chapter. The explanation came in the form of a new time prophecy, the 70 weeks. Since the 70 weeks was given as an explanation of the 2300 days, then both must be interpreted on the same basis, and both must have the same starting point. The starting point for the 70 weeks was made crystal clear: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks,

and threescore and two weeks" (chap. 9:25). The beginning of this prophecy can be nailed down to 457 B.C., and the end of the 69 prophetic weeks, or 483 years, found its precise fulfillment in the baptism or anointing of Christ in A.D. 27. This remarkably accurate prophecy can be interpreted only on the basis of the year-for-a-day principle. So with the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14. They must represent 2300 years. Daniel 9 becomes the key for unlocking the meaning of Daniel 8.

Now that the starting point of the 2300 years has been affixed to 457 B.C., we can then establish its terminal point as being A.D. 1844. What is specially significant about the year 1844? From a purely historical perspective, it is no different than any other given year in the nineteenth century. Obviously, if 1844 is the end of the Bible's longest time prophecy, then serious Bible students must have taken note of it. Indeed, in the early nineteenth century the world experienced an awakening expectation of the imminent return of Christ.

The most prominent preacher in the 1830s and early 1840s to proclaim Christ's fast-approaching advent was William Miller. His followers, reaching about 100,000 in number, became known as Millerites. Based largely on a study of Daniel 8:14, Miller projected the literal return of Christ to be in the fall of 1844. He interpreted the cleansing of the sanctuary to mean the final cleansing of the earth by fire, followed by the creation of new heavens and new earth (2 Peter 3:7-13). But Miller was wrong on two major points: (1) the cleansing contains no hint in it that it is a cleansing by fire; (2) the sanctuary is not a reference to the earth.

What, then, is the prophetic significance of Daniel 8:14? As mentioned previously, God always provides a prophet or a prophetic blueprint whenever a major spiritual crisis or turning point occurs. It would be strange indeed if the Lord brought a major prophecy, such as the 2300 years in 1844, to a climax without having *anyone* know the significance of it. He never gives a

**C**hrist, then, is at the center of the judgment, and His spotless robe symbolizing His righteousness is conveyed to His people. The message of the judgment is that we are saved by faith in Christ.

message without inaugurating a movement, and contrariwise, He never calls a movement without providing it with a message. The crisis of the 1840s was the nonreturn of Christ, and the post-1844 bewilderment was concerning the question of why the world had not come to an end as the prophetic timetable seemingly predicted.

At that time a little nucleus of Seventh-day Adventists was formed, and through careful Bible study they concluded that the answer to the delay, or apparent delay, of the Second Advent was to be found in the high priesthood of Christ. Significantly their Bible-based answers for the delay of the Advent are precisely the answers that hold relevance for us living some 140 years later. The answer is not to be found by spiritualizing away the Second Coming so that it becomes the spiritual reign of the presence of Christ in the hearts of His people. The answer is simply that certain events must take place before the Advent, and one of these is the pre-Advent judgment, which takes place in the heavenly sanctuary.

The cleansing of the sanctuary, then, is not the cleansing of the earth by fire, but a carrying on of the work of judgment within the confines of the heavenly sanctuary. The book of Hebrews tells us that the sanctuary is no longer on earth, but in heaven. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Heb. 9:22, 23). Scripture clearly gives support to the reality of a heavenly sanctuary (Psalm 102:19, Heb. 8:1-5, Rev. 11:19). The focus of the cleansing of the sanctuary should be directed toward heaven rather than earth.

What is the God-given message that accompanied the newborn movement of the 1840s? The message actually is threefold: (1) Christ's righteousness should be viewed not only from the standpoint of the cross, but also from the

standpoint of His mediatorial role in the heavenly sanctuary. (2) The law of God should be seen as the basis of God's government, the reflection of His character, and the standard by which He judges. (3) The sanctuary is the site of the pre-Advent judgment, in which the righteous, both living and dead, are to be judged.

One may rightfully ask, How is all this deciphered from the cryptic message of Daniel 8:14? Simple. One does not have to rely solely upon this one text, because many other passages amplify and illuminate it. The mention of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 suggests a heavenly sanctuary because of the demise of any earthly tabernacle/temple long before the end of the 2300 years. The year/day principle takes the "2300 evening-mornings" far beyond the time of Daniel and eliminates any earthly event as marking the fulfillment of that prophecy. This is borne out by an examination of Daniel 8 and 9, which should be treated as Siamese twins—inseparable.

The existence of the sanctuary implies a priesthood, and the book of Hebrews provides us with the most detailed description of this priesthood. The new order, established at the cross, is as much higher than the old Aaronic priesthood as the heavens are higher than the earth. Since the 2300 years reach their climax clearly this side of the cross, they must find their fulfillment in the heavenly sanctuary and priesthood of Christ, the earthly services having been abolished at the cross (Matt. 27:51, Col. 2:14-17).

The existence of a priesthood, then, suggests a priestly ministry accompanied by services of some kind. The finest window we have for viewing the activities and services of the heavenly is provided in the earthly tabernacle and its services. The sanctuary teaches us that there is a direct correlation between what happened under the Aaronic priesthood and what takes place under the high priesthood of Christ, although in a different sphere and on a different magnitude. If this were not true, then the book of Hebrews would not have been written or entered the sacred

canon. The Passover service met its direct fulfillment in the sacrifice of Christ, our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7). The great harvest festivals, the waving of the firstfruits, and the final harvest of the feast of the tabernacles pictorialize for us Christ's resurrection and the final resurrection of His saints (1 Cor. 15:23).

If there were services and festivals connected with Christ's heavenly priesthood, then we would expect the Day of Atonement to be included. All the sacrifices connected with Jewish services were fulfilled at the cross. Likewise the sacrificial aspects of the Day of Atonement were fulfilled at Calvary. However, according to Leviticus 16, the Day of Atonement involved more than the offering of sacrifices; it also included the removal of sin from the camp, symbolized by the scapegoat, or Azazel. But sin has not been removed from the camp of God's people today. True, Christ has already paid the price for sin on the cross, but sin still exists. The final removal of sin is yet future and cannot take place until the wheat is separated from the tares, the good fish from the bad, and the sheep from the goats. The Day of Atonement, then, depicts a work of judgment—the separation of sin from the camp. Since the righteous receive their rewards at the Second Advent (Rev. 22:12), they must be judged before the Advent. No other Levitical ceremony depicts so graphically the work of judgment as does the Day of Atonement.

The heavenly sanctuary becomes the setting in which the judgment takes place. God's throne is situated in the middle of the sanctuary—in fact, surrounded by the cherubim, which were two in number in the earthly tabernacle. "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims" (Psalm 99:1; cf. 103:19). The very heart of the sanctuary, known as the Holy of Holies, contains the ark of the covenant, which is described by the Revelator (Rev. 11:19). Just as the earthly ark contained the tables of the law, so the heavenly in a sense contains the eternal law of God. It is significant

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# Jesus: God's supreme revelation

*While we often think of Christ as a priest or king, we do not usually picture Him in the role of prophet. Josephus considered Daniel to be "the greatest of all the prophets," but Josephus was wrong. Christ is "the greatest of all the prophets"! □ by Elbio Pereyra*

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he first three verses of the book of Hebrews constitute a magnificent and well-fitted introduction for such a Christ-centered book. "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom

also he created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power" (R.S.V.).\*

The basic thought is that God spoke; He did not keep silent. He revealed Himself, and He revealed all things necessary for human salvation. He spoke by the Son. This unique Son of God is presented as having six impressive characteristics: (1) He is heir of a final, universal destiny; (2) He is Creator, the agent in bringing all things into being; (3) He is divine, like God the Father, reflecting His glory; (4) His nature is divine; (5) He governs, guides, pre-

serves, and controls what He created; and (6) He is Redeemer. The last point suggests His priesthood, mediatorial work, and final exaltation. Think what would happen to us poor sinners if God had not spoken as He did, if Christ had not come to earth as He did, if Christ had not spoken and revealed God as He did!

The text suggests that there was a divine revelation "of old," and that there is also a revelation "in these last days," by which the author means the very days in which he was living.

