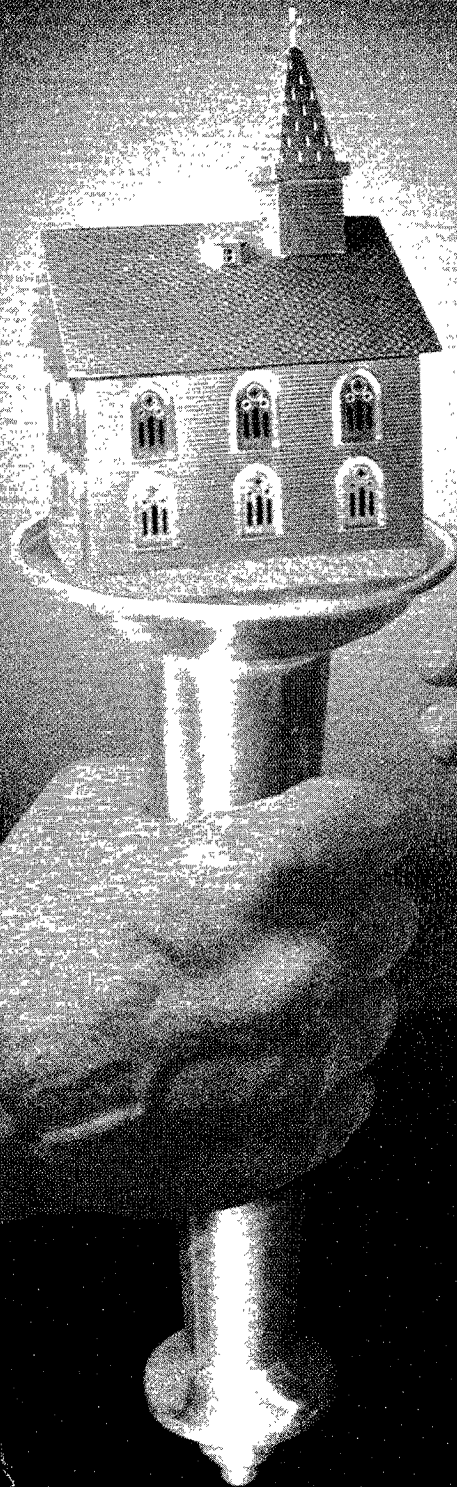


# Ministry

International Journal for Pastors

November 1998



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**Subscriptions:** For 12 issues: United States US\$29.95; Canada and overseas US\$30.95; airmail US\$39.95; single copy US\$3.00. To order, send name, address, and payment to Jeannette Calbi, *Ministry* Subscriptions, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904 U.S.A.

**Subscription queries and address changes:** E-mail: calbij@gc.adventist.org.; fax: 301-680-6502; telephone: 301-680-6503.

**Ministry (ISSN 0026-5314)**, the international journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association © 1998, is published monthly by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and printed by Pacific Press® Pub. Assn., 1350 N. Kings Road, Nampa, ID 83687-3193. Member Associated Church Press. Standard mail postage paid at Nampa, Idaho. *Ministry* is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International. Call 1-800-521-3044 or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

**Vol. 71      Number 11**

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## May 1998 issue

I note George Knight's firm belief ("When Persecuted in One Text, Flee to the Next," May 1998) "that when we get our priorities straight, the goals and numbers will take care of themselves." Knight also notes that "the trouble with many denominations, congregations, and pastors began when they learned how to count."

Yet the ultimate testimony to the efficacy of the Word remains its transforming miracle in human lives. Hence the article's intent would certainly be not to diminish the excitement of counting up the number of such lives. The juxtaposition of biblical study over against evangelistic exposition often yields just this result: "Scholars" and "diligent Bible students" know "soul-winning preachers" to be of dubious exegetical expertise and "number counters" to be of misguided spiritual focus. At the same time, the baptizers and their sympathizers have often wondered how to identify the academics: whether as heresy's plague to be fought or as denominational parasites to be starved.

However, as one from the classroom cloister, I wonder why more of us in biblical studies cannot be known for our Pauline evangelistic passion and success.—Lael Caesar, Ph.D., associate professor of religion, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

● Although I usually get something helpful from every issue of *Ministry*, I found your May issue, focusing on the Word of God, to be extremely good. It is by far my favorite issue. The powerful editorial "Thirsty for a Word" should be read by every minister.

The excellent articles by Jon Paulien on biblical authority and George Knight regarding our penchant for "patch quilt" theology were refreshingly candid in their treatment of both subjects. Homiletics does indeed become a disease when we

use alliteration and acrostics and current events to prompt us to come up with "an idea" that must be supported by texts taken out of context. What cowards some of us are when we choose to leave the leading of the Holy Spirit within the sacred page to "wing it" by ourselves.

There may be a place, a small niche, for topical sermonizing, but the spiritual mind still longs for expositions taken from Scripture's own context.—Steven Clark Goad, Blythe, California.

● Tim Crosby, in "The Bible: Inspiration and authority," attempts to reconcile two irreconcilables: the historical-critical and the historical-grammatical methods of biblical interpretation (May 1998). It is illogical to assume that a wrong method, in this instance the historical-critical, will lead to right conclusions. It is no use maintaining and admiring the gate if the fence is broken.—C. Raymond Holmes, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

● Your May issue is outstanding! Our family has enjoyed your magazine through the years. Thank you and may God continue to bless your ministry for Him! —Judy Landers, via E-mail.

● Thanks very much for the May issue and its focus on good preaching. As an Episcopalian priest, I especially appreciated your having included the article by Reverend O. C. Edwards.—Bob Dietel, via E-mail.

## A closed canon?

I would like to take issue with Luis Acosta's assertion that a "closed canon is a theological construct for which there is no internal biblical support" (January 1998). While there is no list of canonical books in scripture, the closing of the canon with the apostolic witness is a biblical concept. "Internal support" would be a meaningless

concept if we did not include the claims the Bible makes about Christ and itself.

The sufficiency of the scriptures is related to the sufficiency of Christ who is God's ultimate revelation (see Heb. 1:2; John 1:18). The authority in the New Testament is related to the Bible's claims of historical reality. The apostles were "eye witnesses" of Christ's resurrection and teaching (1 John 1:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:5, 6). The closing of the canon with the apostles is akin to the sufficiency of the gospel. There is no other witness necessary for salvation (1 Cor. 15:1, 2; Gal. 1:8).

The supremacy of Christ as God's revelation to humanity, the sufficiency of the gospel for salvation, the historical reality of the resurrection, and the eye witness of the apostles—these are biblical concepts that form the theological basis for our New Testament. While it is true that to the skeptic we may have no definitive proof of apostolic authorship, long standing tradition has not been disproved by objective evidence. Indeed, the claims have held up pretty well to the scrutiny of the ages.—William McCall, pastor, New Orleans First Church, Louisiana.

## March 1998 issue

I am responding to Pastor J. B. Willis's comments in March 1998 *Ministry*.

I agree that not everything Dr. Benson says in his latest book squares with our Adventist theology. Dr. Benson and I have had several discussions about this. What I want to address is our fear of hypnotism, or more precisely, anything even associated with hypnotism. While we have been cautioned to avoid any practice which seeks to exert control of one mind over the other, we are not to reject that which makes good sense simply because of its associations. Pastor Willis suggests that pre-hypnotic is no different than hypnotic. I suppose this depends on our definitions. I would simply ask us to think if

*continued on p. 24*

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**H**ow are you feeling about your ministry? When it comes to your day-to-day function as a pastor, how would you describe the undercurrents of

your thoughts and moods during recent months? What is going on in the private domain of your soul as you think about your work, particularly your lifelong call to ministry? Are you loving it or hating it? Or do you find yourself in a monotonous state of restive indifference?

We sometimes have a way of griping and grouching about this or that in ministry. I must quickly admit that all too often I have contributed too emphatically to this pastime, getting that familiar sense of displaced "high" as I did. The good old word, "grouching," often used during my growing-up years in South Africa, accurately describes this rather common phenomenon. Excessive, frequent grouching may well be an indication that the excitement is dead, that the focus has shifted from embracing the privilege of ministry to what we have come to see as the dreadful, detested chores and conditions of pastoring. Incessant grumbling about meaningless ministers' meetings, troublesome church members, or the foibles of the corporate church is symptomatic of an inner ministerial misery caused not so much by the conditions we are grouching about (real as some may be) as by the fact that the light of our divine call to real ministry has gone out or seriously dimmed.

On the other side of things, I have listened to pastors who enthusiastically, even electrically, declare their joy and fulfillment in ministry. You sense the wonder in them and their deep sense of privilege about being ministers. Their spirit is generally upbeat. They know who they are and are glad to be what they are. They know what they want to accomplish. Most of the time there is spring in their ministerial step. Being around them is, in some cases, almost too much! Yet their

## Hear the call again

W I L L E V A

sense of calling seems to have much of the charged exhilaration Paul displayed when he spoke about his ministry (see below). This tends to remain discernible and operative even in the midst of the hardest rejections and setbacks.

When I describe ministerial grouching and contrast it to the positive attitudes behind an upbeat approach to our conditions and calling, my intention is not merely to praise optimism and decry pessimism! The goal is rather to identify a far-reaching negative condition that afflicts many of us and, quite frankly, makes us and others rather miserable, while it curtails the thrust of our ministry and even our life. The aim is our translation from a critical cynicism into a dignified enthusiasm about our ministry, even in the face of ministerial vicissitudes.

Here are a few beginning thoughts that are calculated to be helpful in this:

1. It would be productive for us to consciously lower our expectations of what day-to-day ministry should be like, as we raise our sense of privilege in having been called to be servants (ministers). Life on this planet, let alone life in ministry, is simply not what we fondly wish it was; if we insist on clinging to unrealistic expectations, we become irritated, disillusioned, and cynical when reality consistently turns to dash what is in fact fantasy on our part. Paul talked of ministry including "troubles, hardships and distresses, beatings, imprisonments and riots, hard work, sleepless nights and hunger." He then talked of the "servants of God" enduring this "in purity, understanding, patience, and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God, with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and

dishonor, bad report and good report, having nothing, and yet possessing everything" (2 Cor. 6:4-10, NIV).

What a terrifically healthy attitude!

2. So, let's take an inventory of our ministerial soul, a reality check. Many of us simply function within a kind of habituated negativity mode, believing our pejorative assessments are representative of objective reality, when in fact they are quite subjective and neglectful of the very real positive side of everyday life. The point here is, "You might already have more meaning than you realize [so literally, take stock of it!]. No occupational fulfillment in the whole world faintly compares with the satisfaction a pastor enjoys who loves God, loves his call and shows love for the people he [or she] serves."<sup>1</sup>

3. But what if you don't feel much love for your call right now? It is critical then, to go back to Who actually called you and not to doubt that it was indeed He who personally gave you that summons. All the affirmation in the church and in the world cannot substitute for the deep inner conviction that Christ Himself has called you to be His servant. Conversely, all the criticisms, sorrows, failures, and foolishnesses of contemporary ministry may well have accosted your sense of the reality of that call, but they cannot destroy the call itself. And right now that call may well be needing the kind of affirmation that comes in rediscovering and renewing your ministerial standing in Christ. Renew it as an act of deep worship and devotion.

4. Just like the vows of marriage, our ministerial calling needs to be nurtured. At the heart of such nurture, I believe, is the recognition of the sacredness of the summons and the divine enabling that goes with God's bidding. I find myself quickly and subtly forgetting these things as I get into the rhythmic round of everyday, pragmatic ministry. It is awful to try to do ministry running on empty. Trying to do ministry without the sense of divine call and empowerment is miserable and breaks out into all kinds of

*continued on p. 24*

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# BE SURE TO LEAVE YOUR LIGHT ON!

**W**hen Roberto Goizueta suddenly died not long ago from complications with lung cancer, Coca-Cola stock barely flinched on Wall Street.



*R. Leslie Holmes is senior minister for the First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

It's hard to understand why. After all, Goizueta led the Coca-Cola Company for 16 phenomenal years. The winner of the famous cola war, Goizueta was the driving force at the helm during Coke's incredible rise in popularity and financial worth. Under his leadership, Coca-Cola's market value soared an astonishing 3,500 percent!

