

South Pacific Division Quarterly Review Teen



**South Pacific Division
Third Quarter 2006**

contents

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mission Teen

On the cover: Youth of the South Pacific Division:
Vincent (top) is from Samoa; Mereoni and Sunia
live in Fiji, where part of this quarter's Thirteenth
Sabbath Offering will help build a worship center
for university students.

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The Challenge

In Papua New Guinea the church membership continues to grow, but pastors and lay workers cannot easily reach remote areas to minister to the people. The most valuable tool to nurture believers is Adventist Aviation Service, the church-operated aviation program. Currently the program is operating with only one aging aircraft. A new aircraft would revitalize the church's ability to serve its members in isolated and difficult-to-reach locations throughout the nation.

Fiji is an island nation lying in the heart of the South Pacific islands. Suva, the capital city, is home to several universities that serve the entire South Pacific region. Some 500 Adventist students from throughout the South Pacific region study here. They are the future leaders of their nations.

But these Adventist students have no church home in Fiji. Without a regular place to worship, the group of young people becomes fractured, and a significant number become frustrated and stop attending church.

The Opportunities

Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help provide the following projects:

- An airplane for church work in Papua New Guinea
- A church-student center for the university students in Suva, Fiji.

GraceLink Connection

Mission reports relating to the Sabbath School GraceLink dynamics can be found on the following pages:

Community Service	7, 13, 15, 17
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making missions meaningful

Leader's Planner

South Pacific Division

The South Pacific Division includes Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and the islands of the Pacific: Cook, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. This quarter special attention is being given to Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is made up of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and numerous islands surrounding it, including New Britain, New Ireland, and Bougainville. The main island is comprised of rain forests covering steep mountain ranges, creating a wild and forbidding landscape. Much of the coastal regions is lined with swamps and tropical growth. New Guinea remained largely unexplored until the 1930s, and much of the more remote regions was not entered until mid-century. Because of the rugged terrain, many of the rural villages are accessible only by foot (which can take several days to walk) or by small planes using dirt landing strips.

Because of intensive mission efforts by various Christian organizations, most of the people of Papua New Guinea consider themselves Christian, although many, especially in difficult-to-reach areas in

the highlands, still maintain their tribal religions, including animism, black magic, and ancestor worship.

A mainstay of evangelism for the past 40 years has been the aviation program that provides transport for church workers to enter the more isolated areas of Papua New Guinea. Health workers and teachers also benefit from the aviation service, and the sick or seriously injured can be airlifted to a hospital in minutes rather than days. However, the Adventist aviation service has just one aging airplane, and whenever it requires scheduled maintenance or emergency attention, the church has no means to reach the outpost areas except on foot.

The South Pacific Division is committed to providing a new aircraft for the work in Papua New Guinea, but it cannot raise the more than \$1 million alone. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide the aircraft to continue its vital aviation ministry to the people of Papua New Guinea.

Fiji

Fiji lies in the center of the South Pacific islands. The capital city, Suva, is home to several international institutions of higher learning, including a university, a technical school, and a medical school. These schools attract the

brightest students from throughout the South Pacific.

Some 500 Adventist students are enrolled at these schools. They have come to prepare for leadership roles in their own countries. But we have no Adventist church near the universities, no place where these youth can come to worship and bring their friends, to fellowship or study in a welcoming atmosphere. The nearest English-speaking church is several bus routes away from the school, and many students do not have the money for the bus fare. In the past the church has rented a hall at the university in which to worship, but increasingly the university needs all of its larger halls on Sabbath morning for lectures, leaving the Adventist students with no place to

worship. For some, it becomes too much trouble to find a church, so they stop attending.

To address this need, the church in Fiji has dedicated its resources to buying or building

a worship hall that can serve as an evangelistic center and student center as well. Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help make this church-evangelistic center a reality.

Your Offerings Make a Difference

Three years ago Thirteenth Sabbath funds were designated to help build up to 26 chapels in Papua New Guinea and an Aboriginal Care Center in western Australia. For an up-to-date report on these projects, please visit www.adventistmission.org. Click on "stories" and "mission stories." Go to third quarter 2006 *Mission*, and click on "extras."



New church in Rabaul,
New Britain

Resources

The *SDA Encyclopedia* (available in book form and on CD-ROM) contains more detailed information on the history of the church's work in Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

Recipes for an international potluck to celebrate the foods and cultures of Papua New Guinea and Fiji appear on pages 6, 8, and 10 of *Children's Mission*. Invite the children's divisions to sing some of the songs they are learning this quarter.

Embassies and tourist commissions can sometimes provide information on their country. In the United States, write to the following: Embassy of Papua New Guinea, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 804, Washington, DC 20036 (phone 202-745-3680), or visit their Web site at www.pngembassy.org; Fiji Visitors Bureau, 5777 West Century Boulevard, Suite 220, Los Angeles, CA 90045; or the Embassy of Fiji, 2233 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Suite 240, Washington, DC 20007 (or

call 202-337-8320).

Videos: The Office of Adventist Mission has produced a DVD featuring the church's work and challenges in the South Pacific Division. For more information, log on to www.adventistmission.org.

An offering goal device can help focus members' attention on world missions and increase mission giving. Ask your Sabbath School Council to set a quarterly mission offering goal; then chart the weekly progress toward the quarter's goal on a goal device. Enlarge an outline of a single-engine airplane (or use a model airplane) and color it in as the offering total climbs.

Remind members that the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering is a special opportunity to support world missions in general and the South Pacific Division in particular. On Thirteenth Sabbath, arrange to count the offering and record the total on the goal device before the end of Sabbath School if possible. This immediate feedback will encourage

members to faithfully continue their mission giving.

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

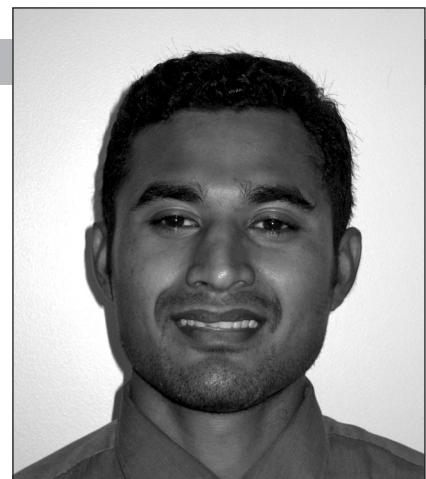
Fourth quarter will focus on the East-Central Africa Division. The Thirteenth Sabbath Projects include a maternity-surgical ward at Songa Adventist Hospital in southeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and a new union mission office in northeast Congo, classrooms for Ethiopian Adventist Secondary School, a health center at Bugema University, and a surgical ward for Kendu Adventist Hospital in Kenya.

First quarter 2007 will feature projects in the Euro-Africa Division.

Special Note: This is a 14-week quarter, and the fourteenth mission report for Teen Mission is available on the web site: www.adventistmission.org. Click on "stories," "mission stories," and "third quarter *Teen Mission*. The fourteenth story will appear at the end of the file.

GraceLink Connection: Community.

*A young man learns that God is always there,
whether he wants Him or not.*



Alex

The Pretender

Alex Wilson

Please, please let me go," I begged my parents. "I'm 16 now—old enough to work. It will be a good experience for me. Besides, I will be with Mike* and his family. I won't get into trouble."

Mike and I attended church together in Fiji. When Mike invited me to spend seven months working on another island, I wanted to go. I wanted to try out my wings. Finally, my parents agreed I could go.

Adventures and Misadventures

Mike and I worked hard during the day, and at night we stayed up late talking and exploring. We discovered some things Christians should avoid, and we met some guys who shared a beer with us. These guys were older, and several of them had been in trouble with the law. We listened with wide eyes as they told us about some of their exploits. It sounded like fun, so Mike and I joined them on one of their late-night outings. I knew that what we were doing was wrong, but we ignored our

consciences and went. That was the beginning of months of ignoring my conscience.

When I returned home months later, my parents were shocked. I used foul language and often smelled of smoke and alcohol. I knew I was hurting them, and I wanted to stop doing these things and live by their rules. But when the craving for tobacco and alcohol got too strong, I would sneak out to smoke or drink.

I really tried to be good, but the habits I had adopted while on the island were stronger than I realized, and I felt powerless against them. I continued attending church to please my parents, but my heart was not in worship. And the craving for alcohol became so strong that I even drank when my parents were around. They were disappointed in me, but they said little. I knew they were praying for me, and secretly I was glad.

The Holy Spirit's Presence

Sometimes when I was out late

at night I could sense the Holy Spirit talking to me, but I ignored His voice as I searched for alcohol or marijuana, the things that now controlled my life. The Holy Spirit continued to speak to me, and even after I told Him to leave me alone, He did not leave me. I guess it was God talking to me that made me still want to break free from the chains I was locked in. But I did not know how to get free, and I was not ready to ask God for help.

One day I saw a poster that read, "You can do nothing about the truth. You cannot hide it; you cannot put it away. You can only accept it." I read the poster several times. I knew that the Holy Spirit was fighting for my soul. But still I resisted.

Then some things happened that made me realize that God had not given up on me. One day I fell off a high ladder while working. I should have been seriously injured, but I walked away. Another time a fight broke out at a party. The fight became

a huge brawl, and some men ganged up on me. I was drunk, but when I saw one draw a knife, I knew my life could end right there. Someone swung a glass bottle at my head, but it hit my hand instead. Then, without explanation, the guys who started the fight walked away. I stumbled home, vaguely aware that God had saved my life one more time.

Another time, after I talked to the man who sold me marijuana, he lunged at my back to stab me. I turned around to see this man with a knife raised over me. I could have grabbed the knife and killed him, but something—or Someone—stopped me. Then I heard the Holy Spirit whisper, *This is what sin will do to you.*

I turned and walked away, shivering to realize that I had barely escaped death—or murder. As I walked I prayed, *God, If this is Your lesson, please make a way for me to leave these things, and take me to where You want me to be.*

Breaking Free

I began to realize how far from God I had wandered. I knew I had to make a clean break from the alcohol, drugs, and tobacco—and that meant a break from my friends. I gave my life and my addictions to God and asked Him to help me. And He did.

I took a job far away from the city where my friends lived. There I had time to think and pray. I met some Christian men, and we talked a lot about God. They helped me deal with my addictions and urged me to stay away from the friends who had been bad influences on me.

When I returned home, my parents saw a new Alex. They were glad, but they asked no questions. They just continued praying for me.

One day I took my brother to a Pathfinder camp and stayed for worship. I was surrounded by Pathfinders singing the songs I had sung when I was their age. I sensed that the Holy Spirit was

gently guiding me back into God's family.

I attended a Revelation Seminar and then some evangelistic meetings, where I committed my life to God. No more playing church; this time it was for real. I recommitted my life to God and was rebaptized.

I love to share my testimony with others and warn them of the traps that Satan has set for them if they wander from God. I remind the young people that God will not let them go without a fight, but they alone can decide their eternal future.

I am grateful that when I finally listened to God's Spirit, the church members were there to help me find my way back to God.

Our mission offerings make reaching out to others possible, no matter where they live. 

* Not his real name.