The revelation "of old to our fathers" was fragmentary. The Greek gives the idea of a partial, given-in-portions revelation that was bestowed bit by bit as needed and as the recipients were able to receive it. The Scriptures themselves demonstrate that this is what happened.

Genesis 1:28-30 constitutes the first recorded fragment of revelation or divine communication by God to man. It consists of a blessing and certain commandments given to our first parents. In the next four books of Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) the expression "God spoke to Moses," or similar words, appears approximately 180 times. Exodus and Numbers have some 70 percent of the total of such references. Deuteronomy, because it is a repetition of previous materials, has about 7 percent. The book of Jeremiah contains the expression "Thus saith the Lord" more than four hundred times. Therefore, it is certainly true that God has spoken many times, or in many portions in the past.

However, God spoke not only at

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**J**esus is superior to all the prophets, even to the great Moses.  
He is superior to the angels, even the most glorious of them.  
He is greater than Aaron, the first and great high priest.

different times but also in "various ways" (or "divers manners," according to the K.J.V.). This suggests that God speaks not only *when* He wants, *what* He wants, and through *whom* He wants, but the *way* He wants.

At times He spoke personally, face to face, through voices from heaven. The Bible records such theophanies or appearances of God. He also spoke through His creative works and His many acts in history. Sometimes He spoke through objective elements, as in Jeremiah 18. He made use of Urim and Thummim, visions, dreams, psalms, parables, laws and rituals, ceremonies, types and symbols, and even through the providences and circumstances of life. Musicians were inspired by God when interpreting melodies played by different musical instruments, as in the cases of Asaph, Jeduthun, Heman, and even David (see 1 Chron. 16:37-42; 25:1-6; 2 Chron. 35:15).

But the most common way that God spoke was through prophets and prophetesses. Abraham was the first individual that God Himself called a prophet. He was the first to receive visions from God and also the first of whom it is said that "the word of the Lord came unto . . ." (Gen. 15:1; 20:7). One hundred prophets that were contemporary with Ahab, Jezebel, and Elijah are mentioned in 1 Kings 18. Prophets are mentioned twenty-six times in 2 Chronicles, with twenty names specifically given in addition to the unidentified "seers," "messengers," and "men of God." If we had lived in Palestine at that time, we might have lived next door to a prophet or been related to one! The word "prophet" appears thirty-one times in Acts and fourteen in the writings of Paul. The verb "prophecy" is used thirty-eight times in Acts and eleven in the writings of Paul, most of them in Corinthians.

Prophets were not only spokesmen for God; in a sense, they were *mediators* between God and men. When a true prophet speaks through inspiration, by the Lord, it is God who speaks. This is what the Thessalonians believed about Paul's words and what Paul himself

believed (1 Thess. 2:13).

But following these fragmentary and varied revelations of God, when the time was ripe, this world became the object of a new revelation. Not a spoken or written word, but a "living Word," the Son of God Himself. The coming of Jesus introduced the Messianic kingdom, and the Messianic kingdom is the beginning of the end, the consummation of human history as it is under the dominion of sin. The author of Hebrews used an expression variously translated as: "in the last days"; "in this final age"; "now at the end of the present age." Similar terms appear also in Peter and Jude's writings (1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18).

The author of Hebrews contrasts the old, fragmentary, portion-by-portion revelation with the new revelation by the Son. The new is more comprehensive; it is original, more effectual, authoritative, and inerrant. Luther, who did not hold to the inerrancy of the Bible, once said that Jesus is the essential Word of God, that He only has no error. God the Father Himself announced: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). It is significant that these words were spoken when Jesus was talking with two prophets, Moses and Elijah.

Jesus is the greatest of the prophets. In fact, the word "prophet," as applied to Jesus, means much more than what is implied generally in the word. He is *the prophet*, the best interpreter of Divinity, the supreme revelation of God, the final revelation, not in point of time, but in quality.

He is the true prophet of God, the best spokesman, interpreter, and mediator between God and man. All other prophets, even the prophets who came after Jesus, were only a shadow of the greatest of the prophets. Jesus is the true antitypical prophet foreshadowed in the Old Testament prophetic institution—the PROPHET in capital letters and par excellence.

Many humble, uneducated, but Spirit-illuminated people recognized His prophetic office. Herod the king thought that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from

the dead, but the people, with clearer insight, declared that He was a prophet (Mark 6:15, 16). After Jesus performed the resurrection at Nain, the people reacted by saying: "A great prophet is risen up among us." "God hath visited His people" (Luke 7:16). On the Sunday that Christ was resurrected, Cleopas and his companion told the Master what had happened to "Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (chap. 24:19). The woman at the well declared with conviction: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4:19). When Jesus multiplied the fish and bread in Galilee, the people said: "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (chap. 6:14). On "the great day of the feast," in Jerusalem, many people said: "Of a truth this is the Prophet" and "This is the Christ" (chap. 7:37, 40, 41). And the blind man, when requested by the Pharisees to tell what his position was regarding Jesus, firmly answered: "He is a prophet" (chap. 9:17).

The ordinary people repeatedly expressed their conviction that Jesus was a prophet, but the scribes, priests, leaders, and theologians of the day did not recognize Jesus as the prophet because of their maneuvering for power and earthly authority. What a tragedy for leadership! The common people of the streets, unlearned fishermen, "sinners," a woman of objectionable and dubious behavior, a blind man—all these recognized Christ as the prophet. But the leaders accused Him of being in league with the prince of devils! What a paradox!

The author of Hebrews does not identify himself. Apparently he has no concern for acknowledgment or self-identification. He moves immediately to his subject: Jesus! His prophetic superiority is the first contrast presented in the book of Hebrews.

Jesus is superior to all the prophets, even to the great Moses (chapter 3). He is superior to the angels, even the most glorious of them (chapters 1 and 2). He is  
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# What lies ahead for the church?

*Why is it that the Christian book market has moved from theological debate and social concern to autobiographical faith statements?*

*Why is it that celebrities such as Pat Boone, Anita Bryant, Terry Bradshaw, and Johnny Cash have replaced the great minds of our theological schools as spokesmen on the Christian faith?* □ by James R. Newby.



Those who predict the future usually find themselves in difficulty rather quickly. What is to come may seem so certain at times, yet the future has a way of taking unforeseen turns and twists that throw our most confident predictions awry. The positive signs in our culture can quickly become negative, and what seems to be

despair can easily turn into hope. Who can positively know the mind of God? Certainly no finite creature. But God expects us to use our minds to discern current events and respond logically, our response, in turn, helping to shape the future.

Alfred North Whitehead offered the clearest and most precise reason why the study of the future is so important: "Cut away the future," he wrote, "and the

present collapses, emptied of its proper content."—*Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1932), p. 191.

Christians are a future-minded people. We believe that the present is not good enough and that life is always changing. Specifically, we believe that there is a spiritual side to human nature that has not been actively developed, and that yearns for a fuller expression. It is in the development of this spiritual side that Christians place their hope for the future.

Two extreme waves of emphasis in our culture, however, have stifled this development: *activism* and *meism*. Perceptive students of modern history can now see that the age of mere activism is over. What began as the social gospel and degenerated into mere "do-goodism" is now dying a slow death. Separated from a spiritual base, and devoid of whatever gospel was originally associated with the

social concerns, activism had no other path to follow. "Since it had no root it withered away" (Mark 4:6).<sup>\*</sup> The death of activism was inevitable. No movement can sustain itself without a spiritual base of support.

But what has taken its place? Unfortunately, the major wave overlapping activism became *meism*. Instead of concern for others, people have become concerned only with themselves. This self-concern, however, is not the variety that asks, "How can I make myself a better person for the sake of humanity and my Lord?" It asks, instead, "How can I advance my own personal enrichment?" In a few years we have moved from emphasizing social concerns to emphasizing personal advancement.