Yet when the final tally is taken of his reign as cola king, Roberto Goizueta's single greatest contribution to his organization may well not be seen to have been his contribution to the bottom line but rather that he remembered his own mortality. For this reason, he mentored a cadre of potential successors that by some estimates runs four deep. As a result, even if some unforeseen tragedy removes Douglas Ivester, Coca Cola's new leader, there are still Goizueta-trained leaders to step in on short notice. Mr. Goizueta demonstrated a lesson from which Christian leaders might well learn.

## Leaving the light on

A mother and her four-year-old daughter visited Abraham Lincoln's birthplace in Springfield, Illinois. Unfortunately, they arrived at the house after it had closed to tourists for the day. The mother, not to be undone, stood outside and described

Lincoln's life and contributions to America's history. She told her daughter of his rise from log cabin to White House and his sense of justice for all. She spoke of his victory over setbacks and closed by noting how, when Lincoln was assassinated, the whole nation mourned. As the little girl listened, her attention was captured by the glow from security lights inside the house. "Look, Mommy," the child exclaimed, "he left his light on."

Roberto Goizueta, in a real sense, left his light on. His succession plan was implemented years before his death. He did everything in his power to guarantee that the business he led would not go dark with his passing.

Contrast that example with the all too common model of leadership within the church. How many times has the work of great leaders in the Lord's vineyard suffered when they passed from the scene because of an unwillingness, or even an inability, to prepare for a seamless succession? In some denominations there is an unwritten assumption that the person who follows a strong leader will automatically be a short-termier. This reality is a personal, professional, and community tragedy that does nothing to advance the gospel. Indeed, to fail to prepare a

new generation of leaders is almost like asking the church to die. Not to plan is to unwittingly conspire with the one who would close our open Bible and silence our preaching; it is to hinder the teaching and mission of the church in the next generation.

Roberto Goizueta believed the final great test of leadership is often what happens after a leader leaves. A few days before he died, he even sent a deathbed message to his board. It said, "If you want to worry about me that is okay, but don't worry about the company. When I die, the company will be in better hands than ever." That kind of statesmanlike, big-picture thinking needs to be modeled more often in the church. Because he believed this way, Goizueta cared enough about his organization to offer himself as a mentor.

#### What is a mentor?

In Greek mythology, Mentor was a friend of Odysseus, who became a wise instructor, guide, coach, and encourager to Odysseus' son, Telemachus. At Odysseus' request, Mentor groomed the young man for success and leadership. This relationship was a wise and visionary arrangement that gave Telemachus more than mere book learning.

The mentoring process is almost as ancient as time. Moses mentored Joshua. Hannah entrusted her son, Samuel, to Eli, the elderly priest, for mentoring. Elijah mentored Elisha. Barnabas, whose very name, *son of encouragement*, implies the mentoring principle, mentored the newly converted Paul, who in turn mentored Timothy. Each in turn intentionally demonstrated the practical skills he had learned.

Not only in the world of business and the church has mentoring been an effective training tool, but in traditional European trades, young would-be craftsmen have for years been assigned to mentoring apprenticeships with a master craftsman. At the end of periods as long as five years, the young men become journeymen who are encouraged to function without supervision, confident they can still call on the master craftsman for advice as needed. After two years as a journeyman and following appropriate professional testing, they are finally received as craftsmen. From the master, the young apprentice learns not only the

skills of his trade but some skills of life. Often the bonding that occurs during the mentoring period lasts a lifetime. In some cases, the mentor and his former apprentice became like father and son.

The craftsman mentor's central thrust is to be a coach who motivates his apprentice to excellence. Through practical demonstration, he imparts advice, perspective, practical skills, professional pride, attitude, catharsis, accountability, and plain old-fashioned "know how" designed to help the apprentice succeed at his trade and at life itself.

**T**here is a  
difference between mentoring  
and teaching. . . . Teachers tell;  
mentors demonstrate.  
Teachers relay important facts,  
theories, and conclusions;  
mentors, in contrast, show the  
way. They put shoe leather on  
head knowledge.

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#### Mentoring versus teaching

There is a difference between mentoring and teaching, although mentors are always by nature teachers. Teachers tell; mentors demonstrate. Teachers relay important facts, theories, and conclusions; mentors, in contrast, show the way. They put shoe leather on head knowledge. The mentoring role involves teaching plus practical modeling, encouraging, relationship building, and, where necessary, redirection.

My own life and ministry have been, and are, encouraged and enriched by several good mentors. God used two in particular to make me the pastor and man that I am, and I owe them a debt I can never

repay. The first, my Uncle Sam Heslip, led me to Christ and then saw the spark of a preacher in me while I was still wrestling with my call in the secret recesses of my heart. He poured long hours into grooming me in Bible knowledge, theology, and the practice of everyday pastoral principles. He provided opportunities for me to minister and was always quick to suggest where I might improve. He made himself available until Alzheimer's ransacked his ability to think.

The second was my predecessor in my first congregation after seminary. For 31 years, wise and greatly beloved, Arthur Schneider devoted himself to pastoring the First Presbyterian Church of Pascagoula on Mississippi's Gulf Coast. He gave me the benefit of his wisdom, support, and relationships. He graciously but firmly passed the leadership mantle to me before a packed congregation on the day I was to succeed him. Because of his willingness to identify with and endorse me, my ministry developed a credibility that was much greater than would have been possible otherwise. The Kingdom of God is richer in that part of the world because of that kind of dedication to the future by one of God's choice servants.

Sam Heslip and Arthur Schneider did more than teach me principles. They modeled how those principles work in day-by-day ministry. Their unselfish perspectives and generous grace enhanced my spiritual and professional growth.

Roberto Goizueta knew that one characteristic of good leaders is that they are always looking for successors. When they find someone they believe possesses the requisite qualities, they invest their hard-earned time and energy in preparing that one to do everything they have been doing and more. They are not threatened by the notion of a new generation surpassing their own achievements, for they do not view themselves as competitors but as father figures and elder statesmen.

#### How to find and enter a mentoring relationship

How does one find and enter a successful mentoring relationship? I suggest three steps: first, pray for God's Spirit to guide you to the right mentoring partner;



second, ascertain that person's willingness to be mentored; third, agree on expectations, including how and when you will interact, how you will communicate, the level of accountability, and when and how you will meet to evaluate the relationship.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12, NIV). From the beginning of His ministry on earth, the Master Mentor prepared his disciples to take His place. He proved His commitment to the principle of mentoring by pouring His life into the Twelve, eleven of whom subsequently mentored others to mentor others. As a result, the church is still alive 2,000 years later. Here, alone, is sufficient evidence that mentoring works.

The apostle Paul was a born mentor. He mentored Timothy: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim. 2:2). Although a hasty reading may make this seem like an instruction to teach, a closer look reveals more than a "do as I say" proposition. It called Timothy to act out what Paul had demonstrated.

Paul also calls for mentors: "I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy . . . He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 4:15-17). "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (11:1). Later he commends the Thessalonians, not for their high level of knowledge in Scripture but because they "became imitators of us" (1 Thes. 1:6).

In similar fashion, the writer to the Hebrews encourages us, "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7).

In each case the Greek text calls for imitation over recitation. The most frequently used verb is *mimeomai* (which gives our English word *mimic*). It means to act like someone rather than merely quoting him or her.

#### The four principles of effective mentoring

There are, I believe, four principles that undergird effective mentoring relationships.

(1) *The principle of possession:* Each of

us must recognize that what we possess in this world is not finally ours but God's. This is clear when Jesus says such things as "... I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Jesus let us know from the beginning whose church it is. A departing pastor once said, "I have fallen so deeply in love with this congregation that I cannot bear the thought of anyone else being their pastor." I was constrained to remind him that such a love went beyond the bounds of pastoral propriety. It is our job to direct them to Him who loves them most of all.

(2) *The principle of perspective:* We are wise to recognize our own mortality, and plan for successors. One day, so far as this world is concerned, each of us will be no more. What do we want to happen to the work in which we have invested ourselves? "Entrust these things to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others," Paul told Timothy, in recognition that one day even his successor would have a successor.

(3) *The principle of priority:* There is a sense in which this third principle stands behind all the others. Each of us decides where our primary ministry focus will be. Jesus said, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33). If we are kingdom seekers, we will be focused on what is best for Christ. It is not easy handling the reins of leadership to another. Yet Christ asks us to do it. If His kingdom is our first priority, we will invest ourselves in it and bring every desire and every action under subjection to it.

(4) *The principle of permission:* As the old European craftsman allowed the apprentice to try his hand at performing the task, good mentors give their charges freedom to try their newly learned skills along the way. In this way they will be encouraged to develop their learning and skill development in order that they might measure up to God's high calling. My first preaching invitation came while I was still in the business world. Before I said Yes, I discussed it with Sam Heslip, who encouraged me to accept and then offered to oversee my preparation. When I was almost ready, he invited me to "practice" before his own congregation. Good mentors know that the best way to hold on is to let go.

More than three years before Roberto

Goizueta's lung cancer diagnosis, he endowed Douglas Ivester with the presidency of the Coca-Cola Company. From that point on, he introduced Ivester at every opportunity as "my partner." Employees, investors, customers, and corporate analysts saw them as a team. Competitors knew they were a dyad to be reckoned with. That single action on Roberto Goizueta's part made their company a more powerful force to consider in the face of corporate friends and foes alike.

#### How long will your light shine?

How long will your light shine? To a large degree, each of us decides that ourselves. Abraham Lincoln's light still shines because he took every opportunity to advance his dream for America's future. Roberto Goizueta's light will, in all probability, continue to shine in the corporate world for a long time. Our own lights can shine for a long time too. Now is the time to take hold of the future. If the work in which you are investing your life is significant enough to last into a new generation, begin praying for God to guide you to someone He has already chosen who would appreciate inheriting the practical principles God has entrusted to you. Then, as God directs you to someone, enlist that person and offer yourself to him or her. In this way alone you can be sure your light will shine for a new generation. ■

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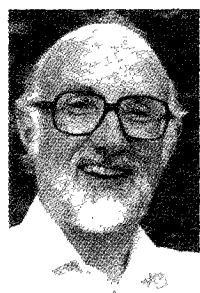
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# ONE MAN'S SEARCH FOR JOY: THE CONVERSION OF C. S. LEWIS

People come to God in many different ways. One of the great Christians of our times came dragging his heels.



*David N. Marshall is chief editor at The Stanborough Press, Ltd., in Grantham, England.*

C. S. Lewis, known to his family and friends as Jack, had read books about "man's search for God." But years after he accepted God's existence, he said that his search had been like "the mouse's search for the cat"! Accepting God, let alone accepting Christianity, outraged every inclination, prejudice, and preconception in this Oxford don.<sup>1</sup>

When the Father set out in search of Jack Lewis, it took Him many years to convince this prodigal He existed and much longer to lead him home.<sup>2</sup>

Of the night when he "gave in to God," Lewis wrote: I "admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England. . . . The Prodigal Son at least walked home on his own feet. But who can duly adore the Love which will open the high gates to a prodigal who is brought in kicking, struggling, resentful, darting his eyes in every direction for a chance of escape. . . . The hardness of God is kinder than the softness of men, and His compulsion is our liberation."<sup>3</sup>

The reason for the return of *this* prodigal is of interest here not just because he

became the twentieth century's most read and listened-to defender of Christianity. Nor is it because two major motion pictures—the most recent *Shadowlands*—have been made of his life and spiritual struggle. Nor is it because a tidy number of us were brought up on his Narnia books. We are interested because we want to understand what it was that drew such a prodigal, what it was that constrained a man like Lewis to take on the quest he did.