Alex Wilson shares his faith in Suva, Fiji.

let's talk

Getting involved in bad habits, such as those that troubled Alex, the boy in our story, often starts so innocently. What decisions did Alex and Mike make that led to enslavement by alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana? [They accepted the drinks their "friends" offered, they did not listen to their consciences when these "friends" invited them to join them in their crimes, but their first bad decision was to "try out their wings" by going to the island without proper adult care. Remind young people that Satan does not tempt them to commit huge sins or serious crimes without first getting them to ignore their conscience on little things. It is so important to listen to the counsel of their parents or trusted Christian adults and never turn from the Holy Spirit's voice.]

When Alex returned home, he wanted to change but found he could not. Why did he have so much trouble giving up the bad habits he had acquired? [He was not yet ready to listen to the Holy Spirit and surrender his heart to Christ.]

pray
PRAY

Pray that young people in Fiji and around the world will listen to Alex and other youth who warn them of the dangers of wandering from the safety of Christ's arms.

GraceLink Connection: Worship.

*Finding Christ is not the end of difficulties.
It's the beginning of a long journey.*



Adrian

Adrian's Journey of Faith

Adrian Kumar

[Ask a teen boy to present this first-person report.]

I grew up attending church with my mother. I considered myself a Christian, and as high school graduation approached, I began looking for a good college to attend. Someone told me about Fulton College, and I applied, even though I knew nothing about Seventh-day Adventists, who owned the college.

When I arrived on campus I noticed that everyone was different. The teachers, the students, and even the kitchen staff, loved and cared for one another in a way that I had not seen before. I wondered how they could be so kind and caring, even toward people they did not know. Soon I realized it was their faith that made them different.

Building His Faith

When the Week of Prayer arrived, I was eager to learn more about God. I was touched by the messages I heard and decided it was time to really focus on God. I prayed that He would open my heart to His messages. I went to the library to read more

about religion and theology. I discovered many books written by Ellen White. I found in her writings a new perspective on religion, and I became excited about my growing relationship with God.

When I returned home for vacation, I told my parents what I was learning from my Bible study. But instead of being glad, they were not happy to hear it. They said I was wrong. Other family members warned me about Adventists. "Don't join that church," they said.

I did not want to cause problems, so I stopped talking about my beliefs. But I returned to school determined to find out for myself what the Bible really said about issues my family and I disagreed on. I became convinced that these Adventists were right, that their teachings followed the Bible. But what was I supposed to do about it? I knew if I disobeyed my family and became an Adventist, they would be angry. But I could find no fault in what I was learning in Bible classes and

at church. I talked with the church pastor and decided that I should be baptized.

Facing Adversity

When I told my mother about my decision to be baptized, she found it hard to accept. But she did not argue. She even tried to accommodate my new beliefs, but other relatives did not understand and were not so kind.

I faced other tests, too. I love soccer, and I had played on a team during school vacations for years. But many of the games fell on Sabbath. I told the coach of my new faith and asked if I could play on the team during the week only. After a lot of discussion, he allowed me to play.

When I returned to Fulton College for my second year, I faced bigger problems. I could not earn all my school fees and feared I would have to drop out of school. I prayed a lot about it and left the problem in God's hands. Then I learned about a government program that would lend me the money to continue my studies.

I could stay in school and pay the loan back when I graduated. When I saw God answering prayers such as this, I realized that I could ask God for anything that was according to His will, and He would provide. I claimed the Bible verse that says, "With God all things are possible" *

Joy to Disappointment

I was excited to receive my teaching diploma from Fulton College. At last I could start teaching and help my mother with bills. But my excitement turned to discouragement as I searched for a teaching position and found none open. I prayed about it and expected God to answer, but no answer came. *Why is this happening?* I wondered. *I've worked so hard and prayed so much for a job, and I'm not getting one.*

I began to fast and pray on Sabbaths and ask God for a good job. I wanted to help my mother with the household bills. But as weeks passed with no job offer coming, I began praying that if it was God's will, a way would open for me to return to Fulton and complete my bachelor's

degree. I searched my life for sin and asked God to help me understand His will and to give me assurance of His love.

My discouragement must have shown, because one Sabbath a woman from church came to me and said, "Adrian, what is your problem? Can you share it with me?" I told her of my desire to work or return to school and complete my undergraduate degree. "That explains a lot," she said. Then she told me that God had impressed her to sponsor me through my last year of studies. I could hardly contain my excitement. I thanked her and prayed with her, praising God for this answer to my prayers.

Sharing His Faith

I love to tell others what God has done in my life. Once when I was at home, I was on my way to church on Sabbath when a man grabbed me from behind and demanded money. I had nothing but my offering with me, so I let him have it. Then I asked the man, "May I go now? I'm on my way to church." The man suddenly started crying.

"Why are you crying?" I asked.

"Please, pray for me. I don't want to live like this." He had no shirt on and was shivering. I could tell he had been drinking. Right there on the street I took his hand and prayed with him, asking God to give him victory over his sins and provide what he needed. Then I shook the man's hand. "Pray for me when you get to church," he said. I promised I would. He had my offering, but God had gotten his attention.

I have discovered amazing joy in Jesus, and I want others to know Jesus as I do. God led me to a school where I could learn the truth in Jesus, and He called me to follow Him.

Your mission offerings have helped sustain Fulton College. The library where I studied so hard was built with your Thirteenth Sabbath offerings. Thank you for sharing with others through your mission offering. 

*Matt. 19:26, NIV.

Adrian Kumar is a fourth-year student at Fulton College in Fiji. He hopes to teach primary school someday.

let's talk

Adrian, the boy in today's story, found his faith while attending an Adventist school. After he became an Adventist, he was surprised to experience some difficult times with his family, his soccer team, and paying his school fees. Was Adrian's experience different from yours? Why does God allow us to go through tough situations? *[It can help us draw closer to God and learn to rely on Him and not on ourselves.]*

Why is it important to study God's Word for ourselves, and not rely on what others teach us? *[Studying the Bible for ourselves allows God to speak to us. God's words are true, while humans may tell us things that are not according to the Bible. Memorizing Bible texts plants God's words in our mind and heart.]*

pray

Pray that we will remember God's promise to never leave us or forsake us when we face difficult times.

GraceLink Connection: Connection.

Can a church survive when its membership changes every five years and the congregation has no place to call home?



Griffith

The Nomad Church

Griffith Harrison

[Ask a young man to present this first-person report.]

I grew up in an Adventist home on an island in the South Pacific. So great was my parents' commitment to God and the church that they sent me to Fiji to study in an Adventist secondary school. This was a sacrifice for them and for me, for I had no money to return home for vacations. So I remained at school and worked to help pay my school fees.

But one day the school's financial officer told me that he had not received a payment for my school fees all semester. I knew that my parents struggled to send me to school, but suddenly I realized that they were having serious financial problems. I wanted more than anything to serve God as a doctor, but how could I if I could not even finish high school?

Prayer and Work

I was determined to be a success in high school and prayed a lot about doing well. Every student had to work a certain number of hours a week, whether

their parents were paying their school fees or not, but I took on several other jobs and worked as much as 12 hours a day to pay my school fees. I graded papers, worked in people's gardens, and did anything I could to earn money. But still I struggled. Teachers helped find work for me, and during school breaks I often stayed in their homes so that everything I earned would go toward my tuition.

But during the Christmas break between the eleventh and twelfth grades, I was hit by a deep loneliness. The other students had gone home, and not many of us remained on campus. I knew I had to work if I wanted to finish my education, but I could not help thinking about my family back home. They would be together for the holidays, even if they could not afford gifts. I felt so blue that I took 50 cents out of my school account—half of my balance—and bought an ice cream as a Christmas treat.

I spent that entire vacation working in a teacher's garden.

And he paid me fairly. But when I counted up my earnings, I discovered that I had paid off the previous semester's bill and had only \$100 toward the new term—not even enough to enroll!

Tears of Sorrow, Tears of Joy

School was opening, and students were returning to the campus. I went to my dormitory room and flopped on the bed. Tears rolled down my cheeks as I heard students chattering happily. They would have enough money to pay their school fees, but I had nothing. Finally I fell asleep.

A knock awoke me. I did not want to open the door because my eyes were red from crying, so I stayed still. Then I heard my teacher's voice. "Griffith," he said, "I know you're in there. Open the door. I have something to show you." I opened the door, and he held out a message saying that a church in Australia would pay my school fees that year. I could enroll!

I went from tears of discouragement to tears of joy.

Hope sprang in my heart. I would have more time to study, and I could earn top grades because I would not be working long hours every day.

I know that if I had attended a secular institution, I would not have had the spiritual guidance and support I needed.

Pursuing a Dream

At graduation I received a scholarship to study at the University of South Pacific. The university is a secular institution and quite different from the Adventist high school I had attended. I was delighted to find that the campus has about 500 Adventist students on campus. We have banded together to encourage and strengthen one another. When I arrived on campus, we would worship in a lecture hall every Sabbath because we have no church near enough to the campus for students to attend. This used to be no problem, because the university let groups reserve

lecture halls when they were not being used for classes. But because the university is growing, it has become harder to get a hall. Now, even when we reserve a hall and confirm it on Friday, we can still arrive on Sabbath and find a class meeting there. While teachers and classes should have priority over student groups, it has become difficult to keep our group of believers together. When we cannot meet in the lecture hall, we break into smaller groups and meet in apartments or outside under trees—wherever we can find a quiet place.

Because we have no permanent meeting place, it has become easy to lose track of a student who drifts away from the church. It makes me sad to see them drop out because we have no permanent place to worship.

A Place for Us

After four years of wandering from lecture hall to lecture hall, we're still a nomad church, never sure where our next worship

service will be held. We cannot invite our friends to church—because we don't have a church!

It's easy to get lost spiritually during college, and we want to help our fellow students find Christ, not lose Him. The students who attend the university in Fiji are among the best and brightest students from throughout the South Pacific islands. They are studying to take their place in their countries as leaders in government, in education, and in business. Yet we have no church to nurture them, no place to train them to become leaders in their church.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a church center for us, a place where we can go to worship, fellowship, and study together. We can invite our friends to join us, and thus make a difference in even more students' lives because of our outreach. 

Griffith Harrison is from Vanuatu. He is studying for a master's degree in general medicine at the Fiji School of Medicine.

let's talk

Griffith, the person telling this story, faced a big challenge while he was studying in the Adventist high school. What was it? How was the problem solved? [*His parents could no longer pay his school fees, so he prayed that God would help him work enough to pay his fees while keeping his grades up. This meant working during school breaks and going without many things. God stepped in and provided a sponsor for Griffith so he could focus on his studies and keep his grades high during his final year of studies.*]

According to Griffith, what benefit did he get from his Christian education, especially when he enrolled in the secular university? [*He had seen how God had provided while he was in high school, and his faith had grown strong. At the university, he was able to encourage other students by telling them that God really does care about them and their challenges.*]

What challenges are you or your Christian friends facing in school? How can Griffith's testimony help you through the difficult times?

pray

Pray that God will provide the funds to build the church that the Adventist students in Fiji need so much. Ask God what you can do to make your Thirteenth Sabbath offering a big one.

GraceLink Connection: Service.

A young man who spent years trying to avoid church learned that he can't run away from God.



Tabua

Hiding From God

Tabua Tuima

[Ask a young man to present this first-person report.]