Fortunately, fads do not last long. Mass-communication capabilities cause our patience with each new fad to become increasingly short. We quickly

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**W**hat is different about this offering of the cup of cold water as compared with the social activism of the sixties? This time it appears to have a firm spiritual base of support.

tire of anything that threatens to become permanent. And so we need not expect the age of meism to be around much longer. Although the lure of narcissism is very strong in each of us, we are still *social* beings. As infatuated as we may become with ourselves, sooner or later the mirror will crack. We know inwardly that we are called to something better.

The church, then, should be prepared to offer an alternative when meism crumbles. But the record of the church in starting trends is not very impressive. The Christian faith usually finds itself jumping on an already-moving wave, trying to adjust rather than setting forth trends that exemplify the best within human nature. Christians seem to be always playing "catch up" with the latest fad; just as they begin to "relate" to the world's culture, the fad changes. As a result, secularization of the Christian message has become a dominant theme within the present-day church. Nothing is more ignoble than the cheapening of Christ's message under the foolish guise of relevancy. When the church marries an age, it soon finds itself a widower. The age of meism is a good illustration. The church has moved inward to accommodate the growing interest in the self. With this wave, two major tracks of concern have appeared—both related to self-indulgence.

First, churches have become interested in growth. Of course, the church has always been concerned with growth, but the present situation has developed new twists to an old theme. The traditional purpose of winning souls for Christ still exists, but other factors seem to have entered the picture—an interest in growth for the sake of growth itself, or for the prestige of the pastor who likes building a "monument" to his guidance, or for the additional money more members can provide. Large numbers have become increasingly equated with success. The modern church tends to place more importance on the size of the congregation than it does on how those members are secured or the degree of their commitment.

A second major emphasis to appear

showed up initially in the area of Christian publishing. In a quick change of direction, the "market" has moved from theological debate and social concern to autobiographical faith statements. Celebrities such as Pat Boone, Anita Bryant, Terry Bradshaw, and Johnny Cash have replaced the great minds of our theological schools as spokesmen on the Christian faith. Superficiality has replaced depth. "Sex for Christians" and "How to Make a Million Dollars Following Jesus" have become dominant publishing themes.

We are still working our way through the age of meism. We know from experience, however, that it will end. God alone is changeless; humans are always changing. Since we recognize, at least intellectually, the demise of meism, we must begin to think of an alternative. The church needs to lead rather than follow, accepting the truth given by the apostle Paul that we are not called to be conformed to the world, but instead to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2). And so, if activism is nearly dead and meism is showing signs of impending death, what is in store?

In his best-selling masterpiece of interpretation, *The Third Wave*, futurologist Alvin Toffler makes the case for the demise of the present industrial age—the Second Wave, which followed the agricultural First Wave—and the coming of the age of technology, the Third Wave. At the risk of using secular terminology to make my point, I suggest that the church is beginning to experience a "Third Wave" of its own. If the church can combine the good qualities of the past two waves—activism and meism—and add the dimension of spiritual depth, a powerful "Third Wave" may be in the offing.

First, if the new wave *does* break upon the shore of Christianity, it will move the church away from the cracked mirror of narcissism. It will envelop and appropriate the growing desire in today's church for a more intense theology, a deeper understanding of the Bible and the Christian classics, and a more committed Christian life style. An ever-

increasing number of Christians are tiring of spiritual "fluff" and are anxious to learn about a faith that will withstand the tough questions and sustain the soul during times of personal crisis. The cultural religion of the recent past has failed to produce the spiritual depth that is now being demanded.

Second, the new wave will redirect the social concern of the church in the sixties, reattaching it to its spiritual roots. It is exciting to witness in evangelical periodicals an increased sensitivity among Christ-centered Christians to their responsibility to be their brother's keeper. What is different about this offering of the cup of cold water as compared with the social activism of the sixties? This time it appears to have a firm spiritual base of support.

Coupled with this redirected social concern is the recognition that the Christian cannot change the world via the human vehicle *alone*. A new realism, born of disillusionment, has entered the picture, accompanied with a compassion that does not condemn, tear down, or cheapen itself in the attempt to make a better world.

In the Cambridge, England, Friends Meetinghouse a sign points Christians clearly to their first order of business. It reads: "Don't just do something—*sit!*" Sitting, in this context, is not a call for docility, but a call to preparation. The "Third Wave" of modern Christianity will emphasize the need for Christians themselves to be changed persons before going out to change others. It will surely not be the last wave the Christian faith will experience, nor does it even promise to be the most spiritually renewing when compared with other "waves" throughout the two-thousand-year history of Christianity. It does, however, promise to keep the church away from the twin extremes of *activism* and *meism*, and it may help sustain our civilization through a new dark age—a possibility that looms ever closer.

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

## Who are the Christians?

*What does it mean when significant numbers of persons can claim to be Christians while freely admitting that religion is not very important to them and that they make virtually no effort to follow Jesus?*

A Gallup poll of 1,059 Americans, conducted a few months ago for Robert H. Schuller Ministries, revealed that less than half of the general population (42 percent) agreed with the statement "Jesus was divine in the sense that He was in fact God living among men." Six percent think Jesus was a great man and teacher, but not divine; 2 percent are not sure such a person ever really lived. Thirty-six percent feel that although Jesus was actually human, He was "divine" in the sense either that He embodied the best that is in all men or that God used Him as no other person has ever been used to reveal God's purposes to the world. Fourteen percent have no opinion at all about Jesus' divinity.

Yet here is the most significant finding of the poll, in my opinion: One half of those who do not believe Jesus is truly divine still consider themselves to be Christians! Even of those who say religion is "not very important" in their lives, 45 percent claim to be Christians, and so do 51 percent of those who admit they make "little or no effort to follow Jesus' example."

If these findings really depict accurately the thinking of the general population, then I submit that we of the clergy ought to be alarmed. Alarmed because only 42 percent accept the full, Biblical divinity of Jesus? Yes. But much more alarmed, it seems to me, that significant percentages can claim to be Christians while freely confessing that religion is "not very important" to them and that they make virtually no attempt to base their life on Jesus' example. Somehow a great many people have gotten a terribly confused idea of what it means to be a Christian, and I suspect it is partly our churches and our members and we ourselves as spiritual leaders who have given them this distorted view.

Although the apostle Paul wrote quite a few centuries before the Schuller poll was released, he seems to have foreseen

the attitudes that were reported. He warned Timothy that in "the last days" people would have "a form of godliness" but at the same time they would be "denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:1, 5). In Paul's day, and for a few centuries following, the church's major problem with the world was its animosity and persecuting zeal. Our problem today is not so much that the world stands outside the church scorning and persecuting, although some of that continues. Rather, our problem is that the world has come inside the church asking to be friends, and the church has responded by embracing the world's values and atti-

idea has gotten around that Christianity equals middle-class suburbia with a dash of church membership added to the recipe. (The truly committed include regular attendance at services.)

This is not to say that there is anything unchristian about being a middle-class suburbanite, any more than there is something unchristian about being upper class, lower class, jungle dweller, city inhabitant, or peasant. The danger comes when we accept the values of our particular culture or society and identify them with Christianity. That, it seems to me, is precisely what has happened when more than half of those who make

**S**omehow a great many people have gotten a terribly confused idea of what it means to be a Christian, and I suspect it is partly our churches and our members and we ourselves who have given them this distorted view.

tudes until one half of those who openly admit to making no effort to follow Jesus can nevertheless call themselves by His name—Christians! Too often there is little in the actual life style of our members or of ourselves to distinguish us from our non-Christian neighbors next door.

Don't misunderstand. A great deal distinguishes us from the atheist who rejects God intellectually, the openly irreligious, the flagrant sinner. But most of our non-Christian neighbors fall into none of these categories. They are "good people" who pay their bills, try to raise their children as best they know how, buy Girl Scout cookies, keep their grass mowed, and are kind to animals. The same activities that fill our lives fill theirs—jobs, families, mortgages, vacations, hobbies. We include church once or twice a week; they don't. In short, the

no effort to follow Jesus and 45 percent of those to whom religion is of little importance can nevertheless claim to be Christians. And the responsibility for this state of affairs—both its causes and its solutions—falls largely on the church's shoulders and on the shoulders of us who lead the church.