## Pursuit of joy

Jack Lewis, from an early age, came to see life as the pursuit of an elusive Joy (with a capital J). Commentators on Lewis's work have written that we shall not understand him unless we have a stab at understanding his Joy. They chart the evolution of its meaning through his poems and prose, his books *Pilgrim's Regress* (1932) and *Surprised by Joy* (1955), and his mountains of handwritten notes on the theme of joy.<sup>4</sup>

Lewis's consciousness that life was about a search for Joy began in his childhood. It preoccupied him through the hellish boarding schools to which his father

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DAVID N. MARSHALL



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sent him, one of which he nicknamed Belsen (for good reason!). At first, Joy meant to him no more than "an unsatisfied desire which is in itself more desirable than any other satisfaction." The desire might be fed by a scene or a sunset or by his adolescent enthusiasm for Wagner and Norse mythology. Gradually, as an Oxford scholar, Lewis realized that he would only know the joy he sought when he came to know the object of joy. Only at age 33, not on the Damascus road but on the road to Whipsnade Zoo in his brother Warnie's sidecar, did he realize that the object of his search was Jesus Christ and that the Joy he sought was the Joy of Jesus. Lewis's realiza-

tion was so strong that he remained alone, outside the zoo, thinking, "He felt like a man who, after a long sleep, is now awake."<sup>5</sup>

### The long road

The road to Whipsnade Zoo had been a long one. His mother's death, when he was nine, had devastated him. He had abandoned the last vestige of the vague Christianity of his Belfast childhood, when he encountered a kindly matron in his prep school. She was the first of a number of mother substitutes in his life. The youthful, personable matron had involved him "in the mazes of Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Spiritualism, and the whole Anglo-American occult tradition." He

had, however, recognized "the passion for the occult" as "a spiritual lust" which, "like the lust of the body has the fatal power of making everything else in the world seem uninteresting while it lasts." An aspect that attracted him about what he then thought of as "Higher Thought" was that "there was nothing to be obeyed, and nothing to be believed except what was either comforting or exciting."<sup>6</sup>

As he pursued his secondary education, however, he acknowledged that "authentic joy" had vanished from his life and that pessimism had taken over. He writes: "Like so many Atheists or Antitheists" he lived in a "whirl of contradictions. I maintained that God did not exist. I was also very angry with God for not existing. I was equally angry with Him for creating the world. . . . God had flown. . . . I was in the Wordsworthian predicament, lamenting that 'a glory' had passed away."<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, Lewis acknowledged that occasional "stabs" of this "glory" came into his experience through his studies and extracurricular pursuits.

As a student at Malvern, he acknowledged, he missed the joy and recalled past experiences when he had felt it. "To get it again," he wrote, "became my constant endeavor." But his search for joy was in the various areas of his intellectual interest, which proved satisfying in a limited way but did not fulfill his need and desire for joy. As he went to Oxford he acknowledged: "I *should* have realized that, with the fading interest in Norse mythology, the Object of my joy was further away." But there was no such acknowledgment.<sup>8</sup>

Lewis came to accept that all his ordinary pleasures were substitutes for joy. He also acknowledged after reading (and meeting) W. B. Yeats that there was no joy to be found in the area of "spiritualism, Theosophy, and Pantheism." He came to contrast "the imaginative longing for joy" with the "quasi-prurient desire for the occult." He concluded: "My best protection [from the Occult] was the known nature of Joy. This ravenous desire to break the bounds, to tear the curtain, to be in the secret, revealed itself more and more clearly the longer I indulged it, to be quite different from the longing that is Joy." The occult was not only irrelevant to joy; it was, in some sense, an opposite direction.<sup>9</sup>

## C. S. Lewis: Suggested Reading

*C. S. Lewis, a professor of Renaissance Literature at Cambridge, was not a theologian. But in the tumultuous years of this century, from his conversion in 1929 until his death in 1963, he spoke and wrote as a Christian apologist without parallel. In lay language, he has left a legacy of understanding in depth the meaning and the challenge of Christianity. Here's a short list of his finest.—Editors*

### Surprised by Joy

An autobiography, Lewis takes the title from Wordsworth's famous line, "Surprised by Joy—impatient as the wind" to trace his turbulent journey from innocence, atheism, theism—and finally to the discovery of a personal God. A spiritual thriller!

### Mere Christianity

First given as a series of broadcasts during World War II, the book makes a compelling case for taking and living seriously Christian beliefs, Christian behavior, and Christian surrender.

### A Grief Observed

A short journal begun after his wife's death from a long and painful illness, the work reflects the weeping, hoping, and affirming of a soul in pain, but a soul rooted firmly in being "at peace with God."

### The Four Loves

In this anatomy of love, Lewis examines affection, friendship, eros, and charity from the writings of Ovid to Paul and concludes that without the unselfish grace of Charity as manifested in God's love for humanity, life cannot be complete.

### Miracles

A classic for Christians who have difficulty believing in miracles. The author argues lucidly and logically for the possibility of God's intervention in nature and human affairs.

### The Problem of Pain

Having experienced both the dilemma of doubt and the dilemma of belief, the author examines pain from both points of view and directs the reader to God's own pain in His Son. A must for pastors who want to know the mysteries of pain and how to minister to those who go through it.

### Screwtape Letters

The wit and wisdom of Lewis at its best. A collection of essays on how clever, smart, and beguiling Satan can be in his commitment to derail the Christian. A senior devil's advice to a junior devil on their joint operation.

In his fourth year at Oxford, Lewis "changed scents." Curiously in his own account of his spiritual odyssey in *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis omitted certain vital influences in his growth toward Christianity.

#### Joy: The realm of the cerebral

Lewis represents his early search for Joy as being entirely in the realm of the cerebral. As early as his army days in World War I he had written, "A young man who wishes to remain a sound Atheist cannot be too careful in his reading." Throughout his time at Oxford he acknowledged that non-religious authors were "tinny" and boring in comparison with Christian ones. He quoted Roland's *Chanson*: "Christians are wrong, but all the rest are bores." At the back of his mind he resolved to find out if Christians were, in fact, wrong.

Among the Christian authors who exerted an influence on him were Milton, Samuel Johnson, John Donne, and George Herbert. George Herbert "was a man who seemed to excel all the authors I had ever read in conveying the very quality of life as we actually live it from moment to moment; but the wretched fellow" impregnated all his writing with Christianity.

Following his election as a Fellow of Magdalen College in 1925, Jack Lewis began to speak of God as the "Adversary" who was "tracking him down."<sup>10</sup>

#### Lewis's conversion

His "waitings and watchings for joy preoccupied his mind disproportionately." Then in 1929, "There was a transitional moment of delicious uneasiness, and then—instantaneously—the long inhibition was over; the dry desert lay behind." "Joy was a desire (and . . . it was also a kind of love). But a desire is turned not to itself but to its object," owing "its character to its object." He asked himself if he had been right to desire Joy itself, rather than the object of Joy.<sup>11</sup>

Lewis was selective in giving credit to his colleagues as influences in his struggle toward Christ Himself.

He did give credit to "the hardest boiled of all the atheists I ever knew" (he doesn't name him), who had conceded that "evidence for the historicity of the Gospels was really surprisingly good." But he was slow

to give credit to his close friend Professor J. R. R. Tolkien, a practicing Christian, who had long conversations with him. George Sayer believes that Tolkien had a major influence on Lewis's 1931 conversion. He provided further proof of the historicity of the Gospels and, immediately prior to Lewis's Whipsnade decision, had a long conversation with him that lasted from midnight until four o'clock in the morning. William Griffin also believes that this conversation with Tolkien, as well as Tolkien's long-term influence, was instrumental in bringing Lewis from mere Theism to Christianity. Indeed, in the chronology of events, it seems hard to discount the influence of Tolkien.<sup>12</sup>

Lewis himself gives further credit to an unnamed Christian in his circle at Oxford who was "clearly the most intelligent and best informed man in the class" and who, from Lewis's description, was clearly a Christian of the user-friendly type.<sup>13</sup>

Lewis's conversion, like any genuine conversion, involved an acknowledgment of his sinful nature, his poverty of spirit, his inability to help himself.<sup>14</sup> The central feature was the Person of Jesus Christ. And it was through his encounter with Christ that Lewis acknowledged that here, at last, was a state of mind that could be described as Joy.<sup>15</sup>

The crux of the foundation of Joy, Lewis had discovered, as he had the assurance of God's salvation. The world and the church are crying out for the kind of faith and understanding that made Jack Lewis the man he was for God. ■

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (London: Collins, 1955), 182.

<sup>2</sup> George Sayer, *Jack: The Life of C. S. Lewis* (London: Hodder, 1997), 217.

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, 182, 183.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide* (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper Collins, 1996), 181-193.

<sup>5</sup> William Griffin, *C. S. Lewis: The Authentic Voice* (Colorado Springs: Colo.: Lion, 1986), 89.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, 52, 53.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 61, 95, 134.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 135-137.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 138, 141-143.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 168-172.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 173, 175, 176, 178.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 178, 179; Sayer, 222-225; Griffin, 65, 66, 88.

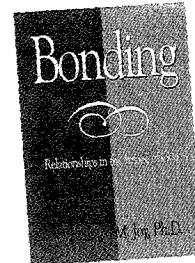
<sup>13</sup> Lewis, 170.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 188, 190.

## Bonding and Rebonding

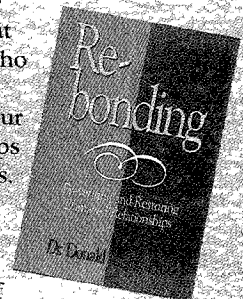
Donald M. Joy, Ph.D.



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# MARKETPLACE PREACHING

## *Interview with Calvin Miller*

**C**alvin Miller, a highly respected preacher, talks about reaching people where they are.



*Calvin Miller, D.Min., is professor of communication and ministry studies at Southwestern Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.*



*Derek Morris, D.Min., is a professor in the School of Religion, Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee.*

**Derek Morris:** In your book *Marketplace Preaching*,<sup>1</sup> you make a strong appeal for us to return the sermon to the marketplace. What do you mean?

**Calvin Miller:** I mean that we should start with people where they are, not where we wish they were. The New Testament was written in Koiné Greek, which was marketplace Greek. When it was translated into Latin by Jerome, it was put in vulgar or marketplace Latin. The marketplace is where people live and talk and where they say things in short sentences. Marketplace preaching keeps things in the vernacular. It's a line of conversation that people can understand. It's what I call preaching in the vulgate. The church once again must learn to preach in the vulgate with marketplace sermons. Preachers must preach conversationally. They must appeal to those outside the church.

**DM:** So you want to bring the sermon back to where people can understand it.

**CM:** Yes. I have discovered that to grow a church from ten members to 3,500 members, you have to be able to start where the

people are. Jesus Christ was a marketplace Savior. He was even criticized for being too marketplace. You see Jesus perching on the side of a well, trying to engage someone in conversation. The well was a center of activity, the marketplace, so to speak. And I think preaching needs to stay there.

**DM:** What is the most effective form for the marketplace sermon?

**CM:** I think story is a powerful form. I'm reading about the way lawyers are using stories. It is rare for a lawyer to present a case without saying, "Here is what happened." And the lawyer tells the jury a story of what happened. I read an article recently in the *Wall Street Journal* about lawyers using third-person stories to convince the jury that certain things are true. Jesus used parables in the same way.

**DM:** How do you respond to those who suggest that expository preaching is more powerful than story, or narrative preaching?

**CM:** I say that the story is the exposition. When Jesus was asked, "Who is my

neighbor?" he didn't give a Hebrew root! He said, "A certain man went down to Jericho..." and He told a story. Ten percent of the Bible is precept and 90 percent is narrative. I think that for the marketplace mind, story is a powerful expositor.

DM: What is the best worship setting for the marketplace sermon?

CM: Marketplace preaching happens most effectively in the context of marketplace worship. "Vulgate worship," as I call it, must be relational, colloquial, and relevant. It must exist for and be understood by the person on the street. We can no longer build high, thick Gothic walls with colored glass that seems to shut the world out. We must take the message into the world and just preach it out in the open. One of the most impressive things that Leif Anderson ever did was to take his Easter services to the Mall of the Americas. Not a bad idea. That's where the world is passing by. People are passing through the mall, through the food court, not through the

church. So you need to take your choir there and tell the story there. This is how Christianity began. And it flourished until they had buildings. Once we took on the provincialized view that we should separate ourselves from others and do our business away from the noise of the marketplace, we were much less effective and successful.

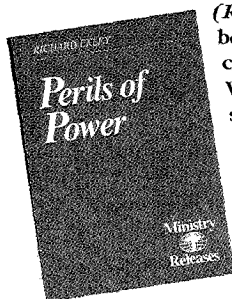
DM: You mention in *Marketplace Preaching* that the church seems more content to die inside than preach outside. Why do you think it is that way? Are we afraid to preach in the marketplace?

CM: Most of us feel a certain need to protect our testimony and our worship style. Christians are notorious for not wanting to talk about Jesus in the marketplace. They do that at church, but they won't do that at their job or in the mall. We don't want anyone to be rude to us or to not like us for what we believe, so we think it's safer not to say anything in these settings. But if Christians would talk about Jesus in the marketplace, they would become more credible.