As a child I became good at hiding. Sometimes I hid under my bed; sometimes I hid in a closet, and sometimes I hid outside in the bushes. I hid to get out of going to church on Sunday morning.

Skipping Church

I grew up on an island in Fiji where Protestant missionaries had established a mission. Everyone on the island was a member of that church, and religion is a big part of the culture even now. The people consider it worse than heresy to leave the church. But that did not stop me from wanting to skip worship services.

I believed what my church taught, but I hated being forced to attend worship services. So when I left my island home to attend a government boarding school on the main island of Fiji, I thought I was done with forced worship. But I was wrong. The school rules said we had to attend church every Sunday. I rebelled and did everything I could to

avoid church, including hiding. Sometimes I was caught skipping church and was punished. They watched me closely for a couple of weeks to be sure I attended church. Then they would forget, and I could skip services again.

A Life-changing Funeral

When I finished high school I felt that finally I was free from religious rules. I met a lovely girl, and we fell in love. Mere was not serious about her religion, and secretly I was glad.

Then one day Mere's grandfather died, and she asked me to go with her to the funeral. Her grandfather was a dedicated Seventh-day Adventist Christian, and his funeral was the most deeply spiritual one I had ever attended. And while there were tears, the people talked joyfully about meeting her grandfather again in heaven. The pastor's message captured my attention. He quoted Bible texts that I had never heard before, such as, "For the living know that they will die, but

the dead know nothing,"* and "I am the resurrection and the life."[†]

At the graveside the pastor read a promise that touched me deeply. I did not know it was in the Bible. "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."[‡]

These words struck me deeply, and I was impressed with how well these Adventists knew the Bible.

A New Education

Two months later that same church held a Voice of Youth evangelistic series. Someone invited Mere and me, and we went. I was impressed at how warm and friendly the people were. They made me feel at home. The pastor was the same

man who had preached at the funeral, and I leaned forward to catch every word he said. It was a spiritual feast.

Mere and I attended every meeting for three weeks. I was eager to hear the message every night, which surprised Mere, but she was happy at this change in my attitude toward religion. As I studied the Bible to know it better, so did Mere. Through my eyes she was seeing Bible truths she had known all her life, and God was drawing both of us to Himself. I gave my life to Jesus and asked to be baptized.

Tough Choices

I had picked up a lot of bad habits that I needed to get rid of. I had tried to quit smoking before, but I had failed. I prayed, threw away my cigarettes, and drank a lot of water. I felt sick for a few days, but soon the smell of cigarettes no longer brought on a craving. God took the addiction away.

I had to face other issues as well. All of my relatives were strong supporters of the church I

had grown up in. It was difficult for them to accept the fact that I was leaving their church for a different one. Some of them challenged my new faith.

I responded with my own challenge: "If you can prove from the Bible that Sunday is God's day of rest and that baptism should be done by sprinkling rather than by immersion, then I will reconsider," I told them. "Until then I will be an Adventist."

When my uncle tried to explain why his church worships on Sunday and baptizes infants, I told him that his explanations were good, but not biblical. I would not accept anything but the Bible. Finally he agreed that he could not find biblical evidence for his claims.

Back to School

One day my pastor challenged me to consider preparing for the ministry. I had a good job that paid enough to support my family and help my parents. But after praying about it, I realized that God was calling me to serve Him as a minister. I knew I could not

hide from God, and this time I did not want to.

So with just \$12 in my pocket, I enrolled in Fulton College. But no matter how hard I worked, I could not pay my school fees and support my family. We prayed for a solution, and God sent a dear saint to pay my school fees. At last I could study and support my family too.

God is so good. My mother and sister have joined the Adventist Church, and I am praying that the rest of my family will come out of hiding and follow God's path as well.

God used a funeral to get my attention and bring me out of hiding and into the light of truth. Thank you for your mission offerings, which helped make that journey possible. 

Tabua Tuima pastors the Tamavua English Adventist Church in Suva, Fiji.

* Ecclesiastes 9:5, NIV.

† John 11:25, NIV.

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, NIV.

let's talk

? Tabua, the man in today's report, tried hiding to avoid attending church. Who in the Bible tried to hide from God? [Jonah, David].

• Were they able to hide from God? What did David say about hiding from God? [Read Psalm 139:7-12.]

Have you ever tried to hide from God? Do you know someone who has tried? What were the results? [We cannot hide from God, for He sees all, hears all, knows all. In fact, we don't have to hide from God, for He will find us because He loves us.]

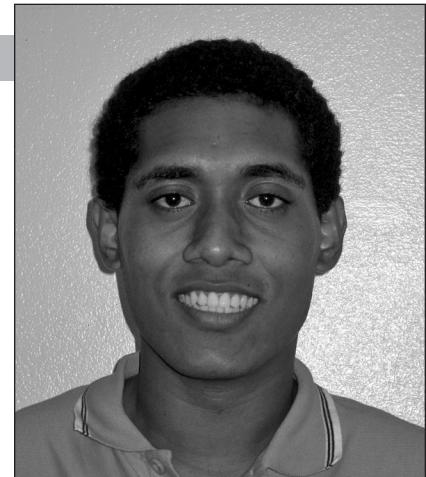
? Once Tabua gave his life to Christ, God called him into the ministry. Does God call us all into the ministry? [Yes, but we are not all called to become pastors. Some of us will be more effective sharing God's love as teachers, taxi drivers, plumbers, sales clerks, or even as students. But each of us has a place in God's work, and He will use us to bless others if we are willing. But He will never force us against our will.]

pray

Pray that each class member will sense how God wants him or her to serve this week, and that each will be faithful to that calling.

GraceLink Connection: Worship.

William thought he was bored with the youth meeting, but the problem was much deeper than that.



William

Demons in December

William Uluilakeba

[Ask a teen boy to present this first-person report.]

My name is William, and I live in Fiji. Recently I had a scary encounter that taught me a big lesson.

My dad paid for my brother and me to go to a national youth congress being held in our town. I was not that interested, but I agreed to go to please Dad. I enjoyed the first two days of the congress, but on the third day I decided to go home. I convinced the camp director to let me go home and return for the evening cultural program.

When I arrived home, the house was empty, so I rested awhile. But when I prepared to go back to the evening meeting, something seemed wrong. I felt a lump of fear in my stomach and sensed that something bad was about to happen. But I pushed these thoughts aside and hurried to catch the bus.

Frightening Encounter

On the way to the stadium, I started feeling light-headed and

hot. I began seeing strange things that I knew were not real. When the bus arrived at the stadium, I climbed off and hurried toward the arena. Once I arrived at the congress, the frightening sensations disappeared. I forgot about them and enjoyed the cultural program.

The program ended late, and I hurried to catch the bus home. When I arrived at my bus stop, I climbed off the bus and started toward home. The streets were empty, for it was near midnight. My heart started to beat really hard, and it felt as if my feet were not touching the ground. Suddenly a man appeared standing in my way. His hair stuck out from his head, and his eyes glowed red. "Friend," he said, "I need money to get . . ."

I mumbled that I had no money, then I stepped around him and hurried toward home. I went straight to my room and closed the door. My heart was still pounding, and I could still see the

man who had stood on the road a few minutes before. I was sure it was a demon.

Fearing Demons

The next morning I awoke feeling well, but I was terrified that the demon I had met on the street might return. I became increasingly afraid and decided to talk to my parents about what happened. Dad listened, then he read a passage from his Bible and prayed for me. He urged me to forget what had happened, but it was not that easy.

Negative thoughts, fear, and guilt piled up in my mind and paralyzed me. I told my parents that I could not sleep and was seeing strange things, such as a vulture picking at an animal's corpse. My parents became increasingly worried about me, but they did not know what was wrong.

Things got worse. I felt scared all the time and couldn't eat or sleep. I became convinced that

someone was going to stab me, and I started carrying a knife with me. My parents were so worried that they took me to Mom's sister's house. She has the gift of prayer, and they decided to hold a prayer service for me. My family formed a circle around me and started to pray. I began laughing out loud. I wanted to stop, but I could not control myself. My family grabbed me and held me still.

When they finished praying for me, I was covered with sweat. I hoped things would return to normal, but they did not. In fact, the attacks became so bad that every few minutes I would shake and cry. I started saying, "I'm leaving," meaning I was going to die. But my father urged me to be strong, to trust God to get me through it.

Help Me, Lord

I knew that people were praying for me, and many of them encouraged me to resist the evil

inside me. I started to pray for my deliverance, and that was when I first started to feel a change. I had to ask God to save me from this evil. Sometimes all I could say was, "God, help me. Take out the evil inside me, and give me strength to overcome." I knew I could not do it myself.

After I prayed, I began to feel stronger. I started reading my Bible and praying regularly. I found the Psalms especially comforting, and I claimed Psalm 56:13 as my own: "For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life" (NIV).

New William

My whole life is different now. I realize that God had been there all the time, but I had not taken His presence seriously. When I stopped praying regularly and stopped reading the Bible, it opened the door for the devil to

trouble me. Now I am careful to keep the avenue of my soul closed to evil and open only to God.

That December I did not want to go to the youth congress, for it was a spiritual event, and I was not spiritually minded. Now I love going to youth functions. Before, I did not get along well with young people, but now I'm doing better. I love taking part in church activities, things I would not do before. Others have shared with me that they have gone through similar experiences.

I want young people to know that now is the time to take God seriously. This is no time to play around with God or straddle the line between God and Satan. We must take our stand today. Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow may be too late. Don't wait to get close to God. 

William Ululakeba is a student at the University of South Pacific in Suva, Fiji.

let's talk

What made it possible for the devil to enter William's life? [*He let his faith grow weak and stopped reading the Bible and praying. The devil cannot enter a person's life unless that person loosens their hold on Jesus.*] What things in your life are keeping you from having a close and happy relationship with Jesus? Remember, even seemingly good things can keep us from praying or reading the Bible. [*Encourage the class to list things that could draw them away from God.*] How did William overcome the devil and return to reality and to God? [*Prayer—the prayer of others and his own personal prayers.*]

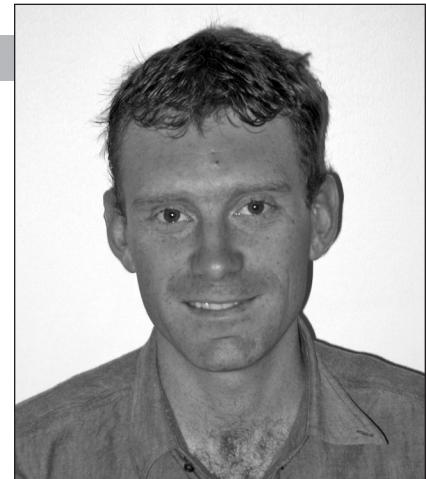
Often people lose hold of their faith without people noticing until they are gone. What signs can you look for in a person's life or actions that could warn you that they are losing interest in God? What can you do if you believe someone is drifting away from God? [*Pray for them first. Then ask them if you can pray with them. Invite them back to youth activities and to worship services. If they resist, keep praying for them. Remember, God has not given up on them; they've given up on God.*]

pray

Pray that the young people in your class will stay close to God and safe from Satan's attacks.

GraceLink Connection: Service.