First of all, the church has helped confuse its surrounding culture with Christianity by too often failing to give a clear-cut example in its day-to-day living of what it really means to be a Christian. A middle-class suburbanite can certainly be a Christian, but if so, there ought to be something that sets him off from everyone else on his block who is not. The Christian has no mandate to be different just for the sake of being different. But we need to recapture the realization that the genuine religion of Jesus will so seep into every aspect of the

daily life that the Christian will unavoidably stand out from others. Jesus talked about this in terms of salt and light, two things that are hard to ignore and that make an impact. "But if the salt loses its saltiness," He warned, "how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything" (Matt. 5:13, N.I.V.).\* People don't light lamps and put them under a bowl, He added. Christians, by their very nature, are going to be different from "good" non-Christians. Their lives may revolve around many of the same things, but there will be a difference.

And that difference must be found in Jesus Christ. When the religious leaders questioned John and Peter regarding the healing of a cripple, they marveled at the apostles' boldness and new-found eloquence. But they did not misunderstand how the change had come about. They "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). John and Peter made it crystal-clear to everyone that Jesus was the one who had worked through them to heal this man. Their conversation was filled with His name; their allegiance was to Him; their lives revolved about Him. They may have been engaged in many of the ordinary activities that occupied others, but there was an evident difference.

Somehow Christians must exhibit to non-Christians, unself-consciously and nonjudgmentally, a life style that, in spite of its similarities to their own, is distinctive—so much so that no one can call himself "Christian" who lacks that distinctiveness. As spiritual leaders, our task is to model that distinctive Christian life style and to call the church by life and voice to be "in the world," but not "of the world."

Second, the church has helped to confuse its surrounding culture with Christianity by actually trying to provide a theological rationale for incorporating the materialism and consumer life style of middle-class suburbia. A segment of the church today subscribes to a "theology of wealth," in which Christians serve a first-class God, who promises His followers that they will be the head and not the tail—a God who wants the best for His people and who intends to see they get it. After all, does not God promise blessings innumerable? And since most of the world is also quite interested in going first-class, it's easy to see how this kind of Christianity blends into contemporary culture.

It is true, of course, that God does

want to bless His people. Sometimes these blessings take materialistic forms; more often they do not. In fact, Jesus indicated that the wealthy will find it very difficult to enter His kingdom. Not impossible, but difficult.

I am not saying all Christians need to develop subsistence life styles, selling their furniture and driving 15-year-old cars. Each has to make such decisions for himself. There is no virtue in poverty. But the distinction between Christianity and culture is blurred when we attempt to put a theological veneer over our materialism by saying that it is God's will for us to have a new swimming pool, sports car, or a bigger home. In a world seemingly obsessed with monetary gain, the Christian needs to be clearly seen as one whose life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses. The Christian may have possessions; he may even have them in abundance. But his relationship to them and his attitude toward them will be distinctly different from that of his non-Christian neighbor. The church, and we who are leaders, are called upon to draw a clear line where necessary between the world's concerns and God's. We cannot try to give legitimacy to the former by presenting them as the latter.

What does the Schuller poll tell us? One thing is that claiming to be a Christian is obviously not enough. It may seem strange that so many who don't take religion very seriously or who make no real effort to follow Jesus should give themselves the name of "Christian." But is it any less strange that so many who *do* claim that religion is vital in their lives, and who *do* claim that Jesus' example is the standard by which they live, should nevertheless be so little different from those who make no such profession?

Both groups feel comfortable calling themselves Christians. Both have concluded that Christianity makes few claims upon its followers and that it sees life in much the same way it does the world. Both have greatly misread the evidence.

Calling oneself a Christian is not difficult. *Being* a Christian is another matter. *Being* a Christian means changes, differences, distinctiveness. *Being* a Christian means in the final analysis living like Jesus Himself lived.—B.R.H.

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## Jarnes joins staff



A new name appeared on our August masthead. David C. Jarnes has joined the MINISTRY staff as assistant editor, filling a position that has been vacant for some months.

David brings to the job a blend of pastoral concern, scholarly expertise, and writing skill. He was raised in a

minister's home and for nine years pastored various Seventh-day Adventist congregations in North Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. Most recently, he has been working toward a Ph.D. in New Testament studies at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Having completed his classwork, he looks forward to taking comprehensive exams and writing his dissertation. At the university, David also taught courses in Greek and New Testament and did editorial work on the quarterly journal *Andrews University Seminary Studies*.

David and his wife, Jeanne, have a 9-year-old daughter, Kristi, and a 7-year-old son, Todd. When not helping to put MINISTRY together, David likes to enjoy the outdoors—camping with his family, mountain climbing, and sports.

We're glad to have David on board the MINISTRY staff. Already he's making his presence felt in our daily operation, and we think you too will see the results, in a better magazine!—J.R.S.

## Update on New Testament archeology

*While New Testament archeology once seemed like a neglected child because of the favoritism shown to Old Testament remains, it has now earned its own rightful place.*

It is only in the past two decades that Palestinian archeologists have begun to give proper attention to the remains of the New Testament period. Archeology as a careful scientific discipline has been at work in Palestine some three quarters of a century and has contributed much to historical research. Even so, as the major twentieth-century leaders in Biblical archeology were interested almost exclusively in Old Testament remains, the Hellenistic and later periods were passed over quickly. But broader interests have surfaced, and with recent sophisticated and more precise methods of archeology, every piece of antiquity regardless of age is now studied to reconstruct everything possible about the history and culture of the people. Thus the evidence needed to analyze the New Testament period is becoming more readily available.

A shift in New Testament studies is also under way that encourages the work of the archeologist. A tendency common among New Testament scholars has involved an attempt to understand the New Testament from a theological perspective without due consideration of the historical, geographical, literary, and cultural setting. However, in many circles a new awareness is evident that the historical context, in many ways presupposed by the authors of the New Testament, is indeed an important element in a proper understanding of the text. This means that the need is growing faster for more information from New Testament archeology and other background studies.

New Testament archeology requires the examination of especially diverse and scattered antiquities; it does not focus only on one race of people or on one specific area of the world. It is rather

the story of a world movement and must encompass parts of the Near East and much of the Greek and Roman world, from Galilee and Judea, to Qumran and the Decapolis; from Tyre and Caesarea to Gaza and Egypt; from Antioch in Syria, to many of the cities of Asia Minor; from Athens, Corinth, and Macedonia, to the capital of the empire, Rome. It must also encompass a variety of evidence—the debris of occupied sites, human remains, synagogues, tombs, churches, pottery, implements, architecture, catacombs, inscriptions, scrolls, papyri, and coins. New Testament archeology then tends to be piecemeal, as it must be sifted from a large accumulation of data in various forms, from numerous locations, and representing varied cultures.

Fortunately, some recent books are filling the gap of our limited knowledge. Two works by Jack Finegan present a detailed look at the New Testament sites: *The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Life of Jesus and the Beginning of the Early Church* (Princeton, 1969) and *The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Mediterranean World of the Early Christian Apostles* (Westview, 1981). A book by Eric Meyers and James Strange offers some important insights into Galilee and Judea: *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity* (Abingdon, 1981). It demonstrates that the archeological data for the ministry of Jesus and His disciples is changing some ideas about the mix of traditional Judaism and Greek and Roman culture. Two books by Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures: An Introduction to Biblical Archaeology* (Baker, 1972) and *The Archaeology of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor* (Baker, 1980), offer significant information on how archeology confirms the New Testament, on the results of excavations at Qumran, and on the history and archeology of missionary outposts in Asia Minor.

Nazareth, though frequently mentioned in the New Testament, was not mentioned by Josephus or by any other literary source earlier than the third century A.D. So an inscription found in excavations at Caesarea that mentions the town of Nazareth is an important witness to the town. Now partially excavated, Nazareth clearly was an unpretentious village, mostly of farmers, and probably of Jewish inhabitants. Yet it was not isolated, for it was near one of the busiest trade routes of Palestine, the Via Maris. Jesus, though from a no-name country village, was well acquainted with the lives of all sorts of humanity.