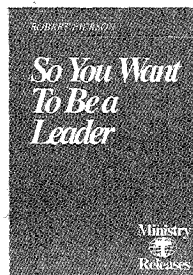
DM: What do you mean when you say that effective marketplace preaching requires tight preparation and loose delivery?<sup>2</sup>

CM: One of the great appeals of story is spontaneity. When you hear Fred Craddock spin a yarn, it seems like he is making it up as he goes. But that isn't the case. There is tight preparation. I believe very much in writing out the sermon. I just don't think you can develop effective marketplace sermons without writing. I don't think that you can produce anything that is going to be very enduring without writing it out. Whenever we finish preparing a sermon, we must go through it once more, sentence by sentence, replacing weak words with robust ones. Each of the sermon's key words must sing. Then phraseology has to be memorized. If you are going to use a line or two of a poem, memorize it. Go over everything in your mind until it's absolutely clear.

DM: I hear you saying that the preparation must be tight. But what about the delivery of marketplace sermons?



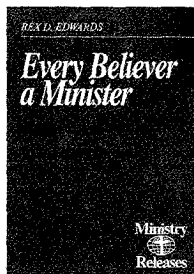
(Richard Exley) This provocatively-titled book deals with a crucial topic for all church leaders: lust and sexual conduct. Written with the pain that comes from someone who has a burden for ministers who either struggle or have already fallen, Exley, an Assembly of God minister, looks at some of the televangelist scandals of the past and uses these events as a springboard to counsel, explain, and help any who read this book.\*



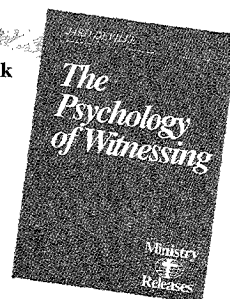
(Robert Pierson) Written by our beloved former General Conference President, this book is a spiritual and promotional approach to church leadership and administration. Based on many of his own experiences during decades in church work, Elder Pierson deals with fundamental principles of what it means to be a leader, particularly in the context of the Adventist Church.\*

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(Rex D. Edwards) Filled with fascinating stories from the history of the Christian church, this book reviews the spiritual privileges and responsibilities of the laity.



(Jard Deville) A popular management and leadership consultant, Deville has written this book with one purpose in mind: "To help you become more effective in leading other people to make a commitment of their lives to Christ." Of course, formulas don't always work, yet Deville focuses more on the principles involved, stressing such topics as interpersonal relationships and how crucial they are in witnessing.



\* Available in English and Spanish.

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CM: For the delivery, you need to hang loose. Hang loose enough so that if anything unexpected happens, you can laugh about it. On one occasion while a preacher was in the middle of the sermon, a little girl broke free, ran down the aisle, and came up onto the stage. The preacher stopped for a moment, picked her up, and said, "Isn't she beautiful?" The crowd broke into applause! And then the preacher said, "I don't know who she is, but you've got 30 seconds to claim her or she's mine!" And then he continued his sermon. This preacher had spent a lot of time in his study, but he was hanging loose in his delivery. He appeared to be human, and humanity more than any other single horizontal quality sells a sermon.

The marketplace preacher has a genuine concern for the people who are hearing the message. This love for the people is even more important than a love for the subject. That's why I advocate "breaking" right before the sermon. By that I mean that for the last ten minutes before you preach, stop looking at the manuscript. Get away from it and meet a few people. Allow your hearers to become central. Get out of your document and into them. If you don't do that, you'll be riveted to your document and you won't be able to identify with your hearers.

DM: Another strategy you suggest to connect with your hearers is the casual start, what you call the "speech before the speech."<sup>3</sup> What are you trying to accomplish in this casual start to the marketplace sermon?

CM: This is a relational age, but I don't think that seminaries teach relational communication very well. They teach liturgy and high worship, but usually they don't touch on relational communication. When church planters go out to the storefront or the mall, they are talking to people who don't know liturgy. We have to start where people are. That's why relational communication is so important. Establishing a speaker-listener relationship is the main key to unlock effective communicating. Not much can happen until friendship is fixed. In the initial moments of building a listener relationship, the key has more to do with feeling than argument. Arguments are not heard until the emotive sense of speakers

and listeners have merged. Only after we have reached an involved and relational oneness can we achieve a togetherness in our argument.

DM: I found myself chuckling when I read your marketplace strategies for maintaining the interest of your hearers. You

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suggest some radical tactics like the napalm file!<sup>4</sup> Why is it so important for you to keep the attention of your audience?

CM: Nothing can happen once interest is gone. Nothing. People will not be inspired by what bores them. They have to be interested—then they can be inspired. It hurts when I hear a preacher take a great

truth and make it so boring that nobody cares. Interest is a key function in moving people from truth to inspiration and action.

DM: What counsel would you give to a pastor who senses the call to preach marketplace sermons?

CM: Analyze your audience. I take this pretty seriously. Usually, when I receive an invitation to preach, I ask: "Is your church formal or informal?" "How do you dress as a pastor?" "How do your people dress?" You don't want to violate that sense of who people are. When I preached for Will Willimon, I wore a robe, because everybody does. Rick Warren preaches without socks—but then people in his church in California go without socks.

Identity is a big issue, and if a preacher goes against that, the people feel distanced from him. So we need to identify with the audience. I also think that a pastor's reading habits will determine his or her effectiveness in the marketplace. Read some novels, biographies, popular psychology. The more widely you can speak names that are authoritative to your audience, the more clout you will have.

And remember, a sermon is never done until the benediction is over. While you are preaching, it can be changed if it's not working. It can be added to, deleted, or even discarded. One morning, a man literally died of a heart attack in our worship service. I don't remember the sermon that day; what I remember is that as the rescue squad came to the church and into the sanctuary, I sat with his widow and prayed with her as the church joined around us in prayer. Those are moments when the preaching is of a totally different nature, but it is loud preaching. It is preaching where the people are—in the marketplace. ■

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<sup>1</sup> Calvin Miller, *Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where It Belongs* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Communicator: 7 Keys to Unlocking an Audience* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 19-24.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 198, 199.



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# HOW DO WE MEASURE “MEASURING UP”?

**T**he bona fide appraisal of a church's achievement does not rest upon statistics and numbers nearly so much as it does upon the ministry the church performs.



*Stephen Grunlan, D.Min., is senior pastor of the Balboa Avenue Alliance Church in San Diego, California.*

How big is your church? Whenever I am asked that question, I give a facetious reply: “Our worship center is 4,900 square feet, and our education and office center is 10,850 square feet.”

The answer surprises the questioner and after a pause they say “I mean, what is your the attendance at your weekly worship service?”

Why do we use worship attendance as a measure? After all, isn't that how activities such as sporting events, concerts, theater, and movies are measured? Attendance is the means used to measure the size of events attended by fans who focus on players on a field, the audience at a theatrical event, or box office success on the first weekend of a major movie. Is that an appraisal we should apply to a church?

In one parish where I pastored, I bought into this measurement-by-attendance paradigm, especially since our weekly attendance grew from less than 150 to over 700 in nine years. Last year, however, when I came to my present church, I had second thoughts. My present church is located close to the center of a major city. The area has a lot of military people and retirees. Soon I realized that weekly worship attendance was not in itself the best way to measure the size of our church family or the success of our ministry.

## **The true measure**

Although the New Testament mentions the count of people in certain situations, it does not project attendance as a means for measuring the effectiveness of a church. It presents the church as a family, a place of ministry.

My wife and I have three grown children. When our children were living at home, there were five of us. The main daily event in our family was evening dinner. Unless someone was out of town or had a conflict, they were expected to be there. Attendance at dinner was usually five. When two children were at camp, attendance was three. However, our family size was still five. If we had company for dinner, our attendance might have been nine—yet our family size was still five.

My present church includes many sailors and navy families. When the ships are in port, attendance is up; when the ships are at sea, attendance is down. Does the size of our church family change according to ships in or out of port? We also have a number of retirees, many of whom take extended trips to visit children or other family members. While away, do they stop being part of our church family? We also have some people who occasionally go elsewhere on weekends, so they can't always be

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STEPHEN GRUNLAN

at church. Are they any less a part of our church family while they are away? No, no less than our children were a part of our family when they were away at camp.

### How big is big?

The New Testament also presents the church as a place of ministry. As an urban church, our congregation ministers to hundreds of people each week who do not come to our weekly morning services. We have a Christian elementary school, a preschool, and an extended care program that ministers to over a hundred students. Only a handful of those attend our church. However, all the students attend chapel services, hear Bible stories, sing Christian songs, and are exposed to the gospel. Each year several accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

We have a youth ministry that involves dozens of young people, mostly from unchurched families. They attend youth activities, Bible studies, and other youth ministries. Most of these young people do not attend our church services. Nevertheless a few months ago the group attended a youth crusade, and six of them accepted Christ.

We have a Tough Love group that ministers to dozens of families each week, most of whom also do not attend our worship services. We have a seniors ministry that is attended by individuals who do grace our pews. Some who participate in our Bible studies do not participate in our weekend services.

Aren't all these people, in our school, youth ministries, Tough Love group, seniors ministries, and Bible studies part of the ministry of our church? Our church ministers to hundreds more people than those who sit in our pews for the weekly worship services.

### Church growth

I believe in church growth. I even believe in measuring church growth. What I question is how we do it. Do we measure it as if it were a ball game or a concert; or do we measure it as a we do a family or a ministry?

When my wife and I were first married, there were two of us in our family. When our first child was born, there were three, then four, and finally five. Obviously as our family grew, attendance at dinner grew, but we did not measure the size of our family by attendance.

Acts 2:41 reads, "Those who accepted his message were baptized and about three thousand were added to their number that day." Now, if the next week 100 converts were home sick and 50 were out of town, was the church 150 people smaller? Of course not.

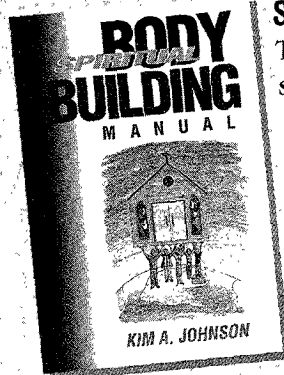
Since I have been at the church I currently serve, weekly worship service attendance has increased 50 percent. However, our church family has almost doubled, and our ministries have increased by an even greater percentage. This raises the question: Which is more important, increasing worship attendance or increasing the number of people to whom we minister? Which is greater growth—adding four families to our fellowship who may not attend every week or adding two families who attend church almost every week? Both will give the same attendance increase, but only

one will give greater family growth.

It is clear that weekly worship attendance has become the standard for measuring church size and growth. But we need to consider what we are measuring and why. Is there a way to measure church size and growth so that our measurements accurately gauge what we are really—or should be—about? Could what we measure affect what we do? Are we focusing on building attendance rather than God's family and ministry? I believe that if we focus on building the family and ministry, attendance will follow.

The next time someone asks about your church size, why not ask them: "Do you want it in square feet—or in souls ministered to, lives touched for Christ, and people helped with the compassionate love of our Lord?" ■

## Spiritual Body-Building



### Spiritual Body-Building Manual

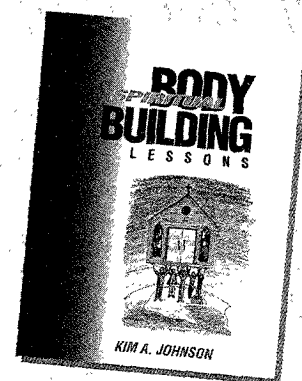
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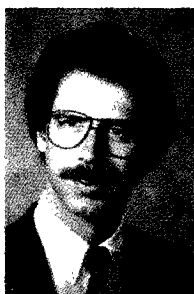
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# “FIRST, YOU MUST DO NO HARM”

**A**cross the long table from me, he slides into a folding chair and introduces himself. I've heard his name before, but we've never met. He's 24, fresh from seminary, and newly installed in his first parish.



*Loren Seibold is senior pastor at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Worthington, Ohio.*

He grins and amens his way through his first workers' meeting.

He asks me a few questions about ministry, things like how I plan my sermonic year or like demographic studies of my community and how I organize committees.