When he left the mission field, he took his love of flying with him, never dreaming that his love would draw him back to missions.



Linden

Sky-High Adventures

An Interview with Linden Millist

[Ask two youth or young adults to present this interview report.]

Narrator: The days of missionaries are very much alive. Linden Millist [MILL-ist] is a young missionary from Australia serving in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Linden, what do you do in PNG?

Linden: I am the chief engineer and quality manager for Adventist Aviation Services. That means I look take care of the church's aircraft and make sure they are flight worthy. I'm also a pilot, so I will fly as well.

Narrator: This is not your first time in Papua New Guinea, is it?

Linden: I spent six years here when my dad was a mission pilot. I flew with him and hung out at the hangar.

Narrator: What are some of your memories of your childhood in PNG?

Linden: I loved flying to remote areas with Dad, spending weekends with him as he led worship services, conducted

baptisms, and ran special programs in these areas. These were exciting times for me.

Narrator: When you left PNG, did you ever think you would return?

Linden: No. We returned to Australia, I grew up, got my pilot's license, and finished high school. I loved tinkering with engines, so my dad suggested that I major in aircraft engineering in college. I liked the idea, for it would keep me in the aviation field doing what I loved. I entered an apprenticeship working with aircraft maintenance and engineering. I learned a lot about aircraft.

I planned to continue working for the aircraft company and get a jet engineering license as well, but God had other plans. One day the church headquarters in Australia called and asked me to consider returning to PNG to be the chief engineer for Adventist Aviation Services. I needed time

to think about it and secretly hoped the church would forget about me. But a few months later they called again. Again I asked for more time.

When they called a third time, I realized they were serious. I prayed, "God, is this what You want? Are You calling me back to PNG?"

Then my dad called me and said, "Guess what? The church has asked us to go back to PNG." My dad and I would be working together.

I prayed more about it and thought about this terrific opportunity to serve God. If I didn't accept this call, how could I expect God to bless me as I went my own way? I knew the answer; I called the church headquarters and told them I would go.

All my life I knew that God had something special for me. And so many things had fallen into place so neatly in my life. I had to admit that God was opening this door, and I had to walk through it.

Narrator: You knew that the Adventist Aviation program was facing serious problems when you took this call. How did you prepare for what you would face?

Linden: Just before I got the call to PNG, I took my own small airplane apart and rebuilt it bolt by bolt. So when I was told that the Adventist Aviation aircraft was in pieces, I knew I could rebuild it and make it fly. The aviation program was not functioning when we arrived. The airplanes were old and needed to be sold or rebuilt to make them safe. I expected that.

We've rebuilt one plane, and it's now flying. But no aviation service can run with only one plane, so we need a second, newer, and more reliable plane. We've found some possible planes that will serve us well as we fly in this mountainous area and land on short, grassy airstrips.

This is our most urgent need, and we're grateful that the South Pacific Division has devoted several big offerings to help buy an airplane for PNG. But we need more money than we can raise in South Pacific, so the division has requested that part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering help us buy this

airplane. Then we can once more fly to the villages to bring pastors, mission leaders, and medical teams in as well as fly people out who need medical care. The lives of these people depend upon the ministry of these airplanes, and I'm happy to be part of God's plan for Papua New Guinea.

Narrator: If you could tell young people something about mission work, what would it be?

Linden: God is looking for people to spread the gospel and help others find Christ. He's not just looking for pastors, teachers, and nurses; He's looking for people with every skill or trade. He needs young people who want to serve Him and help finish the Great Commission. So if you want to serve God, don't put it off. God will never ask you to do something that you cannot do or that will make you unhappy. If He asks you to do it, you can be sure that He will qualify you for the job.

When I got the call to return to PNG, I thought, I'm so young—25—and I don't have some of the skills I need. But God said, "No, I'm happy with what you have and what you know." He's blessing me with knowledge

and skills I need to do this job. I'm happy here. My parents and I might be the only parent-son missionary team in the church, and that's great with me.

Narrator: Any last words of advice for our audience?

Linden: If you find that God is blessing you to excel in a certain career or skill, He's probably training you to do something special for Him. We need to give our talents back to God and serve Him.

God would never ask me to be a doctor or a preacher, but He has asked me to be a pilot and a flight mechanic, something I'm good at. With these skills I can make a difference in people's lives. What a great opportunity! I get to work in a job I love with the skills God has blessed me with, and more important, I can serve Him and others and bless them at the same time.

Narrator: Thanks, Linden. What he said is true: God will not call you to do something you're not capable of doing with His help. He may stretch your skills, but He will never get you in over your head. So if God is calling you to do something, go for it! 

let's talk

>Name some of the ways God prepared Linden Millist to be a missionary pilot and engineer in Papua New Guinea. How does God

- prepare everyone He calls to serve him, whether at home or in a mission field far away? [He gives every Christian talents that they can use for Him; He prepares their hearts through life experiences and leads them step by step to the work He wants them to do.]

Write on the board the following statement: "God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called." Ask the students to share what this means to them. [God often asks us to do things we are not specifically trained to do, but He promises us that He will help us do everything He asks us to do.]

Linden Millist is chief engineer and quality manager for Adventist Aviation Services located in Goroka, Papua New Guinea.

pray

Pray that young people in your class and around the world will stay close to God so they can recognize His call to service when it comes. Pray that they will remember that God qualifies the called, He doesn't call the qualified.

GraceLink Connection: Community.

*Two boys find Christ and
strengthen each other.*



Gebby



Thomas

Friends in Jesus

Thomas Peter and Gebby Sipa

[Ask two young men to present this first-person report.]

Gebby: I've learned that friends can either lift me up or tear me down, and that worshipping God with those who believe as I do goes a long way toward strengthening my faith.

I grew up in an Adventist family, but I did not realize what a blessing this was until I let go of it. It took some serious problems for me to find my way back to God. But God sent me Thomas [nod toward other young man standing at podium] to be my friend, and now we are helping each other grow stronger in God together.

God's Plan

From my childhood my parents told me that God has a plan for my life. But those words did not mean anything then. They were just words until recently.

I was a good student in school, but I met some friends who invited me to join them at some parties. There I was introduced to alcohol, smoking, and even marijuana. Everyone urged me to try these things, and soon I was addicted. I was careful to

hide what I was doing from my family, for I knew they would not approve. And even when my grades started to fall, I did not see the danger that my friends were drawing me into.

As high school graduation drew near, my friends talked a lot about what they would do after school. Several decided to study at the largest university in Papua New Guinea, so I applied there as well. I waited for the acceptance letter, but it did not come. I thought it was lost in the mail. When the newspaper printed the list of those who had been accepted to the university, my name was not among them. I was so disappointed. I thought, *If God has a plan for me, why did I not get into the university?* My parents' words seemed like a bitter lie. I felt like a failure and cried and yelled at God. My friends would be going off to university without me.

Then someone suggested that I apply to study at a university closer to home. I had not thought about this before, but I applied

and was accepted. Things were looking better.

Once I let God lead in my life, things began to fall into place. I began attending church near the university and met warm and friendly believers who made me a part of their church family.

I started reading *The Desire of Ages* during my devotions. As I read about Jesus fasting and praying for 40 days, I was deeply moved. *The King of the universe did that to save me?* That day I surrendered my life completely to God.

I still struggled with the habits I had acquired in high school, but I felt powerless to break them. I realized that God was my only hope for help. I asked Him to take away my addictions, and He did. It was not easy, but God and I were victorious. Now I teach the young people's class in Sabbath School and often warn the teens about the chains that addictions can wrap around them before they even know it.

My parents are glad to see how happy I am now. God has turned

my disappointment into something wonderful. I realize now that if I had gone to the university with my buddies, I would have stayed with my former friends, continued the bad habits they had introduced me to, and probably would never have responded to God's call. But God led me in a different direction, one that has changed my life forever.

Thomas: I prayed for a friend like Gebby for years. I can talk to him and know he understands me. We have so much in common.

I went to Sunday School and church as a kid, but I did it because my parents expected me to go. Like Gebby, I hung out with a bad crowd in high school and was drawn into smoking, drinking, and drugs. I also tried to hide my habits from my mother, but my grades dropped, and I think she knew.

Then one day I walked through the marketplace and saw someone setting up a satellite dish for some sort of program.

Curious, I returned that night to see what was happening. I sat down against a tree to watch and discovered that the program was an evangelistic series.

The speaker's message touched me, and I decided to attend the meetings every night. I could feel the Holy Spirit whispering to me, encouraging me to let God's love into my life. Suddenly I felt ashamed of the cigarette in my hand. I wanted to kick the bad habits I had acquired, but I found the addictions were stronger than I was. I was powerless to let go. I begged God to help me.

I learned that the evangelistic meetings were sponsored by Seventh-day Adventists. I knew nothing about these people, but the message they preached was powerful. At the end of the evangelistic meetings, the church sponsored a Revelation Seminar. I decided to go. That's where I met Gebby.

We became friends quickly, for we had so much in

common. We both struggled with addictions and had a lot of growing to do. We surrendered our lives and our addictions to God. By supporting each other, we were able to gain strength to conquer the addictions in Christ. We were so excited about what God was doing for us that we told everyone we met—our friends, neighbors, even strangers.

I have given God the rest of my life, to do whatever He wants with me. I am content to share my faith with others until God opens more doors for me.

I thank God for sending that evangelist to preach in Papua New Guinea, for it changed my life. And thank you for supporting missions with your offerings, for your offerings helped make my conversion possible. 

Thomas Peter and Gebby Sipa live in Goroka, Papua New Guinea.

let's talk

- ?
- Gebby and Thomas learned that friends can have a powerful influence on them. What influences did their high school friends have on them? On the other hand, Gebby found friends in church who encouraged him to trust in God and were willing to listen when he needed to talk. Ask class members to discuss how a friend or classmate has been a positive or negative influence on them.

Discuss how class members, as Christian young people, can be a positive influence on those around them. How do others in school know they are Christians? [Write responses on the board and discuss the major ones.]



Ask students to role-play situations in which a friend invites them to do something they feel is wrong. Encourage the students being asked to do something inappropriate to counter with a positive activity or statement.

After the role plays, discuss how students can influence their friends as well as be influenced by them. Encourage students to think about how they will respond when someone invites them to do something they feel is wrong or not appropriate.

GraceLink Connection: Worship.

Jay wanted to follow Jesus, but demons terrorized her.



Jay

Delivered From Evil

Jay Aronis

My family is Christian, but we did not attend the Adventist Church. One day my aunt, who is an Adventist, invited me to attend a special Pathfinder program at her church. My parents let me go, and I was amazed at the program the young people put on. They wore their Pathfinder uniforms and marched in together. I whispered to my aunt that I wanted to be a Pathfinder, and she said I could join Pathfinders if my parents agreed.

But when I told my parents about the program the young people had put on and asked to join Pathfinders, they were not pleased. I told my father that it was my idea, not my aunt's, and that I really liked how the young people worshipped. Still my father refused to let me join.

I began sneaking off to the Adventist church on Sabbaths. My father worked, so he did not know I was going. I think my mother knew, but she said nothing. I asked my friends to pray for my parents, and my parents began letting me go.