Capernaum, where Jesus made something of a headquarters for His public ministry, was an important commercial center; its population may have approached fifteen thousand. Most of the town consisted of one-story houses, four to a block, each with a group of rooms around a central courtyard. Fishhooks found beneath floors and a harbor on the Sea of Galilee confirm that this was a fishing center. It was near here that Christ called the fishermen. Numerous remains suggest that the inhabitants here were very prosperous and lived comfortably. The town had high-ranking government officials, a Roman centurion, and at least one tax collector (Matthew). An important church excavation here was built directly over a first-century house that, judging by the Christian graffiti and shape of the church, was an especially sacred place for the early Christians; they apparently cherished this as the location for the house of Peter.

The excavation of other sites around Galilee, with their synagogues and Jewish religious objects, suggest that particularly Upper Galilee was heavily populated by Jews. Lower Galilee, however, was more affected by the urbanization of the Gentile culture, with a more prominent cosmopolitan and pagan atmosphere.

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Dominating a view of New Testament Jerusalem was the grandeur of the second Temple and the mount on which it was erected. Recent excavations of the area around the Temple mount have revealed some of the splendor of Herod's rebuilding of the Temple; massive walls with geometric and floral patterns carved in stone, a monumental bedrock stairway, broad streets, massive bridges, et cetera, all attest to the wealth and prosperity of Herod's kingdom. Another impressive structure built by Herod was his palace, covering an area of 193,680 square feet. Herod literally made Jerusalem the showplace of the East. How unfortunate that the people of this impressive city were unimpressed by the most important Person ever to grace its monuments. They mistook the King of kings for just another insignificant stranger from a lackluster rural area.

Though Herod is well known for his pagan practices (e.g., the temples he built to the Roman emperor), excavations of his fortresses do not show evidence of pagan worship. The Herodium (near Bethlehem) and Masada (near the Dead Sea) have produced no pagan cult objects; to the contrary, Masada even had a synagogue. Perhaps Herod was a practicing Jew.

A find of some of the coins minted by Pilate demonstrates that the money the Jews were forced to use while Pilate was governor was particularly offensive. The Roman government realized the propaganda value of coins, but it also preferred not to offend the people by symbols placed on the coins. Pilate, however,

went against that policy and minted his copper coinage with pictures of the cult objects of the worship of the emperor. Though the story of Christ and the tribute money involved a less-common coin, a silver denarius with the emperor's portrait on it, the Jews conducted daily business with coins just as offensive; this money was to them a form of pagan idolatry.

Recently found in Jerusalem were the first physical remains of a person who had been crucified. A single iron nail had been driven through both heels, one overlapping the other; the calf bones were shattered; the arms had been pierced with nails in the forearms rather than palms. It is possible that this is precisely the way Christ was crucified, for the word for *hand* in the original designates also the lower forearm.

Many other examples of archeological discoveries could be cited for Galilee and Judea as well as other parts of the New Testament world. Clearly much is to be learned from the scientific analysis of the remains of the New Testament period. Not that every bit of data will have relevance to the understanding of the New Testament nor that major changes in interpretation will be the result; New Testament archeology does, however, confirm the accuracy of the record, it does provide a setting for the accounts, and it does improve our understanding of the God-given message.

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## Anniversary date for Adventism

From page 17

that the divine law becomes the foundation of God's government, for His throne is situated above the ark of the covenant in similar fashion to the Shekinah glory appearing above the mercy seat of the ark in the Levitical tabernacle. The law becomes the standard for the judgment that takes place in the sanctuary setting (James 2:10-12).

A careful look at the description of the judgment in Daniel 7 would place it within the setting of the sanctuary. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne

was like the fiery flame. . . . The judgment was set, and the books were opened" (verses 9, 10). In the book of Revelation the Son of man is pictured in much the same fashion, walking amidst the seven candlesticks, which are definitely sanctuary items: He was "clothed with a garment down to the foot. . . . His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire" (chap. 1:13, 14). Christ, then, is at the center of the judgment, and His spotless robe symbolizing His righteousness is conveyed to His people, as described in Zechariah 3. The message of the judgment is the message that we

are saved by faith in Christ.

Some modern translations, such as the R.S.V. and the Jerusalem Bible, suggest that Daniel 8:14 should have the idea of the sanctuary being "restored" to its rightful position in place of "cleansed" as in the K.J.V. Actually the root meaning does include the idea of "vindicating" or "setting right." Every reform movement has the task of vindicating the ways of God on earth and restoring His truth to its rightful place. The movement that began in the 1840s has no less a challenge than that, and no movement will find a higher aim than that of justifying the ways of God before men.

In a sense the pre-Advent judgment puts the Judge Himself on trial. Satan, the great "accuser of our brethren," is pictured as standing within the sanctuary setting and accusing Joshua, the high priest, of all his moral deficiencies (Zech. 3:1). But the moment when one of God's children is under accusation, the Creator Himself comes under attack as well. The sanctuary message tells us that the Creator is just and fair with all His created beings who have sinned against Him. That's why we have a pre-Advent judgment—so that the whole universe can witness God's amazing love and grace blended with divine justice in dealing with erring humans.

When men today are complaining, Where was God when the Holocaust took place? we can turn to the sanctuary for the answer. Like Stephen, we can say, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56). When even we, His own followers, are beginning to doubt and to question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" then it is time that we turn our gaze toward Christ, our High Priest, ministering in the sanctuary, who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:4, 9). When we are tempted to complain that the wicked have it so easy and the righteous have it so difficult, then we need to remember that the psalm writer had the same experience. Speaking of the prosperity of the wicked, he writes: "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God: then understood I their end" (Ps. 73:16, 17). The mystery of the problem and existence of evil dissipates in the floodlight shining from the throne room of the heavenly sanctuary. The heavenly Judge stands vindicated!

## To help them cope

*I wonder what Adam said to Eve, and what she said to him, on the day after Abel's funeral. What did they say to each other a month later, a year later, a decade later? Some way, they coped.*

The occasion arises only too often for us, as ministers' wives, to speak words of comfort to members of our congregation who are suffering the loss of a loved one. It is never easy to cope with such a situation.

At one time my husband had many funerals to conduct, one after the other, and I usually helped by playing the piano or organ for the service. Because of my compassion and close proximity to the grieving families, their sorrow became mine until I felt so personally overwhelmed with grief that I exclaimed to my husband, "I just don't think I will be able to help you in another funeral service!" Helping church members cope with death is a reality for many ministers and their wives. And a most difficult task.

In sorting out the feelings she experienced after the violent death of a former student and friend, Elva McAllaster gives many suggestions, which I believe you will find most helpful when it becomes necessary for you to work with members of your church family who have lost a loved one.—Marie Spangler.

"If there's anything I can do, let me know," I heard a kind-voiced businessman say at a funeral home recently. "Anything."

The man he greeted, the stunned father of a lad who had been killed in an auto crash, gripped his hand and nodded and thanked him.

And I wondered.

If he's like most of us, the stunned father won't pick up a telephone and say, "Yes, here's a thing you can do." The

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Elva McAllaster, a professor of English at Greenville College, writes from the depths of the "copings" she experienced following "a grief like to none other that I have faced—and perhaps none other that I could face." From the *Christian Herald*. Reprinted by permission.

kind-voiced one will be glad he made the offer (which, indeed, I'm sure he meant very earnestly), but he won't take the initiatives that might be taken, further helping someone cope with grief.

How does one cope? How does anyone cope? How can anyone help anyone else to cope?

I wonder what Adam said to Eve, and what she said to him, on the day after Abel's funeral. (What kind of funeral did they have for him?) What did they say to each other a month later, a year later, a decade later?

Some way, they coped.

Some way, mortal generations have been coping ever since.

We stagger under bereavement. We screech protests inside ourselves, and we speak them or sob them outwardly. We follow the rituals of our culture. We hurt. The partings lacerate even when they're expected, and may utterly stun when they're unexpected.

In it all, friends can help to cope.

"If there's anything I can do—" he said. "Anything."

Tonight I look at my calendar, and think about some of the "anythings" that have come into my life in the past six months, since a telephone call shattered my evening, shattered me. (Murder. Brutal murder.)

What did Adam say to Eve six months later?