I'm not always sure how to answer. After all these years, I do a lot of ministry by intuition. Nonetheless, I've waited a long time for someone to think me wise enough to ask my advice. I've savored by the moment. I make valiant attempts at answers, spicing them with enough protestations of humility so that he can't hold me culpable if he tries my advice and fails.

Then he asks me a question that makes me stop, my forkful of food halfway from my plate to my mouth. "What is the most important thing to know about ministry?"

This one I cannot dodge. It is larger in scope and more important than the role of the music committee or the sermonic year. I wonder what to say.

I play back a mental tape of the advice given me in my first year of ministry. "Lord first, family second, church third." "An hour of quiet every morning at dawn." "Always

ask your conference president what to do before he tells you." "Don't neglect exercise."

Some advice, I've noted, is useful if executed but impotent as mere advice. I see in his eyes that he is already supplied with spiritual proverbs and managerial clichés. Perhaps he is hoping for more of the same. That is the problem with stating the expected: He expects it. If I say, "An hour a day of quiet contemplation of Christ on the cross," he will nod his head with vigor and comprehension. These clichés have already become part of the background noise of ministry. They're like the clutter on a desk that you've grown accustomed to: They must be saved but are easy to ignore.

For the first time I noticed that it is narcissistic advice. It is about ourselves, not others.

I decide to pass up lofty principles he knows in favor of a practical one he may not have thought of but may remember longer.

"First," I tell him, "*you must do no harm.*"

He looks at me oddly. It is not the formula he expected, and I see doubt in his eyes. But whether he knows it or not, I am telling him a truth. Not, perhaps, *the* truth, but a

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LOREN SEIBOLD

truth nonetheless. I think of a young mother who told me in tears that at the age of 14, a pastor had fondled her in the church office, where she had gone to him for counsel.

Who knows what happened in that church office? What signals the pastor thought he was receiving and what she conveyed? But it should not have mattered. For the pastor should be the one person in the world who will never take advantage of you—even of your pathologies.

I don't know what that man carries with him. He continues in his ministry. But if he feels that his greatest sin back then was adultery, he is mistaken. That, Jesus assured us, happens often in hearts and as such must be forgiven not infrequently. His greatest sin is that he sent a young woman into the world feeling like no one can be fully trusted. The scars of it show in her marriage, her parenting, her emotional life, and even in her appetite. He may have sought and received peace; she, I suspect, has not.

*First, you must do no harm.*

I think of a man whose faith was forged in fear. He tells of endless sermons in his childhood that may have been drawn from John Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. Warnings of suffering and pain and persecution, always with Adventists as the object of hate and grotesque violation. He remembers sermons wrought intricately in blood and gore and dismembered heads and burning bodies.

He is a person of native spirituality and deep sensitivity; but fear was welded into his faith at an impressionable age. Today he seeks God but hates and fears Him too; and when we talk, when we try to tease apart the faith from fear, I feel angry at a pastor, four decades ago, who warped the mind of the child who grew into this man.

*First, you must do no harm.*

I think of a young woman whose mother, a denominational employee, came into legal conflict with denominational leaders. An incensed but thoughtless minister took up the cause and convinced his congregation to disfellowship the entire family, including the 15-year-old daughter.

Although the woman was vindicated legally and ecclesiastically and received an apology, it was too late for her daughter. Today she loves the truths of Adventism but refuses to join the church.

*First, you must do no harm.*

Another woman tells me the story of a trusted minister who approached her grandfather, late in his life, for a substantial personal loan. The old man gave him the money, agreeing that "a handshake is sufficient between Adventist brethren, isn't it?" When grandfather died a year or two later, the minister seemed to remember nothing of the loan.

She goes to church, but distrust lurks close below the surface and sometimes is projected on a pastor who had nothing to do with the dishonesty of his predecessor.

*First, you must do no harm.*

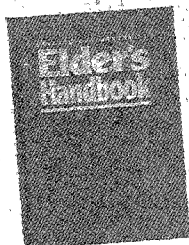
These are still in contact with the church. For each one, there must be a hundred others who abandoned it. Not always

was it the minister's fault; but where it was, he is ten times guilty. For he was to be the one person who was expected to act in the name of, and with the grace of, Jesus Christ. The one person who could be trusted. The one person who would not take advantage of you. The one person who would tell you the truth about God.

I study the young pastor's face for a moment. There's a look of untroubled sincerity in his eyes that I had once—back when I believed that ministry would be a constant joy and endless victories. But he needs to know no more: Real life will unfold itself to him soon enough.

"First, you must do no harm," I tell him—and myself—again. ■

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# PREVENTING CLERGY BURNOUT

**T**hirty-seven practical suggestions for easing life in ministry.



*J. Grant Swank is  
pastor of the Church  
of the Nazarene,  
Windham, Maine.*

To prevent clergy burnout, try the following:

1. Breakfast out with your spouse once each week. Put it on the family calendar and make it a permanent, needed getaway (And don't carry a cell phone with you; the whole point is to *get away!*).

2. Exchange house keys with another couple. When you and your spouse need a breather, skip town. Stay overnight at your friend's house. They can have the same privilege with your home. A phone call to the friend prior to landing on the front porch would be helpful. This kind of reciprocity works wonders for all concerned.

3. Organize your weekly responsibilities. Often burnout results simply from haphazard work plans.

4. Start next week's sermon early enough to prevent a stressful pileup the night before it's supposed to be delivered.

5. Schedule each day efficiently, so as not to overlap duties.

6. Prioritize your responsibilities; differentiate between majors and minors.

7. Fellowship with clergy of other denominations. These persons cannot harm you ecclesiastically, because they are not of your official circle. There is no political string they can pull to undo you.

8. Take at least one full day a week off

from church duties.

9. Filter phone calls to the parsonage via an answering machine. The parsonage phone automatically brings the workplace into the home; such is the nature of the job. However, this does not have to imprison the pastor. He can filter calls so as to schedule responses more efficiently.

10. Obtain child care so that both spouses can have free time. This is imperative, for obvious reasons—yet many clergy couples do not seem to get around to planning such opportunities.

11. Eat out at inexpensive restaurants. Some ministers and their spouses do not eat out much because of the cost, but cheaper respites are just as refreshing as costly ones. A simple picnic supper, or variation thereof, is also an option.

12. Develop your hobby and keep at it. Use that pastime as your rightful opportunity for creativity and variety outside of church responsibilities.

13. Take recreational breaks in your weekly schedule. If you are not athletic, at least plan walks through rural sections or neighborhoods other than where you reside.

14. Don't read religious material only. The brain needs a detour. For example, reading magazines selected for their per-

J. GRANT SWANK, JR.

sonal appeal to you can be quite renewing.

15. Have a policy by which parishioners do not own your living quarters, even if the parsonage is near the church. The parsonage is the private living area for the clergy family, except when parishioners are invited.

16. Plan ahead. Keep a working calendar in the church and parsonages so that you can refer to it quickly. Check off items as they are completed.

17. Take a walk through a mall or shopping area. Plan to buy nothing. Such a simple change of scenery is therapeutic.

18. Drive around the countryside. Don't rush back to the workplace.

19. Take your annual vacations; it's not in the least heroic to skip these needful breaks.

20. Be realistic about your vocation. Do not try to put a happy face on everything or everyone. Express your feelings to a trusted friend but be careful. Know for certain that the individual can be trusted. It is often best to find such a confidant outside the system.

21. Watch for danger signals in your body and mind. If something irregular begins to appear, it may be time to see your doctor.

22. Don't watch too much television, if that is your bent. Find other activities to take the place of this excess.

23. Try to get to sleep at a reasonable hour each night. Nighthawks pay for it in the long run.

24. Answer your mail as soon as possible—a simple move that can efficiently keep your work responsibilities up to date and ease the sense of stress you might otherwise feel in the light of unfulfilled tasks.

25. Delegate more to parishioners. Do not try to do it all yourself. If there are not enough workers for the tasks, ask yourself if that particular item is essential. If not, discard it.

26. Regarding home visitation: Put a tear-off in the church bulletin in which you ask for worshipers to state the day and time they would like the pastor to visit. This cuts through the criticism that the pastor does not call on members in their homes. With today's frantic schedule, old-fashioned pastoral function must be adapted to the rat race.

# MINISTERS

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27. Slow down if you tend to be hurried. Pare down all nonessentials. Cut out needless movement. It is easy to create movement ruts that are unnecessary; eliminate them.

28. Listen to your spouse's appraisal of your reaction to your ministerial responsibilities. Your spouse looks more objectively on what you tend to impregnate with subjectivity, and she or he is the only individual in the world who knows your work and your reactions so well.

29. Realize that God is the one who changes lives. The minister can lead people to the truth about God, but then it is up to the Lord and the free will of the individual to move on from there.

30. It is reassuring to remember that it is God who said that *He* would build *His* church. In this cause, we clergy are simply facilitators and servants. The overall divine move has to come upon each local congregation. Much of that is a mystery to us. Therefore, we must continually relinquish the final ministerial outcome to God alone.

31. Refuse to read material that is depressing, especially information regarding other congregations, particularly those that seem to be overflowing the charts statisti-

cally. Each situation is an individual work in the eyes of God. Keep your mind positive by refusing to intake information that might discourage you.

32. Stay away from comparisons with other churches. Simply don't gather with clergy who are into the verbal game of constantly comparing and competing. This is an attitude of "the flesh," not "the Spirit."

33. Abandon your work and soul continually to the Lord. Refrain from analyzing too meticulously where you are on the "success charts."

34. Again, on the activity side, enjoy local concerts and community gatherings.

35. Plan family excursions that have nothing to do with church work.

36. When pressure builds, take a morning off to do nothing in particular. See to it that your mind winds down so that you can get back on track again. Winding up the mind when it is already exhausted leads to trouble.

37. Listen to relaxing music.

Adapting a selection of these ideas and attitudes to your situation will not only help you avoid burnout but will contribute significantly to joy and fulfillment in your ministry and in your life as a whole. ■

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# COURAGEOUSLY PRACTICING VISIONARY SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

**T**hink about what matters most to you: spouse, children, parents, brothers, and sisters. Others matter, too: your Pathfinder Club, friends who volunteer with you at the hospital, your music group.



*Charles Scriven, Ph.D., is president of Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland.*

Of course, the church will rank high, especially for the pastor.

But have you ever thought about how fragile these circles of people are? Some could die or leave or (as they say in sports) the “chemistry” could change. In fact, organized circles like this are generally in perennial trouble. A Harvard professor, in a book called *Bowling Alone*, says league play in bowling alleys has slumped in the past few decades, symbolic (the book says) of the fact that people are withdrawing into little cocoons. In America, social groups, leagues, volunteer organizations, and even family life have all been fading. Along with them many of the traditional activities that used to be enthusiastically supported in the local church are also ebbing.

In Edwin Arlington Robinson’s poem “Richard Cory,” Cory was a man so rich, so well educated, and so graceful in his look and step that he “fluttered pulses” when he said “Good morning” and “glittered when he walked.” But he was quietly and terribly alone, detached from his community, and

while everyone was envying his wealth and style, “Richard Cory, one calm summer night, Went home and put a bullet through his head.”

Richard Cory’s heart was dead before his body. I imagine that loneliness had a lot to do with it. We all want to be part of something—a family, a company, a team or club, a church—that lifts our hearts the way the wind lifts the eagle. We want to belong to something borne by a dream, something good and beautiful, something with the spark of life and energy.

In this light, consider your role in the circles you value. We each follow the lead of others at times, but we also bear leadership responsibilities. Everyone has to bear at least some responsibility for how things go in a family, a company, a team, a club, or of course, the church.

My question is: How can faith in God enhance our talent for bearing this responsibility? How can trust in, and loyalty to, God help us make a bigger difference? In other words, how can the spirituality of leadership

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CHARLES SCRIVEN



make the circles we care about, the organizations we care for, even stronger? Here are four fundamental ingredients that can make the difference.

### Courage

The word *spirituality* refers to the practice of paying attention to God—paying attention through prayer and study of His Word. If we are thinking about how God can make us more effective leaders, what better starting point than the life of Abraham, an example of courage.

Imagine having a nice house overlooking the river. Your three children are in good schools, your job is exciting and has prospects for advancement. You live in a classy little town, and you love it. Then God says, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1, NRSV).