Trouble in School

When I finished eighth grade I asked my parents to allow me to study at Kabiufa [kah-bee-YOO-fah] Adventist Secondary School so I could learn more about God and the Bible. They agreed, thinking I would not want to be so far from home, but I loved it, especially the Bible classes and morning and evening worship. It felt like heaven!

Everything was fine until one day I woke up aching all over. My eyes were swollen, and my throat was sore. I thought I was sick. Then some girls came to my room and told me that the night before they had heard me shouting. They had come to help me, but I had kicked them and fought against them. They said I was screaming, "Go away!" I was puzzled. What had happened?

Wrestling With Demons

The girls' dean told me I may have been attacked by a demon. She prayed with me, and in a few days I felt fine. Nothing more happened that semester, and I

thought it was over. Then a few months later, during worship I felt a strange numbness in my legs. It crept up my body, and into my head, blinding me. I could still think, and I struggled to keep my focus on God. When worship ended, everyone else walked out. My friends thought I was praying, so they left me alone.

My best friend returned and called my name. I heard her, but I could not answer. She touched me, but I did not respond. She felt me shivering and suspected that I was being attacked by demons again, and she ran for help. Some boys tried to carry me to the campus clinic, but I struggled to get away.

I still could not see, but I sensed a strange figure in the black cloud that surrounded me. It was laughing at me in a scary way. I tried to get away from the horrible figure, but my friends held me down. The scary figure began slapping me, and I turned my face to escape his blows. My friends told me to call out "Jesus!" I tried, but the thing that

possessed me held my mouth shut so I could not speak.

The pastor arrived and prayed for me. At last the scary figure disappeared. I was exhausted, and I slept for hours. When I awoke I ached, as if I had fought a fierce battle. I was frightened, too, for if these demons had come twice, they might come back.

"Jesus!"

I dared not tell anyone, even the pastor, about my concerns, for I feared that the devil would attack me again. Then one night I awoke feeling invisible hands holding me down. I struggled against them, shouting, "Go! Get away!" But the demons held me fast. The dean came and commanded the demons to leave in the name of Jesus. But a demon shouted through my lips, "No, don't go!" My friends urged me to call on Jesus. I tried, but all I could manage was "Jeee—." Finally I shouted, "Jesus!" and the demons let go. I fell into an exhausted sleep.

Many people on campus were praying for me. I joined the baptismal class, sure that

if I studied the Bible more and stayed close to God, the demons would leave me alone. I wanted to keep my mind on God, but I discovered that studying the Bible was no guarantee that the devil would stay away, and that year I was attacked four times.

I was discouraged, but I refused to tell my parents for fear that they would take me out of school. I told them that I wanted to be baptized, but my father refused to allow it. I felt sad, but I knew that if God wanted me to be baptized, He would make it possible, so I obeyed my parents without arguing.

Nothing Can Keep Me From God

As another baptism was nearing, I again told my parents how much I loved God and that I wanted to be baptized. This time they let me decide. I invited them to witness my baptism, and they said they would come.

A few days before my baptism, the demons returned, beating me harder than ever. I struggled for hours against them, sure that I would die. When they finally left me, I wondered

whether I should try to be baptized. But the next morning I decided to be baptized, for God was stronger than the demons, and I had chosen God's side.

I prayed constantly and guarded my thoughts and words. As I entered the baptismal water, I knew that God was in control. I came up feeling so light and free! It felt as if I had been carrying a heavy load for so long, and suddenly the burden was gone.

A few weeks later my father called to tell me that my mother had started going to the Adventist church and was preparing for baptism. I was so happy I cried. My mother is now baptized, and my father attends church when he can. My younger brothers and sisters have joined Pathfinders and attend church. And since my baptism the demons have left me alone. I never take God's protection for granted, and I have placed myself in His loving care for the rest of my life. 

Jay Aronis lives in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. She wants to become a high school teacher.

let's talk

? Demons and demon possession are real. What would you do if you discovered a friend was struggling with a demon? [Pray, and call a Christian adult to pray with you. Satan cannot stand in the presence of God.]

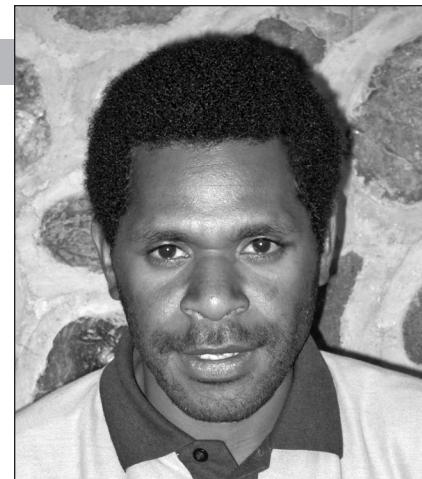
? Jay's experience with demons was difficult and frightening. How can you prepare to withstand a similar test? [Ask God to guide you and protect you every moment of the day. Never, never play with spirits or satanic devices, such as Ouija boards, fortune-telling, or séances, for these are Satan's territory.]

pray

Pray that God will deliver young people from demons. Pray that God will help you understand the power of Satan to harass those searching for God.

GraceLink Connection: Community/Worship.

A boy's dream seemed impossible, but he claimed God's promise that all things are possible and is realizing his dream.



Nelson

God Will Provide

Nelson Waigai

[Ask a teen boy to present this first-person report.]

I grew up in a small village in northern Papua New Guinea. It is an isolated area, and most of the people cannot read or write. We had a small village school, and I wanted to study there, but my parents could not afford to pay the school fees for us seven children. But my dream would not die.

When I was 6 years old, some Adventists came to our village and opened a Branch Sabbath School. My mother allowed me to attend, even though we were members of another church. I loved the Bible lessons and the activities we did.

Not long after I began attending Sabbath School, my father was sent to prison for doing something wrong. I did not understand what was happening, but I saw the sadness in my mother's eyes and saw her struggle to feed and clothe us. My dream of attending school began to fade.

School Days

Then one day the church pastor announced that they were going to start an Adventist school in our village. I did not ask my mother if I could go; I enrolled myself in school. And I loved it! But one day two years later the teacher said the school would have to close. I was so sad! Then someone told me about an Adventist school several hours away. I decided to walk to that town and enroll in the Adventist school there. It did not matter how far away it was; I was going to finish my education!

I told my mother of my plans, but she reminded me that she could not help me. "It's OK, Mother," I told her. "I have prayed, and God will help me go to school."

I found the Adventist school and studied there for four years. Then I was told to transfer to the public school. I transferred, but the public school was not as

patient about school fees as the church school had been. One day the teacher told me to go home.

"You Don't Belong There"

I walked out of school so disappointed—and walked right into the director of education for the Adventist church! "Why are you so glum?" he asked me. I told him that I had to go home because I could not pay my school fees. "You don't belong in the public school," he said. "Come with me to the Adventist school."

We walked to the Adventist school, where I enrolled in classes that day. I wondered how I would pay my school fees, but God reminded me that He had sent me to this school. I studied there for six months without paying any school fees. One day a teacher told me that I had to pay my school fees if I wanted to finish the school year. I could not pay the fees, so I returned to my room and packed my things. But I never

stopped praying that God would make a way for me to study.

Nowhere to Go But to God

I could not go home because I did not have money for a bus ticket. So I stayed at school and waited for something to happen. Two days later my teacher came and gave me a piece of paper. "Your school bill has been paid," he said. *Who paid my fees?* I wondered. I knew that my relatives had no money. Then it hit me: God had paid my school fees!

I stayed in that school until I finished eighth grade. I worked after school each day and full time during holidays. Sometimes the teachers gave me a little money for things such as toothpaste and soap. But no matter how much I worked, I could not erase my debt to the school. When I became discouraged, God encouraged me.

One night I dreamed I was walking up a steep path. Along the path were ropes and trees that I could grab on to. At the

top were two paths. I wondered which path to take. Then a man beckoned for me to follow him. I did, and we came to a beautiful lake. He told me that this lake was like truth and that as long as I stayed near it, God would bless me. I understood from this dream that I should never give up trying to get a Christian education.

New School, New Challenges

I graduated from the eighth grade and was chosen to study at Kabiufa [kah-bee-YOO-fah] Adventist Secondary School in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. Kabiufa would cost more than the primary school, and I still had no money. But I had learned to trust God to take care of me. Someone gave me 200 kina [about US\$75] toward my school fees. It would not pay my tuition, but it was a start. I knew that God would provide the rest.

Then I learned that someone had paid half my bill. I worked even harder to do my part, and

God never let me down. Last year I went home to see family for the first time in five years! My mother asked how I could pay my school fees, and I told her that God was paying them. Even those relatives who had opposed my studying understood that I spoke the truth.

I am almost finished with high school. In a few months I will graduate. I will stay at Kabiufa and work until I pay off my school bill. Then I hope to go on to college. God has helped me in so many ways, and I know He will continue to bless me. I pray, and God provides. I know that He will never leave me nor forsake me. He has led me this far; I know He will lead me all the way to eternity! All I need to do is trust Him. God does not promise that the path will be easy, but He promises to walk beside us. ☽

Nelson Waigai lives in Papua New Guinea. He hopes to study medicine and become a doctor.

let's talk

QUESTION Nelson wanted to go to school, but his family could not pay his school fees. He stepped out in faith and enrolled. How did God provide for Nelson's education? [People helped him, but he worked during school and during vacation times to pay his bill.] What are some ways that we can step out in faith and to do what we know God wants us to do? [We can share God's love through our words and our actions; we can faithfully tithe and give generous offerings, even when we earn just a little money. Allow students to find other ways to exercise their faith.]

QUESTION Nelson had a dream that encouraged him to stay in school. Sometimes, in certain cultures, God uses dreams to speak to people. What are some other ways that God lets us know what He wants for us? [The Bible, our pastor, Christian teachers, our parents, even our friends.]

pray

Pray that students will have faith to fulfill a dream, just as Nelson is doing, and that they will trust God to lead in their lives and help them to be a blessing to others.

GraceLink Connection: Community.

When his future did not work out the way he had planned, Kivio blamed everyone but himself.



Kivio

Born for Something

Kivio Oli

I walked into my parents' house and said, "Let's talk." Then I told them, "If you cannot help me find work or something useful to do, I'm going to go become a thief like my friends!"

Rough Beginning

My demand surprised my parents, but their response was even more surprising—and sobering—to me.

Mother had taken me to her church when I was little, but I never developed a personal relationship with God. My father had turned his back on the Adventist faith, so when I visited his relatives and went to church there, I found their religion unusual. I did not know what these Adventists believed, but I knew that most Christians worshipped on Sunday.

A few years later my uncle invited my parents to attend a Revelation Seminar. Dad did not go, but Mother went, and she took me with her. I still was not interested in religion, but I began to understand that these

Adventists taught straight from the Bible, not from tradition.

Eventually Mother joined the Adventist Church, but I was a teenager by then, and church did not attract me. Oh, I went to church with Mother, but I remained unchanged.

Big Dreams, Big Disappointment

After high school I studied music. I had big dreams to become a famous keyboard artist. I made new friends who drew me further from God and my mother's Christian influence. They introduced me to discos, marijuana, and the wild life. Some of them were *raskols* [rascals]—our name for thieves and thugs. They wanted me to join in their activities, but something kept me back.