After these six months of grief-heightened sensitivity—like having optic nerve endings on arms and face and fingers—I think hard about what he said at the funeral home. After these six months, and after the dark chasms I've sometimes walked through previously, and after the counselings I've had occasion to give when other people were in their dark chasms. "If there's anything I can do—"

There's no prescribing. Each person is a different person. Each grief is a different grief. But there are things one can think about, things one can suggest.

Take some initiatives. Don't wait for the asking voice. They may be little initiatives, but they may mean immensities. I do not forget that Jack telephoned six months ago and asked me if I should see my doctor for a sedative. I do not forget that June buttoned the back of a blouse for me while I dressed to catch a post-funeral plane. I do not forget a special packet of bergamot-scented tea that Ella left at my door, with a valued note.

Keep in touch. Your flowers and cards and telephone calls during the first overwhelmed days are healing and helpful. The rememberings later on may be even more healing and helpful.

My sister Aleta died when I was 11. Of all the kindnesses that came to our family, the one I remember most vividly and most gratefully happened when our neighbor Cleo Woodbury came some days after the funeral, bringing a little potted geranium.

Just a few weeks ago, a note containing a quotation from C. S. Lewis was a gentle and kindly touch of spiritual Merthiolate for me. Just yesterday, a letter with joyous allusions to certain hymn phrases was another touch of Merthiolate.

Listen. Maybe that should come first among any suggestions. First, and middle, and last. Listen. Listen often. Listen, without lecturing and advising. Listen, with quiet inquiries when they're appropriate. Listen. Just listen.

"Grief wants to be heard," a young man said to me last summer, with deep tremors in his long-distance-telephoned voice, on the night before a friend of his was to be buried.

Yes, grief wants to be heard. It needs to be heard. When the whole world has suddenly gone topsy-turvy, the weird new landscapes need to be described. Memories need to be examined, lingered over, discussed.

Anton Chekhov depicts this need brilliantly in his classic short story "The



Lament." Iona Potapov's son has died, and no one will listen to Iona, and finally in his desperation he tries for relief by telling the whole narrative to his horse.

Listen. I wonder. Their afterward days were unlike the afterward days of any other mortals, for He, though absent, was divinely with them. But was one reason that our Lord commended His mother and John to each other's care, from the cross, so that each could always find utterly unwearied ears that would listen?

Listen. And not just on the first day, nor during the first week. Listen. Offer the Kleenex, offer the attentive silences, offer the matter-of-fact inquiry. Listen.

*Remember, you're dealing with amputation.* In our brittle, fun-oriented American society, there is a deep and pervasive impatience with continuing grief. We tend to send off a sympathy card, to shrug inner shoulders, to say to ourselves, "Well, why doesn't he snap out of it?"

But it's amputation. Every touch of Merthiolate is valued, every band-aid, but we're still dealing with amputation. Sometimes I think the earlier generations were wiser, who prescribed their mourning armbands and mourning veils.

After the sudden death of his college friend Arthur Hallam, the poet Tennyson spent some seventeen years in writing the lyrics that became his great poem "In Memoriam." Not days, or weeks, or months; seventeen years.

This very morning I talked with a woman who spoke thoughtfully of how bitter a person she would be apart from her Christian faith. She buried an adored young daughter 36 years ago today, and she is still an amputee. Peacefully, now, but an amputee.

Say it. Maybe in a written note, maybe in a telephoned word. It needn't be immediate; it may mean more later. It needn't try to say everything, or to say much at all.

Say it. One of the most helpful moments in these past six months, surely, came when Orley Herron walked past my office door and paused to toss Jeremiah 1:8 to me in *The Living Bible's* paraphrase: "... for I, the Lord, will be with you and see you through."\* It meant immensities.

My friend Janey telephoned me when she first heard the news. Without amplifying, she said—and reiterated—"We love you, Elva. We love you." It meant immensities.

I know now something of the depth of

what Joe Bayly means in one of his observations: "Time heals; love keeps scar tissue from forming." Say it.

*Don't say it.* The other side of the coin. I realize that different people have different needs, but from all I've ever known and experienced, I would now venture a few sayings to censor out, if you can, when you're the kind-voiced businessman saying, "Anything I can do—"

Don't say: "I know just how you feel." No. No, you don't. You'll mean to be kind, but if you say those words you may cause twinges and alienate. Every agony is a new and private agony. An ancient Jeremiah spoke for each of us: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow" (Lam. 1:12).

You'll have clues. Use them. But don't assume; don't presume. If there's a deep kinship in grief from what you have experienced, let the one who is new in the brotherhood be the one to claim it.

Don't say: "Time will heal." It will. It does. (Adam and Eve coped somehow.) But don't say so to the rawness of new grief. You are inevitably implying, "He won't always be as important to you

as he is now. You won't always remember all you're remembering now. He will fade out of your life." And grief may want to shriek back, "Don't tell me that! I know it already, and it's agony to know."

Don't say: "How are you?" We're not at the funeral home now, but in the weeks that stretch ahead. Of widowhood, newspaper columnist Clarissa Start wrote that there is nothing to compare it with, nothing, unless it's being cut in two by a buzz saw. Another widow commented with gentle but pained humor some weeks after her Great Going, "What do you say when people ask, 'How are you?'"

Of course, "How are you?" is usually counted a quite meaningless greeting, the equivalent of a "Good morning." But it can be like acid against cut flesh. "How are you?" "Oh, quite devastated, thank you."

If you really want to know how he is, how she is, listen, listen, listen.

Don't say the pitying word. Compassion, yes. Understanding, yes. But not pity. Pity induces self-pity, and self-pity wilts the human spirit. Very matter-of-fact inquiries may be much more thera-

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## Prayers from the parsonage

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This morning I awoke full of energy. Lisa and Hans got dressed, made their beds, and had time to help straighten the kitchen before school. I whizzed through my work and even outlined an article before Hans came home from kindergarten. By the time Lisa returned, I'd crossed off everything on my "to do" list. Dick and I talked awhile, and then we all went biking. We fixed supper together and had family worship. There were no protests over baths and bedtime, and both children had been sleeping almost two hours before Dick got back from evening Bible studies.

Thank You, Lord, for days like this when everything falls in place and I have time for my husband and children . . . and myself. It's good to feel organized and efficient.

But there are other days when we all oversleep, and the morning is a rush,

days when I must summon all my self-discipline just to limp through routine jobs, days when plans are upset or I'm interrupted every few minutes, days when I feel frustrated and incompetent.

On those low days, remind me that there is probably a reason why I am tired, irritable, or discouraged—perhaps I'm fighting a cold or I've hit a lag after high-pressure activity. Let me remember that people are unpredictable and that schedules aren't set in stone.

And most of all, keep insisting that You love me, that I'm worthwhile, whatever my emotions or accomplishments. "Nor height, nor depth . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

Sometimes I'm like a swollen river racing to the ocean. At other times I'm a sluggish trickle slowed by snags. Regardless of the current of my days, may Your presence be in me like a deep and quiet pool.

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Cherry B. Habenicht

peutic than other forms of sympathy.

One of the most usefully therapeutic conversations I have had was with a state detective who came to me for information. He was calm, intelligent, fact-appraising, understanding, human. "I wish I could have known Danny Cade," he said thoughtfully—and I was renewed in the radiances that were intermingled in all my dire grief. I *had* known him.

*Expect the unexpected.* Expect the vacillations, the inconsistencies. The chemistry of grief is not to be predicted.

Yesterday, through a linking of episodes and conversations and overlapping associations, I was for a while a person of Kleenex packets and blurred eyes and, yes, of murky sobs. Today, there has been a pervasive calmness and serenity all day. Tomorrow? We'll see about tomorrow when it comes. Maybe glad gratitudes for what was, the gratitudes that sometimes send me to Beethoven's Ninth or to Handel so that music can say for me what I can't verbalize. Maybe new laughter.

Blessed is the friend who can be flexible and discerning. Who is patient if I dissolve. Who doesn't try to make me ignore, for his own comfort, the topics

that are filling my mind. Who doesn't try to pull out what seems to need, for the time, to be hidden within the dark earth-humus of a heart.