I don't know Abraham's exact circumstances. Basically, though, this is what happened to him (Genesis 11 and 12). The Word of God says that he was "settled" in Haran, along with members of his extended family. But when confronted with the call of God—he left. He was 75 years old, but age didn't matter. He "obeyed when he was called" and "set out, not knowing where he was going" (Heb. 11:8).

It's been said that courage isn't courage unless you're afraid. Leaving your homeland is scary. Breaking with customary practice is frightening. Abraham must have shivered a time or two before he salied forth. That was courage.

When Edson White, the son of James and Ellen, rode down the Mississippi in order to bring the gospel to impoverished and ill-treated blacks, white vigilantes threatened to lynch him and blow up his boat. The ifs, ands, and buts could have kept him where he was, held him back, muzzled him, but they did not stop him from doing what he believed God had called him to do. That, too, was courage.

Whatever human circle you have responsibility for, if you are going to lead the way God wants you to lead, you'll sometimes be scared. That goes with the territory—especially the pastoral territory. But you won't bog down in all the stalemate ifs, ands, and buts. If we were all Abrahams, heading into the unknown for God, we'd

feel something like Edmund Hillary climbing Mount Everest or Neil Armstrong on his flight to the moon.

### Vision

In the spirituality of leadership, then, courage is basic, like bread. But not any courage, not courage that's mean-spirited or without high purpose. When we bear responsibility for our families, our communities, and our churches, courage must be coupled with vision.

In colonial times, a revival broke out in the Northampton Church in Massachusetts where Jonathan Edwards, the greatest Christian leader of his age in America, was pastor. The revival brought many pleasing effects but also some pious foolishness and frenzy. The weird effects led Edwards to declare how you determine, as a Christian, whether your vision—your truth, your insight, your dream—is genuine rather than fake. The test, he wrote, is whether you find "such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy, as appeared in Christ."

The same thing comes through in the Bible. With His arrest looming, Jesus explained His vision to the disciples. Some things I'd like to tell you you're not ready to hear, He says in John 16. "You cannot bear them now" (verse 12). But Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will accompany the disciples all their life and ministry, even after

He is physically absent, and the Holy Spirit, He says, "will guide you into all the truth" (verse 13). The Holy Spirit, Jesus is saying, gives the gift of a clear vision.

Then the Gospel of John says that what the Holy Spirit helps you to see is what Jesus wants you to see. The Holy Spirit "will glorify me," Jesus says, "because he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (verse 14). To John, as to other New Testament writers, Christ is the criterion—the standard of truth, the test of the genuine. From the Christian point of view, the best of all visions is the vision of and from Christ.

The authorities, it turned out, did arrest Jesus, and He was tried and then crucified. But Jesus broke the bonds of death. His whole life and teaching were validated by the miracle of resurrection. This Jesus was now—unmistakably—the Christ, the Messiah. He is still the Christ, reigning in heaven while we live on earth. Christ is above our traditions, above our policies, above "the way we've always done it." And the Spirit's work, in large part, is to help us know, in our ever-changing circumstances, what following Jesus means in our present situation. New questions and new times challenge our routine understandings every day. So the Holy Spirit, in guiding us to clearer vision, helps us see in ways we've never before needed to see.

But there is another side to this. There

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was a sea captain who in the middle of the night saw lights ahead and had his signalman blink out this message: "Change your course ten degrees south." From the direction of the lights came the signaled reply: "Change your course ten degrees north." The captain was irritated: "I'm a captain—change your course!" he had his own signalman snap back. The reply came: "I'm a seaman first class—change your course!" Now the captain was furious: "Change yours," he signaled, "I'm on a battleship." The reply came back: "Change yours—I'm in a lighthouse."

As on the sea, so in communities, families, or churches: It is destructive when people think of their own viewpoint as non-negotiable. As Yogi Berra once said: "It's not what we don't know that gets us into trouble. It's what we know for sure that just ain't so."

Because Jesus understood the truth about arrogance, He promised that with the Holy Spirit we would always be learning. The vision the Holy Spirit gives deepens all the time over time. Those who embrace it are ready always to acknowledge prior narrow-mindedness. They are ready always to look beyond the next horizon, to imagine the next innovation, to seize the next opportunity.

### Service

Jesus reminded the disciples that it's common for those who bear responsibility to "lord it over" people. Then He declared, "But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant." And to drive home the point, He said, "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve" (Mark 10, 43, 45).

Courage counts. Vision—creative vision—is indispensable. But in leadership, service is basic. That must mean words of kindness and deeds of mercy. But when we are talking leadership, when we are talking about the responsibilities we bear in the human circles we care about—the service that matters most is the service that empowers others, that helps others to be the best they can be. According to John, Jesus Himself felt this way because He told the disciples that they would do works "greater" than His own (John 14:12).

Leaders serve by energizing people. They mobilize people. They make leaders out of the people they lead. If we care about the spirituality of leadership, the hectoring

authority of the tyrant is out. Service that empowers others—no bluster, no paranoid defensiveness, no reach for selfish power—is true leadership. It's the leadership that can make our families, communities, and especially our churches strong.

### Hope

Courage matters. Creative vision matters. Service matters. But hope matters, maybe even most of all, because it's so easy to lose hope in today's world. Paul, who says he fought "wild animals" (meaning difficult people) while in Ephesus, knew the truth about human beings and hope. If there is no hope, says his first letter to the Corinthians, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Paul knew that without hope, the circles of people, such as the church, who matter most, don't have a chance. He knew that without hope our efforts to bear responsibility, especially as pastors, hardly matter.

That's why I resonate so much to the idea of the "blessed hope." I'm energized by what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:57, 58: "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved," he goes on, "be steadfast, immovable, always excelling [always doing more than expected] in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

If Richard Cory, in the poem, put a bullet through his head because he was lonely, I suppose it was also because he couldn't see any hope. Spirituality is the practice of paying attention to the reality of God, and when we engage in that practice, the hope we need wells up inside of us. So does the courage, the vision, and the energy to serve.

### People matter

People matter to me more than anything else on earth. Whether I think of my family or my colleagues or my students at the college, I know each circle can lift my heart. Together, they can lift me the way the wind lifts an eagle. I also know each one is fragile—people could leave or die; the "chemistry" could change.

But I'm sure that if I pay attention to God, if I practice the spirituality of leadership, then, by God's grace, I can help make these circles of people even stronger than

they are. And unlike Richard Cory, I will feel that I belong to something—something borne by a dream, something good and beautiful, something with the spark of life and energy about it.

Practicing the spirituality of leadership can do this for anyone. The benefit is part of what the grace of God—the generosity of God—is all about. It helps those who lead to bear their responsibilities well. And it helps families, communities, and churches—the human circles that depend on leadership and bring so much in the way of satisfaction—to truly flourish. ■

## Letters

*continued from p. 3*

any of the following practices are wrong: The ability to relax the body and the mind, taking deep breaths; focusing our thoughts; and create desired/beneficial mental images.

While these are the steps used in the prehypnotic state, it does not follow that by themselves they are wrong for Christians to practice. In fact, I have found my mediation and prayer time to be enhanced through these exact preparatory steps.—Dick Tibbits, D.Min., Celebration, Florida.

● Congratulations! The March issue of *Ministry* is excellent. Your team is doing a good job. I'm also pleased with the new plan to reach out to clergy of other denominations through the satellite project. God bless!—Lowell Bock, Yucaipa, California. ■

## Hear the call again

*continued from p. 4*

negative maladies. Functioning within the wonder of God's call and empowerment makes all the difference. So it is for us to nurture our sense of God's calling to us and begin, if need be, by simply acting as though we love our ministry and our particular placement and the people we are serving.

"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (Exod. 3:5, NIV). "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last" (John 15:16, NIV). ■

<sup>1</sup> H. B. London Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman, *The Heart of a Great Pastor* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1994), 120.



**S**ince 1960 the United States has seen "a 560 percent increase in violent crime and a 400 percent increase in illegitimate births. Despite massive

levels of public assistance and unprecedented welfare spending, we witnessed a quadrupling of the divorce rate, a tripling of the number of children in single-parent homes, a 200 percent increase in teenage suicides, and a drop of 75 points in the average SAT scores of high school students."<sup>1</sup>

This frightening and dangerous decline in values has sent many to urge their legislators to restore morality. Well-organized conservative Christian groups are a force to be reckoned with in local and national politics.

This raises some serious questions for Adventists. We, too, can relate to the concerns of our Christian friends, alarmed at the current moral degeneration. But we also are a people of prophecy, and we expect a day when the United States will pass laws dictating how to worship God.

Hence, we find ourselves in a dilemma. If we oppose the conservative Christian agenda, we appear to be their opponents. Yet if we agree with the push for legally mandated morality, then we seem to be neglecting the truth of prophecy. What is the proper stance for Adventists to take regarding legislating morality? Should we oppose it because we feel it will ultimately lead to the curbing of religious freedoms? Or is there a role we can play that both upholds moral values and attests to the truthfulness of biblical prophecy?

#### Light from the past

Our past is helpful in determining this. The 1800s didn't have the problems of pornography, illegitimate births, abortion,

## Legislating morality: How far do we go?

GARY D. GIBBS

child abuse, etc. that plague us today. But that age did have a major issue that fired Christian activists: alcohol abuse. At times the temperance movement was as hotly contested on the political circuit as abortion is today. And it was almost single-handedly pushed into the national consciousness by an organized league of Sunday-keeping Christians—a league that eventually included the drive for a national Sunday law. How did Adventist leaders respond to this? Specifically, how did Ellen White react to this religiopolitical temperance movement?

#### "Go vote"

While Mrs. White counseled Adventists not to "become involved in political questions," she did not mean for us to be completely detached from politics and moral reform. She urged all church members to vote and to influence legislation on the moral issue of alcohol use.<sup>2</sup>

In May 1865, at the third annual General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan, the delegates passed a resolution that supported voting for moral issues.<sup>3</sup> Nearly twenty years later the question of whether Adventists should vote on issues of morality surfaced again at a camp meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, where James and Ellen White were present. A proposed action was placed before the people that instructed all ministers "to use their influence among our churches and with the people at large to induce them to put forth every

consistent effort, by personal labor, and at the ballot box, in favor of the prohibitory amendment of the Constitution."<sup>4</sup>

Some of the brethren disagreed with the clause that called for action at "the ballot box" and asked that it be removed. Ellen White, who had retired for the night, was called to give her counsel. She wrote later: "I dressed and found I was to speak to the point of whether our people should vote for prohibition. I told them 'Yes,' and spoke twenty minutes."<sup>5</sup>

#### A crucial distinction

Romans 13:1-4 states that it is the government's duty to punish those who are lawbreakers. Laws are not amoral. Every time the law of the land makes murder, theft, or perjury a crime, it has legislated morality. And this is as it should be.

However, *this does not mean governments should legislate how people are to worship God.* When it comes to legislating morality, a crucial distinction must be made between the two tables of the Ten Commandments. Over one table the Lord rules. Over the other civil leaders, including "the ministers of God," have a responsibility (see verse 4). It is proper for governments to establish and enforce laws dealing with the last six commandments, which define the human-to-human relationship. But the first four commandments, describing the human-to-God relationship, are under God's sole jurisdiction. A government's role here is simply to provide for the free exercise of religion.

Civil government has a duty to follow God's law and honor Him. Ellen White understood this and was not fearful of being involved in social issues of grave moral import. Neither did she allow the fact that Sunday observers were the catalyst for the temperance movement to keep her from championing the cause.

#### The temperance movement

The temperance crusade grew out of a desire to reverse the downward spiral of

an "alcoholic republic."<sup>6</sup> Alcohol was a loose lion. Legally protected, it ravaged the minds and bodies of people. Christians were concerned. Lyman Beecher, a Congregationalist pastor, sparked social activism to outlaw alcohol with his six-sermon series on intemperance in 1825 and 1826. Another sermon series by Calvin Chapin, preached and published in Connecticut, further influenced public opinion.