When I finished my music degree, I expected my career to take off, but it did not. In fact, I could not find any work in the music field. I sat around home feeling sorry for myself. I felt hopeless and empty, and I blamed

everyone but myself for my failure to succeed.

Then one day I turned to God. I began attending a small Branch Sabbath School near my home. The local elder listened as I complained about how life was turning out. He encouraged me to seek God's will for my life. I tried, but with no success, no job offers, I grew restless again. I wanted a good job; I wanted to be useful. I was no longer focused on becoming a pop star; I just wanted to work.

Fed Up

One night I approached the little church, looked at the building, then turned around and walked home. I knew I was not living the kind of life I should be to call myself a Christian. I had been pretending to be a believer, but I was not fooling God, and I probably was not fooling anyone else. I was fed up with the bad habits—smoking and drinking—that I could not seem to shake, and I was tired of being dependent on my parents.

But instead of falling on my knees and repenting of my sins and bad attitudes, I walked into the house and told my parents, "If you cannot help me find work or something useful to do, I'm going to go join my raskol friends. I will become a thief in order to pay my own way in life!"

My father looked at me for a moment, then he spoke slowly so that I could not misunderstand, "Son, we've done all we can do. We've put you through school and given you a place to live and food to eat while you look for work. Now you must take responsibility for your own life."

Taking Responsibility

Dad was right. I had no right to point fingers at others; I had to take responsibility for my own life if I ever wanted to become something worthwhile. After several minutes of silence, Dad added, "However, I'll see what I can do."

I wanted to find meaning for my life, and I knew that meaning must come through God. I began studying the Bible in earnest, and eventually I was baptized.

Dad asked his brother, who works at Pacific Adventist

University, to send me an enrollment application. I applied and was accepted to study to become a teacher.

Dad got really drunk one day and ended up in a fistfight. He realized what his lifestyle was doing to him and the family, and he has stopped drinking and smoking and started attending church again. Not long ago he was baptized, so now all three of us are Adventist Christians. That makes me really glad.

I completed my bachelor's degree in education, and with my background in music, I was qualified to teach music in secondary school. But I wondered where God wanted me to apply to teach. I wanted to work for the church, but I wasn't sure how to go about finding a job.

Then just before graduation I received two job offers. One was to work in a public high school in the city where my family lives. The other offer was to teach at Kabiufa [kah-bee-YOO-fah] Adventist Secondary School, in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. I had done my practice teaching at Kabiufa, and I enjoyed the school a lot. I wanted to stay in Port Moresby, where my family was,

but when I asked my father for his advice, he urged me to accept the call to the Adventist school. "This city is not a good environment for you," he said. "You still have friends here who will not be good examples for you."

I prayed about it and realized that Father was right. I accepted the call to Kabiufa, and now I know that this was the right decision.

When I look back over my life, I see how God led me out of the mire of sin and hopelessness into a life built on the solid Rock, Jesus. A friend used to say, "We are born for nothing, for no purpose." Now I know that he was wrong. We are born for something—something special, for God has planned our futures.

Your mission offerings help support Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School. And your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering several years ago helped build the boys' dormitory here. Please continue to give your mission offerings and to pray for those who are lost in Papua New Guinea. 

Kivio Oli teaches music and expressive arts at Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School in the eastern highlands of Papua New Guinea.

let's talk

? Kivio, the young man in today's story, learned some important lessons about being responsible. What were they? [He learned that he was responsible for making important choices in his life, that no one else could choose for him. The most important choice Kivio made was to surrender his life to God and follow His directions. Only then did he find success, happiness, and peace.]

? How does being responsible in our lives each day honor God? [Others see our choices and are influenced by them, whether they say something or not. Sometimes those who are most influenced are the ones who make fun of our choices.]

pray

Pray that each of us will make the right choices in life, starting with our daily decision to follow Jesus.

GraceLink Connection: Service.

What makes a young person risk his life to share the gospel with others?



Johndick

On a Mission for God

Told to *Teen Mission* by Johndick Yua

Johndick loves his work. Although he studied to be a plumber, he has chosen to work as a lay missionary instead.

As a teenager Johndick enjoyed working in his home church. His local mission saw that he was gifted with reaching and teaching others and invited him to attend a lay workers' training seminar. Johndick went, and then he set out to use his new skills.

He visited a village where several Adventists lived. They had no church, but they were sharing their faith with others. Johndick found the people worshipping under trees and in their homes. He met with them, encouraged them, and taught them to be efficient soul winners.

Bush Chapels and Booming Growth

Upon arrival in his first village, Johndick found groups of people worshipping under trees and in private homes. When it rained, the meetings held under trees could not continue. Johndick felt the urgent need of these believers

to worship in a proper shelter. Soon, he began conducting cottage meetings, which are similar to an evangelistic series, but on a much smaller scale. There were five villages in one area that had many Adventist believers and interests. As more people accepted Christ and were baptized, the need for new churches grew more vital.

"When I first arrived, we could not find land to build a church. A villager offered to donate land for a church even though he was not an Adventist believer. He had heard several aspects of the Adventist message, and felt that we present the truth. Today he is in the baptismal class at the church, and his family attends as well," Johndick says.

In his monthly report to the mission, Johndick sent pictures and requested help to build a chapel in the area. His sponsors in Australia responded with funds to build a new house of worship. With this money Johndick was able to purchase roofing iron, and

with the help of the his dedicated new converts a simple church was erected with local materials—including woven sago leaf palms for the walls!

When the church was completed, the local mission representatives were present for the dedication service. "About 120 attend regularly and 19 are baptized members. This is the church in just one village among the five," says Johndick.

"I am working with the believers in the other four villages to construct more permanent houses of worship. At present they each have a roof church—a thatched roof supported by wooden pillars. The churches are made of bush materials and have no walls. Few buildings in this area are built from concrete blocks or sawed lumber, so they wear out quickly and must be replaced every three to five years," he adds. "We hope to someday build more permanent structures so that the people will not have to spend so much time

repairing their own house of worship and can spend more time reaching those who still need to hear the gospel message.

The Work Grows On

One day some people visited Johndick. They had come from a village that had no Adventists, but they had heard that Adventists teach the Bible. They asked Johndick to hold cottage meetings in their village. Johndick held a week-long series of Bible studies in the village and found the people enthusiastic listeners. When the meetings ended, the people asked the village leaders for permission to build a chapel on their own land. The leaders agreed, and the new believers quickly built a shelter of wooden poles, bamboo, and coconut palm leaves.

The group of worshippers grew, and soon the chapel overflowed. The land on which the chapel was built was not big enough to enlarge the chapel. While the believers discussed what to do, the pastor of the only other church in the area visited Johndick.

"My members are flocking to your meetings," he said. "They want to learn more about

the Bible. I cannot hold them back, and soon I will have no congregation to pastor. I will leave this area and let you shepherd the believers." The believers were able to use the larger chapel for worship services, and many others are studying the Bible with Johndick in this village.

In total among the five congregations that Johndick shepherds, 69 people are baptized members and 321 attend Sabbath services. These village congregations are far from one another, and Johndick often travels in difficult circumstances to reach the people.

The five villages are far from his home and far from each other. Travel between them often is difficult, especially during the rainy season. Johndick takes public transportation to the nearest village, then he follows trails through thick jungle, swims across rivers, and makes his way across landslides and around narrow cliffs to reach his destination. During the rainy season he often must sleep near the river until the water recedes enough to safely swim across. But still he loves his work, teaching the Bible, nurturing new

members, training leaders for each congregation.

He makes it to each village every fifth Sabbath unless the dangerous rivers keep him from his destination. Between his visits, the leaders he has trained preach and carry on pastoral duties.

Other villages in the area have asked Johndick to come, and he plans to go hold cottage meetings wherever he is welcomed. Some villagers found leaflets containing the name of the Adventist mission and requested a teacher. Another attended one of Johndick's cottage meetings in another village and asked him to come. Johndick discovered enough people interested in studying the Bible that he began preparations for a baptism. Soon, one more village will worship God on the Sabbath in their own little chapel.

Johndick receives only a small stipend for the work he loves to do. When asked how much longer he can continue his work in such difficult conditions, he smiles and answers, "As long as the Lord leads." 

Johndick Yua shares his faith with people living near Madang, on the northeastern coast of Papua New Guinea.

let's talk

? Johndick is a young person who loves to share his faith with others. Many of the early leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were young people—James and Ellen White, John Nevins Andrews, and others. Do you think it is easier or harder to lead people to Christ today than it was in 1850? Than it would be in Papua New Guinea or other developing nations?

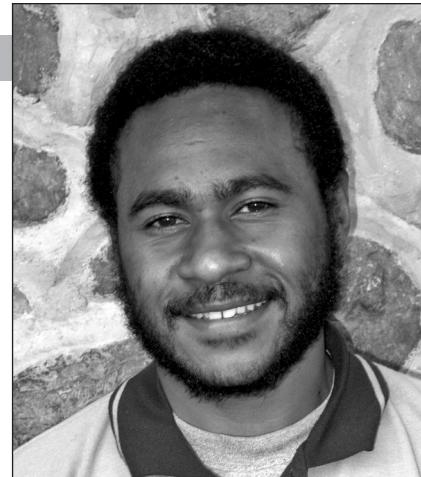
? If you had just five minutes to tell a stranger (who didn't know God), why you are a Christian and why you want them to consider Christ in their lives, what would you say? Why would you say what you've chosen?

pray

Pray for Johndick and others around the world who have chosen to answer God's call to share their faith with others. Often they must sacrifice family, home, and quality of life to live in what could be a dangerous situation. Pray for their safety, their health, and their commitment.

GraceLink Connection: Community.

One temptation led to another, and soon Ben was drowning in bad habits. How could he escape?



Ben

A Healthy Interest

Ben Pilisi

[Ask a teen boy to present this first-person report.]

I grew up in a Christian home, but I did not know a lot about God. When I was 12, I started reading the Bible for myself. I began in Genesis and read all the way to Leviticus at one time! When I reached Leviticus 11, I read about the clean and unclean animals. I was surprised to learn that pigs are unclean animals. In Papua New Guinea pig is a big part of our diet. I decided to ask my pastor about it.

"I read in the Bible that we are not to eat pig, but we eat pig. Why is that?" I asked him.

"Everything that God created He made good," the pastor said. "So it is to eat pig—or any other animal."

The pastor's answer did not satisfy me. Somehow I felt sure that there was more to this clean-and-unclean-animals thing than what he told me. I told my family that I did not want to eat pig anymore. They asked why, and I tried to explain it. They did not understand why it mattered to me, but they did not force me to eat unclean meats after that.

I had heard that Seventh-day Adventists don't eat unclean foods, and I thought that perhaps they were the right church. So I began asking questions to learn more about this faith. Some people told me that Adventists talk only about the Sabbath, and not about God's love, and the only person I knew who was an Adventist was a boy several years older than I. I talked to him one day and told him I wanted to know more about his church. He invited me to visit his church, but it was three miles [five kilometers] away from our village—a long way to walk.

Temptations Mount

When I finished primary school, my brothers killed a pig and roasted it in a mumu [moomoo], a fire pit. They teased me about how delicious the meat was, and I had to admit it did smell good! I gave in and ate a bite. Afterward I felt terrible.