*Pray.* Does it sound like a platitude? Prayer may stop with platitudes, but it need not. Within the deep chasms of grief, prayer for one's associates is veritable rod and staff.

Prayer that is not prayed casually. Prayer that is affirmed. (Who can measure the worth of a few words on a postcard: "I talked to God about you this morning, and He gave me this Scripture verse to put into your hands for you now"?)

Prayer that leads to deeds. Prayer that leads to new levels of human sharing, while there yet is time.

I still hear his earnest voice at the funeral home: "If there's anything I can do, let me know. Anything."

I hope he won't wait for a telephone call. I hope he will find some "anything" on his own initiative.

\* From *The Living Bible*, copyright 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

and Mediator was announced. What a contrast between Sinai and the mount on which Jesus gave His memorable sermon! No boundaries were set, no thunders, lightnings, frightened people, or distance between God and men. Man had free, unrestricted access to God through the revelation of His Son.

God designed human beings to learn, to trust, and to obey. To learn, we need a teacher; to trust, we need a friend; to obey, we need a leader. And God provided us with all three. Jesus is the great Teacher, the Prophet who rightly interpreted God. Moses is the model. Jesus is the great Friend of all mankind, the true Priest who introduces them to God and represents them before God. Aaron is the model. Jesus is the great Leader, the King. David is the model. Thus in Jesus we have the supreme revelation of God—Prophet and Teacher, Priest and Friend, King and Leader. All three in one!

He is the Prophet who reveals God as nobody else can, the Priest who mediates before God as nobody else can, and the King who leads and guides us as nobody else can. In Old Testament times prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for their tasks. So in Christ we have the anointed One par excellence. And more than that: He is God. He not only established a kingdom; He established a kingdom within us. He is the ideal Teacher, Friend, and Leader—and our marvelous God. All this is only a part of the incomparable revelation of God designed to save us to the uttermost.

In Acts 3:23 Peter quotes what God the Father Himself had said through Moses about this unique prophet to come: "And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." Thanks be to God! Because we have the Son, we are not to be destroyed. As John has expressed it, "He that hath the Son hath life." And if we have life through the Son, we shall keep listening to God by means of Jesus. God declared on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Hear Him."

How good it is that God spoke and that He spoke by the Son! How good it is to listen, to learn, to trust, to follow this kind of spokesman, "the greatest of all the prophets," the supreme revelation of God.

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

## Jesus: God's supreme revelation

From page 19

greater than Aaron, the first and great high priest. His priesthood is much better (chapters 7 and 8). His sanctuary, unlike the Old Testament shadow, is the very reality in heaven (chapter 9).

Josephus, the Jewish historian, called Daniel "the greatest of all the prophets," and that phrase has been used for the title of a book on Daniel. But I suggest that Josephus was wrong. Daniel is not "the greatest of all the prophets." Jesus is! The common people, the Samaritan woman, the blind man, the fisherman, the "sinners," were right. Jesus is the Prophet par excellence.

At Sinai the need for a mediator between God and man was manifested. It was there that God Himself announced the Incarnation in a most marvelous promise and prophecy. In recounting the events of Sinai, Moses later reminded the people, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your

brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb [Sinai] on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the Lord said to me, 'They have rightly said all that they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him'" (Deut. 18:15-18, R.S.V.). It was this Prophet that the common people of Jesus' day identified with the Nazareth carpenter.

At Sinai there were thunders, lightnings, and noise of trumpets. The mountain was smoking and in flames, covered by thick clouds. Moses spoke, and God answered audibly. The reaction of the people was: "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19). It was then and there that Jesus the Prophet

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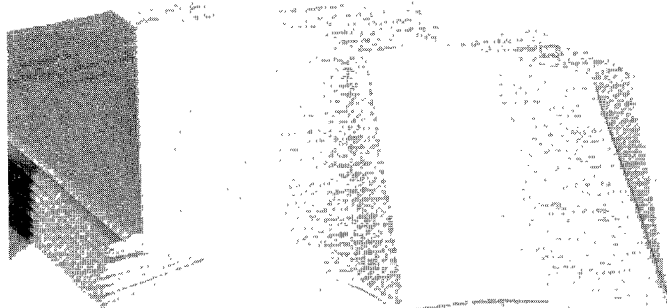
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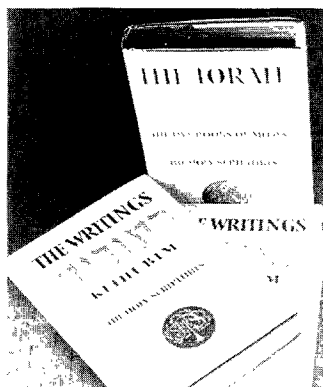
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## New translation of Old Testament

For the first time in more than 2,000 years, Jewish scholars have produced a complete translation of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew. The only other time that has happened was some 2,300 years ago when, according to tradition, the Septuagint version came into being as the work of 72 scholars who translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek in 72 days!

The production team for the New Bible Translation (11 Israeli and American scholars) wasn't able to match the legendary swiftness of their earlier counterparts, but they did manage to turn the Hebrew Old Testament into contemporary English in approximately 25 years. The translators were assisted in their work by rabbis from each of the major streams of Judaism: Conservative, Orthodox, and Reformed.

Although the New Bible Translation is said to be based on "the most accurate rendering of the original Hebrew," religious conservatives will likely be disappointed with some of the translations. One of the

most controversial changes occurs in the first line of Genesis. Instead of the traditional: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . .," the New Bible Translation has: "When God began to create the heaven and the earth . . ." The third commandment becomes: "You shall not swear falsely by the name of the Lord your God," rather than "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The well known "valley of the shadow of death" in Psalm 23 has become "a valley of deepest darkness." No reference to death exists in the Hebrew according to the translators.

Issued by the Jewish Publication Society, the New Bible Translation is comprised of three volumes: the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Writings. The final volume appeared in 1982.

## Tax update

Here's an update on the announcement in this column of the May issue reporting on United States Internal Revenue Service ruling 83-3 that would prohibit ordained ministers from receiving a double tax benefit by taking a deduction for the mortgage interest and real estate taxes already excluded from income in their parsonage allowance. Instead of going into effect June 30, 1983, as originally scheduled, the ban against "double dipping" is postponed until January 1, 1985, by a new IRS guideline, 83-100.

There are a few excep-

tions. Those clergy who did not own and occupy their present home before January 3, 1983 (or at least who had a contract prior to that date to purchase a home subsequently bought and occupied), are not eligible for the extension. Further, if you sell the home that you owned and occupied before January 3, 1983, the extension will no longer be applicable to you as of the date you cease to occupy the home.

## Textionary available

What is a textionary? It's like a dictionary, but with this difference: a dictionary helps you find words and their meanings; a textionary helps you find texts on various subjects. This small, 50-page booklet, *The Bible Textionary*, lists more than 1,000 texts under 48 topics.

## Parson to parson

When you run up against a puzzling situation or a perplexing problem in your ministry and you aren't really sure how to handle it, what do you do? Wouldn't it be great to have a broad cross section of your peers give you the benefit of their thoughts? Wouldn't you like to hear from those who have faced a similar situation and how they dealt with it?

Beginning in January, 1984, MINISTRY will be initiating a new feature, "Parson to Parson," that will do just that. We intend for this column to be what you want it to be. That's why we're asking you to provide both the situations to be considered and the solutions you have found.

It could help you find just that text you need, when you need it. For more information, write: Textionary, Box 555, Collegedale, Tennessee 37315.

## Plan your next meeting

Cohutta Springs is a new convention/family-retreat center owned and operated by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Surrounded by national forest and unspoiled wilderness areas, the site has been planned to serve church and business groups, educational institutions, and families with an ideal setting for seminars and other meetings. For more information write: Georgia-Cumberland Conference, Route 1, Box 17-A, Crandall, Georgia 30711. Or call: (404) 695-9093.

Here's how the feature will work. Each column will pose a question and give a sampling of response from readers indicating how they would meet, or have met such a situation. In addition, the topic to be discussed in a future column will be given along with an invitation for you to share your thoughts on it.