In response, 16 prominent citizens of Boston met in February 1826 and formed what eventually became the American Temperance Union (ATU). In nine years the ATU had 8,000 societies in the United States. By 1839, 350,000 persons had made decisions to sign total abstinence pledges.<sup>7</sup>

Ellen and James White were not content to sit on the sidelines. They were avid supporters of this cause and often united their efforts with the members of other churches. "In his labors," wrote Ellen White, "my husband, whenever he had opportunity, invited the workers in the temperance cause to his meetings, and gave them an opportunity to speak. And when invitations were given us to attend their gatherings, we always responded."<sup>8</sup> As a result, the Whites had "the joy of seeing several unite with us in the observance of the true Sabbath."<sup>9</sup>

Mrs. White continued to urge this practice right up to the time of her death. Nine months before her death she wrote calling the church to work in harmony with the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), an interfaith Christian organization concerned predominantly with lobbying for prohibition. She encouraged high-level involvement and interaction.<sup>10</sup>

What were these temperance societies like? They marshaled "Cold Water Armies." Sunday School children marched in parades and "dispensed cold water to spectators along the way, freely distributed temperance tracts, and endeavored to persuade drinkers to sign the total abstinence pledge."<sup>11</sup>

Temperance societies also used

politics to achieve their goals by lobbying state and federal legislatures to pass prohibition laws. When lawmakers didn't support their cause, the temperance promoters ran their own candidates. Prohibition was made an election issue. With the antiprohibition candidates out of office, the prohibition officials influenced legislation outlawing alcohol.<sup>12</sup>

Women were influential in a unique way. With Bibles in hand, they entered taverns, knelt on sawdust floors to pray, and appealed to tavernkeepers to close their places of business. Frequently they conducted all-day sit-ins.<sup>13</sup>

The WCTU pledged "to employ all proper means to discourage the use of and traffic in [alcoholic beverages]." Frances Willard, president of the WCTU for 19 years, "campaign[ed] for prohibition amendments in state constitutions, supported the women's suffrage movement . . . , advocated vegetarianism, opposed tobacco use, called for the creation of kindergartens, and on Sundays even sent ladies to the local jails to take bouquets with Bible texts attached for the prisoners."<sup>14</sup>

Of course, Ellen White did not advise Adventists to participate in all of the WCTU's activities, but only "so far as we can do so without compromise."<sup>15</sup> Neither did she suggest that Adventists indiscriminately join all temperance societies.

#### The reason for the moral crisis

In one of her clearest statements regarding our responsibility to God and government, Ellen White rallied Adventists to go to the polls and exert their vote in favor of temperance. Here, she also gives us a striking insight into the cause of our moral crisis.

"There is a cause for the moral paralysis upon society. *Our laws sustain an evil which is sapping their very foundations.* Many deplore the wrongs which they know exist, but consider themselves free from all responsibility in the matter. This cannot be. . . . The advocates of temperance fail to do their

whole duty unless they *exert their influence by precept and example—by voice and pen and vote*—in favor of prohibition and total abstinence."<sup>16</sup>

This statement reveals two important principles. First, a major cause of moral degradation in a country is its immoral laws. Second, Adventists have a responsibility to God and society to change such laws. Wringing our hands and complaining about how bad things have become is not enough.

We shirk duty when we sit back and point to the atrocious crimes of child abuse, rape, abortion, and pornography as signs of the end and then neglect to use our influence as citizens to correct the laws that sustain these evils. While protecting the wall of separation between church and state, we must not open the gate to evil that will ravage our children and homes. This is the balance that we must strive to maintain.

#### Christians in politics

Some believers lament Christian involvement in the political process. But if Christians do not stand for moral beliefs and values, who will? Who will resist the incessant tide of immorality that seeks to erode society? If we absent ourselves from the public forum, what type of society will we inherit after these with purely secularized concerns exercise their right to vote and influence public opinion?

Here is what happens when Christians are silent: Secular humanists control the state. With no fear of God, there is no fear of degradation and self-destruction. Laws are enacted that are godless and sustain corruption. How will Christians fare in such a society? They will not be able to freely live out their faith. And their children will be constantly bombarded with ungodliness and emptiness.

Ellen White was no silent observer when it came to the moral issues that affect society. One can only wonder what she would tell Adventists today regarding abortion upon demand, pornography, and euthanasia. Surely she would not

condemn those in our nation who champion reform and laws that "rigidly enforce" common-sense virtue.

#### Temperance and Sunday laws

In 1887 the WCTU sided with the National Reform Association (NRA), a national Sunday law lobbying group. They hoped to improve American morality by closing saloons at least on Sundays.<sup>17</sup> But state governments passed Sunday laws and used them to persecute Adventists and Jews. This all transpired in what was for Adventists a very charged atmosphere full of prophetic significance. At the 1888 General Conference session, the church experienced a significant outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This, coupled with the move by the NRA and WCTU to pass Sunday laws, signaled to every Adventist that the world was on the verge of the end of time. Consequently, Adventists didn't want to have much to do with organizations such as the WCTU, which were involved in Sunday legislation.

A. T. Jones, editor of *Sentinel*, was the denomination's foremost defender of religious liberty during this era. Jones, concerned with the Sunday law developments, came out hard against anyone and any organization connected with it. In one of his articles he pointed out the relationship between the WCTU and the NRA and was critical of some of the WCTU leaders' statements in favor of Sunday legislation.

Ellen White's reaction to Jones is both interesting and instructive. "You are building up barricades," she wrote Jones, "that should not be made to appear. After reading your articles [against WCTU], will those who know not what our faith is feel inclined to make an attempt to unite with us? . . . The work Christ came to do in our world was not to erect barriers and constantly thrust upon the people the fact that they were wrong. . . . If far more earnest, devoted, determined efforts were made for such associations as the WCTU, light would shine forth to souls who are as honest as was Cornelius. . . . The ideas

expressed in your articles savor so strongly of antagonism that you will do harm, more harm than you can possibly conceive."<sup>18</sup>

A few weeks later she wrote Jones again, indicating that regardless of the WCTU's involvement with Sunday legislation, we still were to work with and for them in a kind, Christlike way. "Some of our best talent should be set at work for the WCTU, not as antagonists, but as those who fully appreciate the good that has been done by this body. We should seek to gain the confidence of the workers in the WCTU, by harmonizing with them as far as possible. . . . My brother, do not represent truth and the situation of things as so formidable that those belonging to the WCTU will turn away in despair. There are vital truths upon which they have had very little light. They should be dealt with in tenderness, in love, and with respect for their good work. You ought not to handle them as you do. If you continue to do this, you will close doors whereby some, yes, many might be reached. Withhold your condemnation till you and our people have done all that can be done to reach them, not by the learned arguments of ministers, but through women of influence working as Sister Henry worked."<sup>19</sup>

#### Example of Sister Henry

According to Ellen White, Mrs. Henry was a model for how Adventists are to work with other Christians in parachurch organizations that have both moral reform and Sunday law agendas. Who was Mrs. Henry, and what example did she leave for us to follow?

Before joining our church, Mrs. S.M.I. Henry was WCTU's national evangelist. In 1896 she went to Battle Creek Sanitarium as a patient. The doctors said she would not be able to walk again and would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. While at the sanitarium she learned of and accepted membership into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. After covenanting with God to keep His commandments and attending a prayer service for healing,

Mrs. Henry was restored to health. Ellen White, in Australia at the time, was thrilled to learn of her conversion and began developing a friendship through correspondence.

In December 1898 Ellen White wrote to Mrs. Henry: "I thank the Lord with heart, and soul, and voice that you have been a prominent and influential member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. . . . For twenty years I have seen that the light would come to the women workers in the temperance lines. . . . *The Lord does not bid you separate from the [WCTU].* They need all the light you can give them. . . . Flash all the light possible into their pathway. You can agree with them on the ground of the pure, elevating principles that first brought into existence the [WCTU]."<sup>20</sup>

At the moment Ellen White's letter arrived, Mrs. Henry had already turned in her resignation as an officer of the WCTU; but after reading Mrs. White's letter, she withdrew it. While Mrs. Henry conscientiously quit the WCTU because of their work for national Sunday legislation, Ellen White's broader vision encouraged her to remain in the organization. Thankfully, Mrs. Henry followed Mrs. White's counsel: "It was largely due to the influence of her work and her appeals that the work in behalf of the Sunday law was quite generally dropped by that organization."<sup>21</sup>

Let's be perfectly clear. God does call people into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But this call doesn't exclude Adventists from working together with Christians in parachurch organizations that have the same concerns as we do for moral reform, as long as we, in the words of Ellen White, "can do so without compromising any principle of truth."<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, it is this crucial balance that many find difficult to maintain. Even so, we must strive for it.

#### Fulfilling our duty

The history of our participation in the temperance movement sheds light on

our current situation. It is clear from Ellen White's own practice that, while our work is to share the everlasting gospel, it is not our duty to be separated from social, and at times political, involvement.

While Adventists "exert their influence by precept and example—by voice and pen and vote—in favor of" reform, we should also seek to educate people to the separation found in God's law between the first four commandments and last, six. By making clear the distinction between where a government's duty begins and ends, we can educate people to the claims of God's fourth commandment and warn against oppressive religious laws.

Our calling as a church is not to reform the political system. Social and political involvement will by no means settle the sin problem. Only personal

conversion and the return of Jesus can accomplish this. Nevertheless, while living to hasten the coming kingdom, we must also fulfill our God-given duty to be responsible citizens and participate in maintaining a stable society. To do so is to act in total harmony with our faith. ■

*Gary Gibbs is the senior vice president and evangelism coordinator for Amazing Facts, Inc., in Roseville, California.*

<sup>1</sup> Jim Nelson Black, *When Nations Die, America on the Brink: Ten Warning Signs of a Culture in Crisis* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1994), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, "The Temperance Work," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 15, 1914.

<sup>3</sup> See *Review and Herald*, May 23, 1865, 197.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Temperance* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1949), 255.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Jerome Clark, "The Crusade Against Alcohol," in Gary Land, ed. *The World of Ellen G. White* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1987), 131.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>8</sup> White, *Manuscript Releases* (Silver Spring, Md.: E. G. White Estate, 1981), 1:123.

<sup>9</sup> ———, "Disseminating Temperance Principles," *Review and Herald*, June 18, 1908.

<sup>10</sup> See "The Temperance Work."

<sup>11</sup> Clark, 132.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 134, 135.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 136, 137.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>15</sup> "The Temperance Work."

<sup>16</sup> ———, "The Temperance Work," italics supplied.

<sup>17</sup> George Knight, *Angry Saints* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1989), 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ellen G. White, Letter 17, 1900.

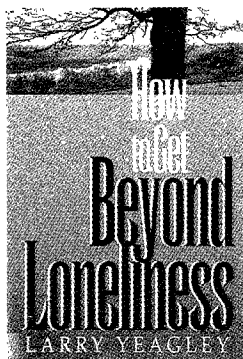
<sup>19</sup> ———, *Manuscript Releases*, 7:167-169.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:125, 126.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

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**I**t is rare for me to address the same issue three times in a single year. However, in response to my previous articles (June and July 1998), a former

denominational financial officer, well-versed in retirement issues and policies, shared the following observations about the proposed changes in the NAD retirement plan and the scheduled vote for implementation at the upcoming NAD year-end meeting.

#### The Defined Contribution plan

Many organizations have shifted from a Defined Benefit (DB) plan to a Defined Contribution (DC) plan. The reason for the shift is clear: the DB plan obligates the employer to make retirement payments at a specific amount for as long as the retired employee lives. The DC plan only obligates the employer to make specific contributions into a retirement fund during the time the individual works for the organization. The organization does not guarantee how much the employee will receive during retirement or what will happen if the employee lives beyond the time when his/her fund is depleted.

In the new DC plan, the amount which the employee will receive depends on the number of years worked, investment options given to the employee, investment decisions made by the employee, and other economic factors.

Most DC plans assume that working employees have significant personal funds which they will personally contribute along with the organization's contribution. Pastoral salaries do not allow for such significant contributions or perhaps even for the modest personal contributions required by the proposed DC plan in order for employees to receive a full contribution by the denomination.

The advantage to the employer is obvious. Once the employee retires, the

## Selective disobedience revisited

JAMES A. CRESS

employing organization has no further financial obligations to the retired employee. When the amount that has been contributed is fully expended, the retired employee is without income.

#### Retiree benefits and spouse allowances

Two additional, significant changes in the proposed DC plan for the United States portion of NAD involve medical coverage and spouse allowance for retirees. Note the impact if these observations are accurate.

*The denomination will no longer provide retirees' medical benefits as we understand them.* Instead, the new plan envisions making supplemental payment to the retiree, which should enable retired workers to obtain insurance through Adventist Risk Management (ARM) or another insurance carrier. Again, the advantage to the employer is obvious—reduced obligation in connection with health coverage.