I faced other temptations in school—smoking, drinking, using drugs. I knew these things were

bad for me, but when my friends teased me about refusing to join them, I gave in to temptation, just as I had with my brothers' temptation to eat pork. Tobacco really took a hold on me, and soon I was smoking almost a pack a day.

My school went just to ninth grade, so we often talked about where we would go to high school. I wanted to study at Kabiufa [kah-bee-YOO-fah] Adventist Secondary School. My friends laughed at me and said, "You will have to attend worship several times a day there!" When time came to apply to a high school, I decided to apply to a school in town instead of Kabiufa. But I was not accepted, and I missed a whole year of school. I was discouraged watching my friends go on with their studies while I just worked.

The next year my father surprised me and told me I would go to Kabiufa. He wanted me to quit smoking, and he thought Kabiufa was a good place because it did not allow smoking.

I arrived at the school intending to quit smoking, but quitting was far more difficult than I had thought. The friends I made at school were not a good influence on me. We skipped classes and sneaked out to smoke. My teachers told us that if we had a problem, we could come and talk to them about it, but I denied my problems and refused to ask them for help.

Reality Check

My grades suffered, and I knew that my father would be disappointed in me if I failed, so I focused on studying more. I knew that I needed to stop smoking, but it was so hard. My friends kept tempting me when I tried to quit. I realized that I could not quit on my own and decided that I had to ask God to take control of my life. From that moment on, every morning I prayed that God would take away the desire to smoke.

As the semester ended, we all waited anxiously for our report cards, which would tell

us whether we would return for the next year, come back on probation, or be expelled. I prayed that I would be allowed to return. When the deputy headmaster [vice principal] gave me my letter, I read it. I was on probation, it said, but I could return the next year. He told me, "You must change your attitude if you wish to return to Kabiufa." I promised that I would. I returned to the dormitory to prepare to go home. Then I learned that all of my friends—all of the boys who had smoked with me and denied it—had been expelled. "It's our own fault," I said quietly. "We came here to learn, but we've wasted our time."

I arrived home determined to stay away from cigarettes. I told my mother that I wanted to attend the Adventist church nearby, and she was glad. Then she told me that when she was younger she had attended the Adventist church. She encouraged me to go and even promised to go with me sometime.

When I returned to school, I told the pastor that I wanted to commit my life to Jesus and join the baptismal class. I really enjoyed learning more about God. I felt that I was finally beginning to understand who He is.

A New Chapter

With God's help I am free from tobacco. I know there will be other temptations, but I have asked God to fight the temptations for me and give me the victory. I tell my friends that I have made a promise to God and that I want to be faithful to Him.

Soon I will be baptized. My mother has kept her word and is attending church and taking my younger sisters with her. She tells me that now we have a church in our town. Together we pray that our entire family will unite and worship God together one day. 

Ben Pilisi is completing his final year at Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School. He hopes to study accounting.

let's talk

Ben's biggest temptation was smoking. How did he become addicted to cigarettes? [*His friends teased him to trying one.*] Ben mentions giving in to his brothers' teasing and eating a piece of pork. Temptations often start small, but soon one temptation piles upon another, until we are overwhelmed with guilt. What is the best way to avoid being overcome by temptations to sin? [*We must constantly monitor our words, our actions, and the influence of our friends to avoid being put into a situation that can lead to temptation.*]

Have friends ever encouraged you to do something that you knew was not right? How did you handle the situation? Have you ever pressured someone else into doing something questionable?

PRAY
pray
PRAY

Pray that Ben will continue to follow God and be a witness to his family.

Program

Modern-day Mission Frontiers

Congregational Song	"Lift High the Cross," <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 362
Welcome	Modern-day Mission Frontiers
Program	
Prayer	
Offering	Ask kindergarten and primary children to sing one or more of the songs they have learned in Spanish or Portuguese as the offering is taken.
Closing Song	"Seeking the Lost," <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 373

* * *

Scene 1: Place an enlarged map of the South Pacific Division near the narrator's podium. On the left side of the platform, place a sign on the door, identifying it as a "lecture hall." Place another sign on the door, stating, "No church meeting today." (If no door leads from the platform, make one from cardboard and hang it where people can "open" it and exit the stage.) On the right side of the platform, place four folding chairs and a small table to represent a small apartment.

Cast: Narrator, Pastor Mike, three college-age students. Student 1 is a boy.

Narrator: The island nation of Fiji [*locate on map*] lies in the heart of the South Pacific, a central location for international universities and trade schools that serve the entire South Pacific. Several thousand students come from the islands of the South Pacific to the university, the medical school, and trade schools. Among them are about 500

Adventist students who are preparing for positions of leadership in government and private sectors when they return home. But the Adventist students face a problem. They have no place to worship. . . .

[Two students dressed for church walk up to a "door" and see the sign posted on it.]

Student 1: *[reads the sign aloud]:* "No church meeting today." Now what do we do?

Student 2: I thought Solomon had confirmed the use of the hall for services today. *[Stops speaking as student carrying books walks past students in hall and into the lecture hall behind the "door."] I guess the lecturer forgot to tell the office that he was holding a class today.*

Student 3 *[walks up carrying a Bible.]:* Hi. Why are you standing out here? *[Pauses.] Oh, I get it. No church here today, right? Do you want to come to my apartment for worship? It's small, but we can worship together.*

Student 1: Great. I'll write a note on this sign in case others want to come. *[Scribbles a note on the paper tacked to the door. Then the three walk toward chairs on the right side of the platform and sit down.]*

Student 3: Welcome to my apartment. It's not fancy, but we can at least worship without being kicked out of the lecture hall. *[Students bow their heads and pray. Student 3 looks at student 1 and speaks.] Daniel, you were going to teach the lesson study today. Would you like to start?*

[Pastor Mike joins the narrator.]

Narrator: The Adventist students—among the brightest in their communities—have traveled far from their homelands to study in Fiji. For years the university provided them with a lecture hall every Sabbath. Pastor Mike, why can't

the students worship in the university lecture hall?

Pastor Mike: As the university grows, more teachers need the lecture halls on Sabbath, and the Adventist students have been crowded out—sometimes on short notice. It's not religious discrimination; it's simply overcrowding.

With no permanent place to meet, students don't know where they will worship on Sabbath. When they cannot meet together in a lecture hall, they meet in small groups in their apartments. But they have become discouraged and are no longer coming.

Narrator: Can't the students attend Adventist churches in town?

Pastor Mike: We have only one English-speaking church in the city, and it's far from the school and too small to accommodate the students. We need an Adventist student center near the campus, where we can worship on Friday night and Sabbath, and have midweek prayer times. A student center would provide fellowship and a place to study during the week. As students brought their friends, this center would become an evangelistic center as well.

Narrator: This sounds expensive.

Pastor Mike: Remember, the students attending the university are the future leaders of their nations. Without a church many students will drift from their faith. With a church to hold us together, we can train youth spiritually as well as academically. What price should we put on a soul? Or on 500 souls?

The students have begun raising money for the Adventist student center. They are excited about the prospects of having a

place where they can come to study, to pray, and to worship—a true church home.

Narrator: If we keep these young people active in church while they are away from their families, they will more likely stay in the church when they return home. Thank you, Pastor Mike, for showing us your need and your dream.

* * *

Scene 2: Livingroom (*add flowers to previous scene to indicate that it is a different location*). On a small table behind the chairs, place a box painted to look like a radio receiver with a microphone-speaker. Offstage, position someone with a piece of crumpled newspaper near the radio operator. When operator speaks through microphone, rumple and straighten the paper to simulate static.

Cast: A husband and wife and a friend; offstage, radio operator.

Narrator: Now we travel west to Papua New Guinea [*locate on map*]. This mountainous island has presented special challenges to missionaries since work began there. Steep mountain ranges pierce the clouds; in many areas the terrain is nearly impassable. Small airplanes that land on short grassy airstrips are the lifeline of people living in these mountains. For the past 50 years Adventist Aviation Services, headquartered in Goroka [goh-ROH-kah], has proven its value again and again. Trips to villages that once took days now take minutes. Churches have sprung up, health clinics treat minor injuries and illnesses, and schools educate children. Much of this would not be possible without the airplanes, the lifeblood of the highlands of Papua New Guinea.

It's Sabbath afternoon in the

home of the Adventist pilot and his wife. Let's join them.

Pilot: That was a great sermon, Bill. Thanks for your timely message.

[*Radio crackles, and a voice breaks in.*]

Radio operator: Sierra Delta Alpha, this is Goroka base. Can you read me?

Pilot [*jumps up and grabs microphone*]: This is Sierra Delta Alpha to Goroka base.

Operator: We've received word that a young girl is seriously injured near the Appa airstrip. I know it's your Sabbath, but no other pilot is available. Could you please fly out to pick this girl up? I'm not sure she'll survive until tomorrow.

Pilot: Jesus healed the sick on Sabbath. I'll go. It's a clear day, so I should be there in about 45 minutes.

Operator: I'll notify the village you are coming. Thanks!

Pilot: Sierra Delta Alpha out. [*Turns to those seated nearby.*] Sorry to rush off. Can you monitor the radio while I'm gone? I'll let you know when to call for an ambulance to meet us at the airport.

Wife: Do be careful, dear. We'll be praying for you! [*Pilot exits and joins radio operator out of view.*]

Narrator: No flight in Papua New Guinea is without risks. In the tropics, clouds build up in the afternoon, obscuring airstrips and making landing impossible. Prayer often is the only way to break through to those in need. These brave pilots literally fly "on a wing and a prayer."

Wife [looking at clock]: Roger has been gone for 45 minutes. He should be nearing the village soon. [Radio crackles.]

Pilot: Sierra Delta Alpha to base. [Wife goes to radio to answer call.]

Wife: This is base. Roger, have you landed yet?

Pilot: No. Clouds have built up the mountainside, and I can't find the airstrip. I'm circling around. Please pray that God will open a hole that I can fly through. Over.

Wife: We'll pray. Over.

Friend: Let's pray right now. [The two kneel and ask God for a safe landing and a successful rescue of the injured girl. Before they return to their seats, the radio crackles again.]

Pilot: Sierra Delta Alpha to base.

Wife: Base here.

Pilot: God surely heard our prayers! He opened a hole and gave me a perfect view of the airstrip. I'm on the ground waiting for my patient. Just pray that God holds that hole in the clouds open until I take off!

Wife: Will do, Roger. Be careful!

Narrator: Anxious moments pass as the pilot's wife and guest await word from him.

Pilot: Sierra Delta Alpha to base.

Wife: Base here. Are you airborne, Roger?

Pilot: Yes. I should be landing in 30 minutes. Please call the ambulance and have them waiting. The girl will need surgery.

Wife: Will do. Thanks, Roger! [Wife reaches for the telephone to call an ambulance.]

Narrator: Saving lives, transporting pastors, teachers, and health workers to villages, is all in a day's work for the pilots of Adventist Aviation Services. But when a plane is grounded for maintenance or emergency repairs, they cannot serve the people who rely on them. Pastors cannot visit church members, nurses cannot teach health care and disease prevention, and so many of the villagers' needs go unmet. For more than a year Adventist Aviation's only plane was out of service. How many people waited to hear the words of life from a lay pastor? How many have died for want of proper medical care?