To get the column going, we need you to give us the questions, problems, or situations you have faced. We'll even pay you for them! For each question you submit that is used in Parson to Parson, we'll pay you \$15. Send your suggestions to Parson to Parson, MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

# Recommended reading



## **The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of Final Punishment**

Edward William Fudge, *Providential Press*, P.O. Box 218026, Houston, Texas 77218, 1982, 500 pages, \$19.95. Reviewed by Marvin Moore, pastor of the Waco, Texas, Seventh-day Adventist church.

Edward Fudge's book *The Fire That Consumes* is one of the most thorough treatments of the subject of hell from a conditionalist point of view that has been produced in this century. It is probably exceeded only by Froom's two-volume work *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers*.

Fudge's work is unusual in that the author began his research a committed "traditionalist" (to use his own term), whereas Froom began and ended his work a conditionalist. Raised to believe that the wicked endure conscious, eternal torment in hell, Fudge says in his preface, "I had no desire to change my mind or any inclination that I would ever do so."—Page xiv. However, a careful examination of the Biblical and historical evidence led him over a period of time to adopt the conditionalist view.

Fudge's work divides itself roughly into four categories: (1) an examination of the Old Testament evidence on the eternal destiny of the wicked; (2) an examination of intertestamental literature; (3) New Testament evidence; and (4) the doctrine of hell in

Christian history.

Central to the conditionalist view is the idea that man is by nature a single unit, not a dual soul and body. Fudge agrees. In a chapter with the clever title "If a Man Lives Again, Shall He Die?" he examines the Old Testament word *nephesh* and concludes that "'soul' is the most comprehensive term for man in his wholeness." "Man is an indivisible whole."—Page 61. His final statement on the Old Testament teaching about the nature of man is a quote from Pedersen's book **Israel**: "When death occurs, then it is the soul that is deprived of life. Death cannot strike the body or any other part of the soul without striking the entirety of the soul. It is deliberately said (in the Old Testament) both that the soul dies, . . . that it is destroyed or consumed, . . . and that it is extinguished."—Page 62. With only a brief examination of the word *psuchē*, Fudge concludes that "the New Testament does not take a different view of the matter."—Page 62.

Fudge's examination of the Biblical data regarding the destiny of the wicked is comprehensive to a fault. He considers every Biblical passage that has a bearing on the question, including even John 3:16 ("might not perish"). Equally as significant as his conclusions is the method of interpretation by which he reaches them. An evangelical of the inerrancy persuasion, Fudge states in his concluding chapter, "Our case rests on a detailed examination of many passages of Scripture. They are considered in context according to regular rules of hermeneutics, using, for the most part, tools either written by or generally accepted by evangelical traditionalists."—Page 434.

As a conditionalist, Fudge concludes that both Testaments teach the eternal death and destruction of the wicked, not their continued life in ever-burning hell. In his discussion of Paul's teaching on the fate of the wicked, he introduces a discussion from ancient Greek literature between

Socrates and a friend named Cebes.

Socrates argued that man's soul continued living after death, while Cebes believed that at death man truly died, soul and all. Fudge points out that Cebes' "two most important words, by which he describes the utter annihilation of the soul, are two of the primary words Paul uses to describe the end of the wicked" (p. 268).

Without a doubt, among the most problematic New Testament texts for conditionalists are those in Revelation 14:9-11 and 20:10. Recognizing that "there is no easy solution" (p. 304), Fudge nevertheless argues convincingly from Old Testament parallels and from a careful examination of the texts themselves that the texts do not support the traditional view of hell.

While acknowledging that one passage in the apocrypha and several in the pseudepigrapha support the traditionalist view, Fudge has found much evidence for conditionalism in the intertestamental literature. He concludes that the existence of clear-cut traditionalist views in the intertestamental literature does not justify interpreting New Testament passages in the same light. In any case, Scripture, not the apocrypha or pseudepigrapha, must be the final court of appeal for the evangelical Christian.

In the earliest Christian literature Fudge finds an almost universal conditionalist point of view. He argues that the traditionalist view began with Tertullian at the end of the second century and became hardened into Catholic orthodoxy with Augustine in the fifth century. In the Reformation period the maligned Anabaptists were conditionalists, and Luther was inclined that way. However, Calvin argued the traditionalist position with a passion, and reluctant to create division and anxious not to appear a friend of the Anabaptists, Luther yielded the point. Fudge sees this, and not Scripture, as the source of modern Protestantism's traditionalist orthodoxy.

On one point evangelical condition-

# Recommended reading

alists and traditionalists agree: Scripture must be the final court of appeal. And here Fudge throws down a challenge to traditionalists. "What traditionalist authors have never done," he says, "is to take up the numerous passages in support of final extinction, then show where conditionalists have either misused the text, ignored the context, eliminated crucial information, or added data not found in the Word of God itself. They themselves, on the other hand, ignored the rich teaching of the Old Testament, falsely presumed a uniform intertestamental view, and interpreted the New Testament pictures and languages on the basis of later philosophical tradition and ecclesiastical dogma rather than ordinary, accepted methods of scriptural exegesis."—Page 434.

Fudge concludes his book with two short sentences reminiscent of Luther: "This case rests finally on Scripture. Only Scripture can prove it wrong."—Page 436.

For traditionalists in search of an alternate point of view to challenge their thinking and for conditionalists who want a readable, comprehensive exposition of their view, no better book is available than William Fudge's *The Fire That Consumes*.

## **The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation**

Hans K. LaRondelle, Andrews University Press, 1983, 226 pages, \$14.95; \$9.95, paper. Reviewed by Kenneth A. Strand, professor of church history, Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

With considerable attention being recently focused on political events in the Middle East, questions are being raised as to whether such events are a fulfillment of Bible prophecies. LaRondelle's book gets at the heart of these issues by first of all examining the fundamentals of proper Bible interpretation. The author is an expert in the field, and his book is the product of several years of careful research. It not

only reveals a broad and deep understanding of Scripture itself but also manifests a comprehensive knowledge of important current literature on the subject.

LaRondelle appropriately turns our attention to Scripture as its own interpreter, noting the importance of both the immediate and wider scriptural contexts. In his first nine chapters he examines the underlying issues by discussing the "remnant" concept (basic to both Old Testament and New Testament theology), the New Testament's Christological and ecclesiological applications of Old Testament prophecies, and its universalization of the territorial promises of Israel, plus other related matters that are essential for a proper understanding of the Bible's own message.

Chapter 10 has a useful treatment of several "problem texts"—texts frequently used by dispensationalists who view a modern political Israel as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Chapters 11 and 12 deal with two particular areas closely related to the book's main theme—the dispensationalists' placement of the "seventieth week" of Daniel 9 in the future with respect to our time, and the so-called "secret rapture" theory.

MINISTRY readers will recall that LaRondelle has recently published articles on dispensationalism. His *Israel of God in Prophecy* is the best work that I have seen on this subject of such widespread current interest.

## **Another Chance: How God Overrides Our Big Mistakes**

Dean Merrill, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1981, \$4.95, paper. Reviewed by Peter Swanson, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

If you have ever wondered how best to minister to someone who has committed one of those "big, bad, ugly" sins, then you must read this book. Dean Merrill examines in careful detail the process of restoration—the reshaping of the vessel on the Potter's wheel. He shows that God is not

limited to a single formula for the remaking of a life devastated by sin.

The clearly written conceptual material is interspersed with experiences from the lives of people who committed socially reprehensible sins, but who, through the enabling grace of Jesus, were able to rebuild their brokenness into something beautiful.

The author does not approach this sensitive subject with a quick-fix recipe of "cheap grace" or "easy forgiveness," nor does he overlook the awful consequences of either secret or open sin upon the lives of those closest to the sinner. Rather, he presents a very practical approach that will create a climate that is conducive to genuine repentance, restitution, and restoration.

This is also a therapeutic book. Give it to that unapproachable, self-isolating soul who is suffering the agonies of remorse, and through its message the healing balm of heaven will flow into the life.

This readable, gripping book should be required reading for everyone on a church disciplinary committee.

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