If this is accurate (and the plan is not yet completely designed), the retired worker will have to find a carrier willing to provide coverage at an affordable rate. Also, should the retired worker need to change carriers, the question remains whether the new carrier will accept the retiree with existing medical conditions or apply certain limitations? However, the anticipated design provides that retirees will always have the choice to remain with a product sold by ARM. The retired worker takes on much greater responsibility for health coverage decisions under the new plan.

*Spouse allowance is eliminated in the new plan.* The current DB plan provides for a spouse allowance and recognizes that pastoral spouses (usually women) have

often helped the employed spouse (often the husband working as a pastor) in the work of ministry. Pastoral spouses are the single largest group of volunteers serving the church in North America. Even pastors' spouses who are employed in other lines of work give many hours of volunteer service to God's cause each week.

Only those who have worked as pastoral teams really understand how much work the "unemployed" spouse does for the ministry of the one who is paid. Those who have never been in this situation do not comprehend the expectations and demands placed upon pastoral families for active participation by the spouse in ministerial functions. Sometimes lip service is given to their contribution, but those who have designed the new DC plan have stated, "pastoral spouses are not recognized in the DC plan."

Some have concluded that a spouse allowance cannot be legally included in the new plan. However, this is only a technical issue for which a plan could be established to protect the promise made to pastoral families for so many years. In fact, Canada is making just such a provision in its retirement plan. If we cannot include the spouse allowance under the new plan, then we need to implement a parallel policy (not merely a recommendation but a mandated policy) which will make provision for the spouse allowance.

Our denomination is already out of harmony with Ellen G. White's counsel requiring that spouses who are co-workers with their husbands to receive remuneration. If we remove the spouse allowance which has been promised for so many decades to workers who are currently serving faithfully, we will further violate this counsel.

Pastoral workers and denominational leaders should join together to urge delay in implementation of the new plan until these issues are thoroughly discussed and alternative solutions are found. This is neither a financial nor legal issue alone. This is a moral issue of remaining faithful to a long-established promise made to pastoral employees. ■



## SHOPTALK

### Ministering to parents with infants

As a cradle roll leader, my wife gives to each parent at the close of Sabbath School a one-page spiritual message or a summary of the sermon to be given by the pastor that Sabbath. This might be the only adult blessing they will receive that Sabbath at church.

In Sabbath School they are with the children, singing and listening to stories. Then in the worship service they are busy with the responsibility of keeping their children quiet and entertained and many times miss the adult spiritual blessing of the worship service.

For a sample copy of the actual letter, write to: Robert Reiber, 8802 S. R. 194, Pullman, WA 99163.

### Sharing Ministry

My busy schedule does not permit me to read all the articles in *Ministry*. But I have found joy in sharing this important journal with others. My wife reads this journal, and we as a family discuss the issues raised. This has helped us to have a common worldview, and we have something more theological to talk about.

I have also asked my elders to read it, and some articles have brought them deep insights on theological issues. In most cases they have asked me to explain certain issues, and this has forced me to reread the articles diligently. I have also been made to reflect my own understanding of issues.

By sharing with the Sabbath School superintendent, I found students acting out the NET '96 report which was in the *Ministry*. Now I am planning to share the journal with other ministers and establish a professional relationship.—Douglas MuFanga, pastor, Nyahuni Church, Zimbabwe.

### The written word

I have discovered in my ministry as chaplain to many Generation X students that the written word is still the most

powerful way to communicate. The problem is lack of time and energy to write personal letters.

So I developed a ministry of note cards and postcards—note cards that can be sent to students in campus mail. I also think that a church could have in its foyer a church mailbox so the pastor and other parishioners could write notes. With commuter students, I mail a postcard, to encourage or to connect with them.

Note cards can be purchased commercially or made inexpensively with an ink jet or laser printer. Postcards can be simply purchased from the post office.

Why use a note card/postcard? It's *convenient* (I keep a small stack with me at all times); it's *personal* (handwritten, not typed or emailed) and it's time *efficient* (I limit my comments to the front of the note card/postcard—I have to pray and think before I write!).—Joseph B. Modica, Ph.D., chaplain, Eastern College, St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

### Pictorial church directory

Pictorial church directories are often difficult to compile and are usually out of date by the time they are completed. In order to simplify and stay up to date, our church has a pictorial directory on a large bulletin board in the fellowship hall. A church photographer takes pictures on a regular basis. New members are added to the directory almost as soon as they join the church. Pictures of members who have transferred are removed shortly after they have left. This helps our members get to know one another and especially helps new and established members become better acquainted.—Bill Peterson, Mississippi Gulf Coast District.

### Ministering children

The world has its minimum wage, but the church, has a different spin: *no minimum age!* Volunteers are always needed. If we let children do "child-size" tasks, adults can be shifted to adult-size jobs. A good way to implement this is to develop a ministry portfolio for each children's department or program. One

class could prepare the Communion service, juniors fold bulletins, and middlers run an overhead projector.

We must see our youth as young ministers for the Lord. Often our boys and girls are the ones to pass out literature in the neighborhood (with adult supervision) and advertise activities, such as the Vacation Bible School. Children may be the best evangelists you have in your congregation.—Douglas A Rose, Grand Prairie, Texas.

### Anniversaries

Anniversaries are important. These celebrations stir our minds and cause us to reflect on a wonderful event.

When taking part in marriage ceremonies and baptisms, I note the date in my diary, and on the particular anniversary of the event, I send a card and, if possible, include some piece of memorabilia which I have saved—a program outline, a ribbon, or a photograph.

On the card, I offer encouragement and affirmation and let them know that I value their friendship and look forward to meeting them again as time allows. I share with them the joy I experienced in being with them on their special day and that I value the place they have given me in their lives. I encourage them to continue to look to Christ and there find courage and strength for the duties of each day.—Steve Cinzio, clinical counselor, Sunnybank, Queensland, Australia.

### Public speaking and gestures

Public speakers would be more effective if their gestures matched their utterances. Desk-pounding and arm-swinging are in place if one is talking about Noah building the ark or a person running the Christian race, but many gestures bear no relation whatever to the topic presented.

Useless motions like fighting bees or a squirrel spinning in a treadle detract from the message. Size, height, or direction gestures are in order, but better no hand motions at all unless they match the subject. Downward or side-to-side

strokes often become "vain repetitions" and weary the audience. Watching a video of one's self might help.—Adriel Chilson, College Place, Washington.

## The listening ear

Members sometimes believe and feel that no one "in authority" cares about their concerns. To address this problem, each week following the morning worship, an elder stands at a large picture of a human ear that is located in the narthex. There, any member with a comment, complaint, or concern will have the undivided attention of the elder's "listening ear." The elder listens and accepts a member's comments without offering rebuttals, defenses, or alternative views. The goal is for the elder to understand, not change, the member's opinion.

At the monthly session (board meeting), each elder reports the comments heard at the Listening Ear, and action, if needed, is taken. The comments heard at the Listening Ear are also published, anonymously, in the newsletter so the entire congregation is assured that elders are well-informed.—John Stahlman, pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Michigan.

## ER outreach

Members of a nondenominational church in Roseville, California, have made the emergency room team at the Sutter/Roseville Community Hospital their ministry focus. At least once a week they bring the emergency room staff a fully-prepared meal as an appreciation gift for their dedicated efforts. This is an innova-

tive way to extend God's love to the professionals in the medical community.—Rich DuBose, Newbury Park, California.

## GO '99

The GO '99 International Young Adult Missions Conference will be held at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, December 29, 1998, through January 2, 1999. Guest speakers will include Bart Campolo, Byard Parks, Marilyn Laszlo, and others. Mission-minded Christians, missionaries, the young-at-heart, and former missionaries are invited to attend. For more information, write [loiswade@andrews.edu](mailto:loiswade@andrews.edu)

## Park ministry

Stephen Lewis, regional evangelist for the Southern California Conference, recently started a ministry in Farnsworth Park in Altadena, California. Due to conference budget cutbacks, Lewis realized he needed to find a way to minister without an evangelism budget. The initial group of 20 that started meeting in the park for Bible study, acappella singing and prayer, has grown to over 100, with 75 percent under 25 years of age. Sessions occur each Sabbath morning at 8 and 9 and 12 and 3. Lewis says, "We don't want this to become a church but rather a place for people to come and learn about God in a neutral environment."

## Outreach ideas

The Placerville SDA Church in Northern California has more than six hundred members and a 12-grade school, in the foothills of the Sierras. They do

many of the usual things, including an effective prison ministry (10 baptisms so far), a fair booth, and evangelistic outreach, but they also have a rather unique ministry for an Adventist Church. They do big productions such as the Witness, Christmas, and Easter dramas and more. Their commitment to quality has earned them a reputation second to none. It is hard work to do, but rewards have been well worth it: many new young families, a bulging Sabbath School, and community goodwill. If you have a drama person, some resources, and a situation where this could be done, give it a try and don't be afraid to ask for advice and help.

Another idea from Placerville. Does someone in your church have a passion for cameras and photography? If so, you could do like one of the Placerville members is doing. Start a camera club that's sponsored by the church and open to the community. This is a great way to draw nonmembers into fellowship.

Visit the Placerville SDA Church website at <http://www.tagnet.org/placerville>. —Rich DuBose, Newbury Park, California.

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# Moving?



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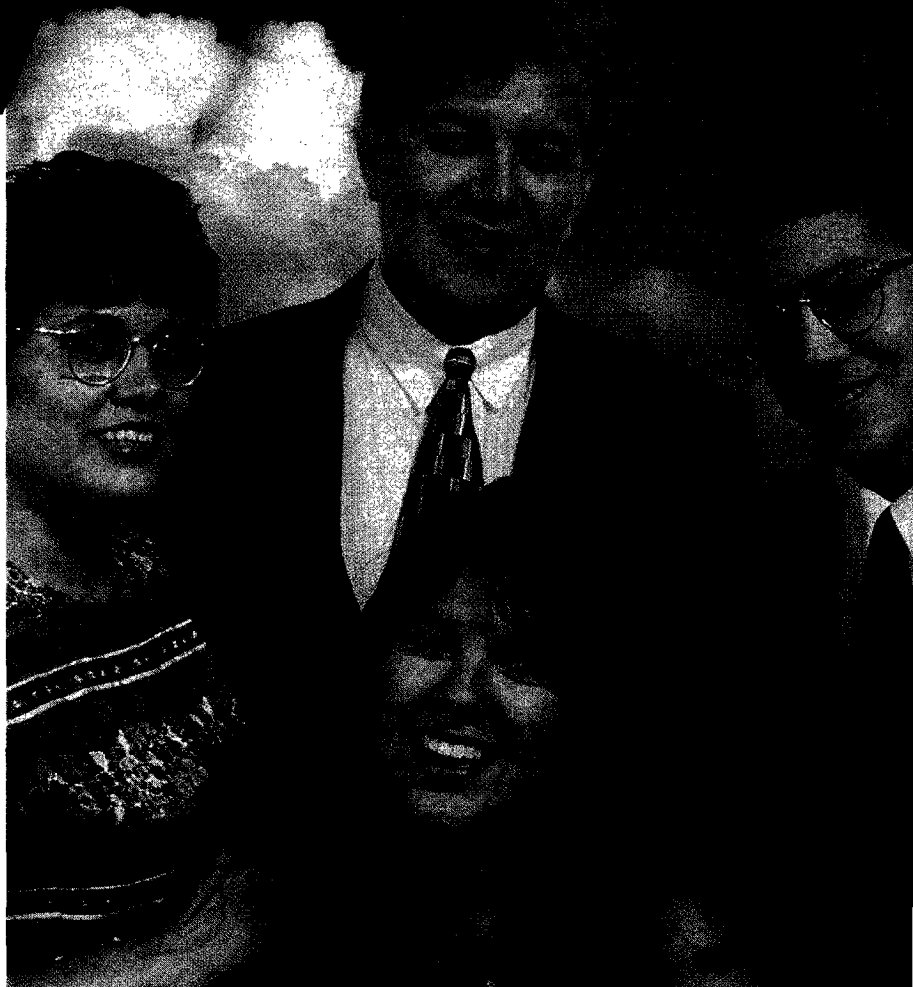
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

New Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

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