This quarter your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering has a huge job to do. Adventist students studying in Suva, Fiji, need a church, and Papua New Guinea desperately needs a new airplane. South Pacific Division has allocated a large yearly offering to go to purchasing an airplane, but they need our help to finish the project.

These two projects are mission at its best—spreading the gospel to those who still live in darkness, whether they are living in isolated villages in the mountains of Papua New Guinea or attending the most modern university in the South Pacific islands. We can make a difference in lives today.

[Offering]

mission

Third Quarter 2006 - South Pacific Division

Charlotte Ishkanian
Editor

Hans Olson
Managing Editor

Katie Gulbraith Dillon
Wilona Karimabadi
Contributing Editors

Office of Adventist Mission

Gary Krause, Director
Rick Kajura, Communication director
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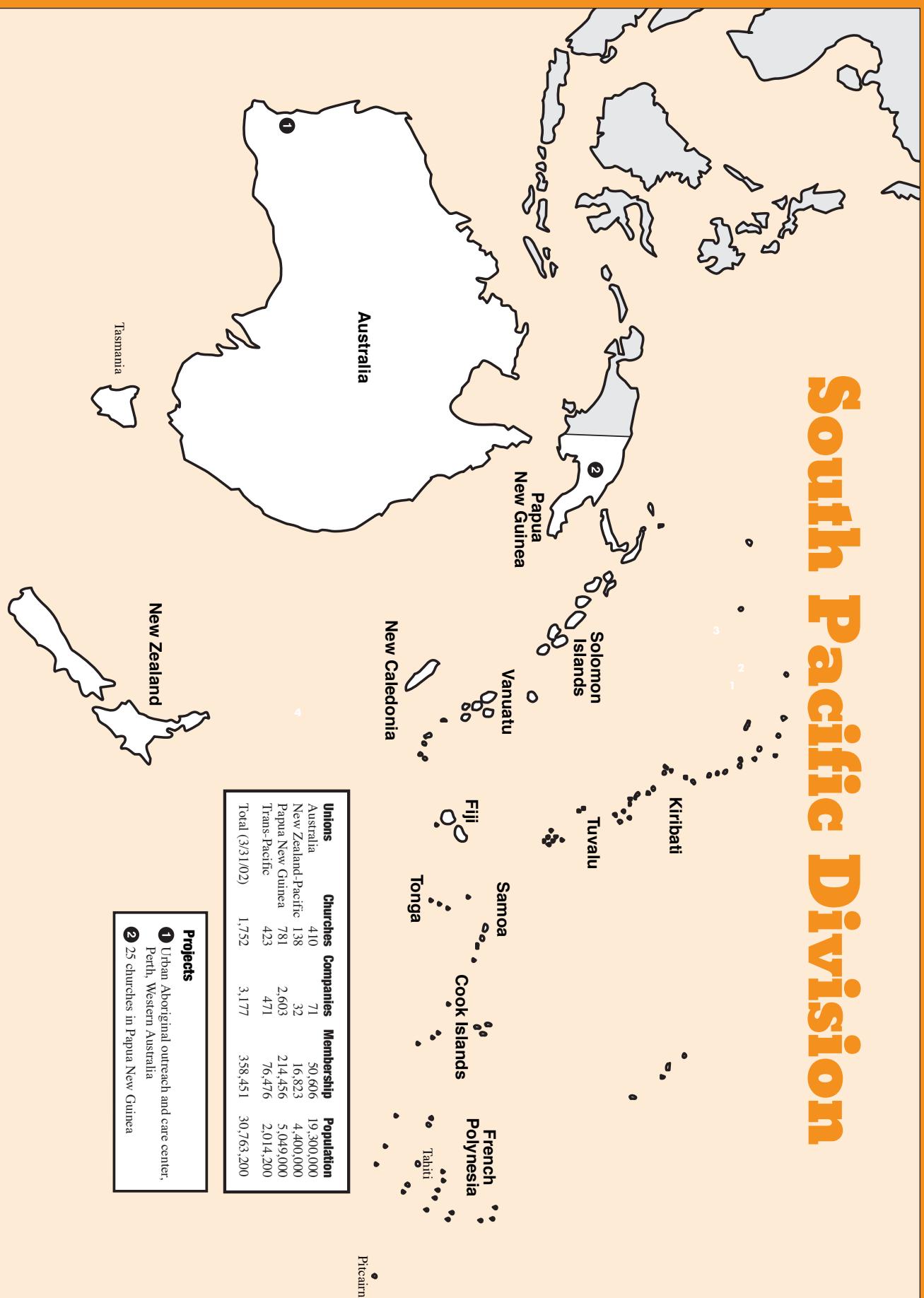
E-mail: GoMission@gc.adventist.org
Internet: www.adventistmission.org

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Vol. 52, No. 3

Where legally possible, offerings will go to these projects, otherwise, special arrangements will be made with the General Conference for distribution of funds based on the laws of the countries where these offerings are collected.

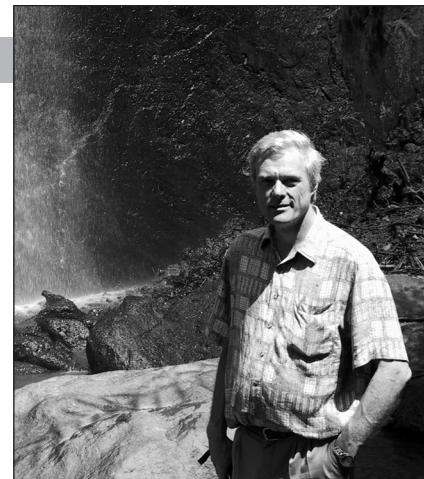
South Pacific Division



GraceLink Connection: Service.

Imagine living in an isolated village atop a mountain.

Now imagine you need help.



Trevor

Reaching the Isolated Papua New Guinea

Wilona Karimabadi

Papua New Guinea is a breathtaking island nation with steep jungle-covered mountains that rise out of a tropical sea. Hidden amid the thick jungle growth on the mountains, called highlands, are villages of stick-and-mud homes with thatched roofs.

Imagine living in such a village; imagine seeing a village on the next mountain ridge but knowing that it takes a day to get there, down the steep mountain trail, across a raging river, and up the next mountain range. And when you arrive, you discover that the people in the village speak another language!

Now, imagine that someone in your village gets sick or is seriously injured. Villagers build a makeshift stretcher and climb down the mountain, juggling the stretcher between them. If they slip on the muddy trail, the stretcher will tumble down the trail as well. But with luck, the injured or sick person will live through the harrowing journey to reach medical help.

The government saw the need and built dirt airstrips on accessible mountaintops in the interior of Papua New Guinea. People who had never seen a car recognize an airplane as it circles overhead and swoops noisily in to land. The plane has brought a nurse to teach healthful living and how to treat common sicknesses and simple injuries. And if someone is seriously ill or wounded, the pilot promises to fly them to the hospital.

For many people in Papua New Guinea, what we have imagined is their reality. They live in fear of the spirits that they believe inhabit trees, rocks, and shadows. They become embroiled in wars with other villages. And when someone becomes seriously ill or injured, they walk for help.

Adventist Aviation to the Rescue

For almost 50 years now, the Adventist Church has used airplanes to fly lay pastors, mission workers, and medical teams into these mountaintop villages to minister to the people. The pilots

fly health-care professionals in to immunize children and adults against preventable diseases such as polio and measles; these doctors and nurses train local volunteers how to care for new mothers and their babies and how to treat wounds to prevent infection and death. And, when necessary, they notify the pilots who airlift the sick or injured to hospitals for lifesaving treatment.

On one clear morning pilot Trevor Robinson flew to several village airstrips to deliver supplies and encourage the lay workers in remote villages in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. But by midafternoon fierce tropical winds blow thick layers of clouds into the area. The planes are not equipped to fly through thick cloud cover. He prayed, and God provided a window through which he could fly to reach the sunlight high above the mountains. He arrived home exhausted and grateful to be on the ground.

But soon after he arrived home, he received a radio

message. A tribal feud had resulted in several people being killed and a chief being severely wounded. The chief would die without emergency care, and if he died, so would many others in this eye-for-an-eye culture. Trevor shook off his weariness and returned to the plane. He knew that many lives would be lost if he did not reach the chief in time.

He taxied down the runway and soared into the sky. Trevor made his way toward the mountaintop runway, praying all the way for a clear path to land. He knew that only a miracle would clear his way to land safely in the late-afternoon clouds. The cloud cover was very thick as he flew over the last ridge of mountains. Then suddenly the clouds parted, and he saw a clear path to the tiny airstrip. *Thank You, Lord,* he prayed as he touched down.

One More Flight

Trevor quickly loaded the chief and a relative into the plane, and revved his engines. He bounced down the runway and into the air through the same hole in the clouds. He knew he had just

enough time to make it to home base before sunset. But as he approached the airport, a thick wall of rain blocked his path. He tried to fly over it, under it, and around it, but he could not find the runway. *Please, God. Open the way to the airstrip,* he prayed silently while peering intently into the darkness.

Suddenly a narrow slit appeared in the clouds, and through the slit he could see the lights of the airstrip. Quickly he radioed his position and was cleared to land. An ambulance stood waiting at the end of the runway, and the chief was rushed off to the city's hospital. Trevor tied the plane down and walked wearily to his vehicle and headed home. Later he learned that the chief would survive. He eventually made a full recovery.

Saving lives, transporting lay pastors, teachers, and health workers to improve people's lives and teach them about Jesus. All these and much more are the duties of God's pilots and the airplanes they fly. But what happens when the airplanes can't fly, when they

are grounded for repairs or needed maintenance?

For more than a year Adventist Aviation was not able to fly. One plane was too old to safely continue the demanding flights in the highlands. The only remaining plane needed extensive maintenance to be airworthy. For all those months that the plane was being rebuilt, the villagers who relied on the Adventist plane for contact with the outside world were not served. Health workers could not fly in to the villages to teach health care or immunize children; the sick could not be transported to medical care; and mission workers had to walk days to reach the villages they serve instead of flying for 30 minutes. Without doubt, lives were lost. People who were precious to Jesus may never have had a chance to hear that God loves them.

The only Adventist-owned mission plane is flying again. But it needs to be replaced. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide a new airplane for mission outreach in Papua New Guinea. For the people there, this airplane is a matter of life or death. 

let's talk

What would you do if you were camping—or living—in an area far from medical help and someone fell and received serious injuries? How would you feel if you knew that the airplane that usually brought help to the area was not operating because of lack of funds and needed repair?

Imagine you are a mission pilot, flying in mountainous terrain without instruments to tell you that you are flying straight toward a mountain. Clouds are blocking your view, but you know that someone nearby is dying and you and your plane could save their life. On the other hand, if you crash into a mountain, you would die and the plane would be destroyed. What would you do?

pray

The aviation program in Papua New Guinea clearly is an important arm of mission. Pray that God will bless the pilots and the planes so that this ministry will continue to lead many to Jesus.

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Does the size or style of your house of worship make any difference to the quality of worship? Could you receive a blessing worshipping in a thatched-roof shelter with no walls, such as those Johndick describes? Does a “proper church” building contribute to your worship experience? Why?