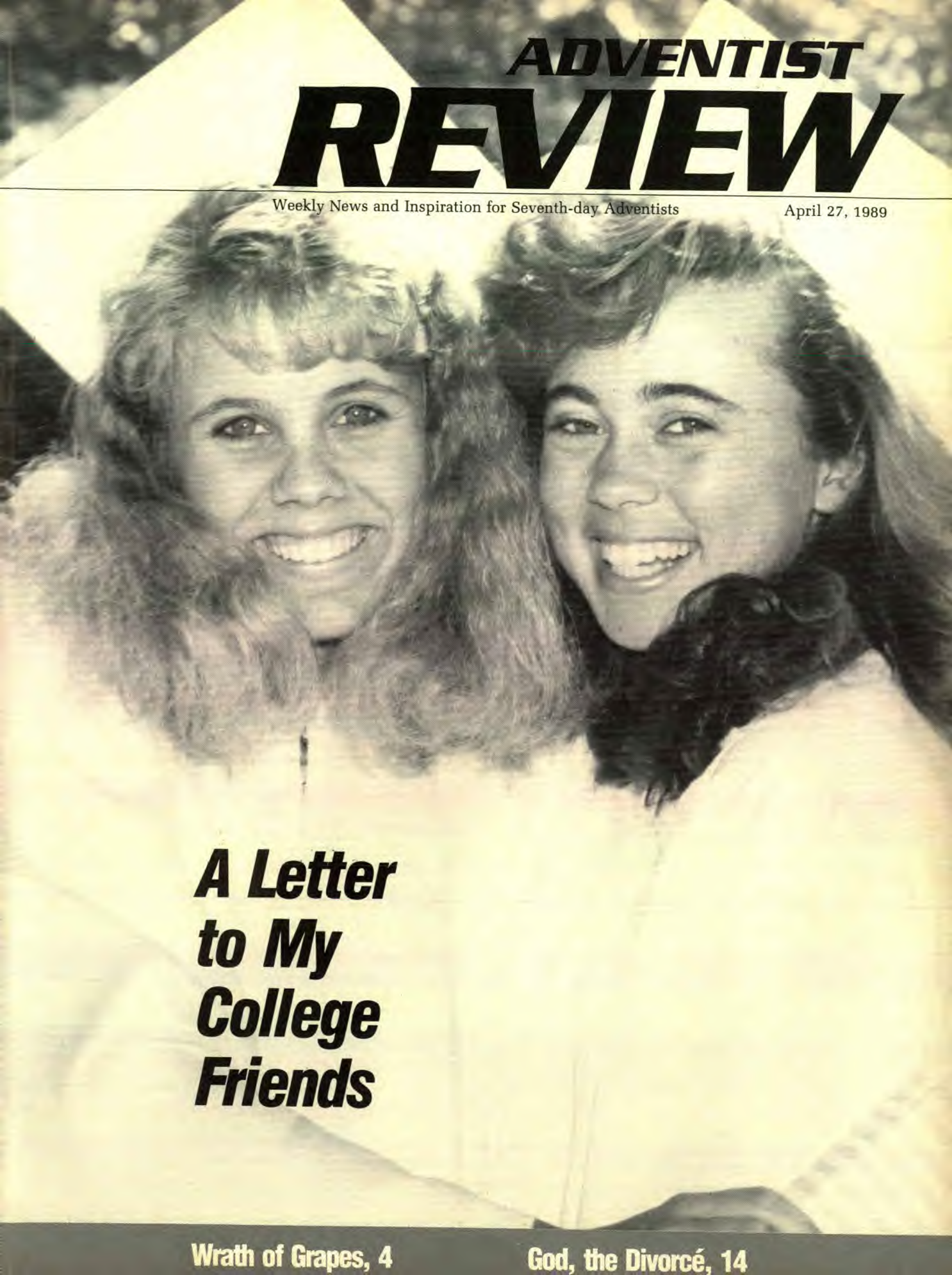


ADVENTIST REVIEW

Weekly News and Inspiration for Seventh-day Adventists

April 27, 1989



A Letter to My College Friends

Wrath of Grapes, 4

God, the Divorcé, 14

Liars

I was chagrined to receive my February 16 *Review* and note the title, on the outside cover, "Why Do American Adventists Lie?"

While the title may be appropriate as a caption on the article inside to catch the subscriber's attention, what does the title on the outside communicate to the public who see it only at a glance?

Does the desire for sensationalism in titles and layout necessitate conveying an erroneous message that Adventists are liars and can't be trusted with the truth?

DELORES WILLIAMS
Sheridan, Michigan

We set off the title in quotation marks to indicate that someone was asking this question. Maybe that was too subtle for the mailman.—Editors.

The Christian University

Can a university be Christian (Mar. 2)? In the deepest sense of the word it cannot be truly a university unless it is Christian.

EARL M. HILL
Montgomery, Texas

When Adventism becomes so fearful for its truth that it does not allow it to stand on its own two feet to compete in the marketplace of ideas, when it surrounds it with limitations on free discussion and inquiry, when it fears to expose even its university students to anything but emasculated presentations of competing philosophies, then we will know that truth is well on its way to becoming superstition, in which its adherents, like certain math students, know all the "right" answers but haven't a clue as to how they arrived at them.

DONALD E. CASEBOLT
Roseburg, Oregon

Small Churches

You've tickled my funny bone! "A Partnership for Church Renewal" (Mar. 2) was excellent, and I welcome changes and progress

when it comes to the Sabbath school.

However, the author's statement that "all churches have at least four age groups" stopped me short. A number of churches in our union have memberships of below 30 in which there are only one, two, or three of the age groups mentioned. I hope that the coming changes will be such that these small congregations can implement them.

CAROL JUDSON
Topeka, Kansas

The 4,444

Will you be one of the 4,444 Adventists the *Adventist Review* editors are looking for? Find out in a future issue.

Fit for Heaven

"Acquitted" (Feb. 16) should have been titled "Acquitted and Fitted" because the final third of the article dealt with the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

Scripture says that God justifies the ungodly while they are still helpless (Rom. 5:6-10). Even if God waited until the Holy Spirit wrought a change in us, we still would not have a righteousness sufficient to merit our justification at that time. Only the perfect, infinite righteousness of Christ can justify us at any time. Let us not make sanctification our justification, though Roman Catholicism has done this by stating: "Justification itself 'is not only remission of sins but also sanctification and the renovation of the interior man'" (*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VIII, p. 84). I hope we will not confuse the work God does for us with what He does in us.

FRED SPEYER, PASTOR
Sunnyvale SDA Church,
California

Sabbath Observance

Re "The Sabbath: A Gift to Value" (Feb. 2).

I have read many excellent articles in the *Adventist Review* concerning our personal behavior during the hours of the Sabbath. At the time of Christ the Jews had more than a thousand derivative laws prescribing their Sabbath behavior. Maybe we should direct more attention toward *what* the Sabbath is and *why* we observe it, and less about behavior (i.e., do's and don'ts).

ORASON L. BRINKER
Eckert, Colorado

The article stated that the Sabbath was not meant to be a day for "useless idleness." Exactly what is useless idleness? Who can rightly be the judge? What is maybe useless to one is fruitful to another. As a college student, I have found this to be true.

The author says children should be taught simple do's and don'ts until they are able to ask why. Then why teach them? Let the children learn from their parents by watching and doing, not by giving them "simple" do's and don'ts that they won't understand. Then as they become able to ask questions, they can be given intelligent and scriptural answers to their questions.

An Ellen White reference was given to support the point that we should not sleep a lot on the Sabbath. She was speaking of people who haven't strained themselves during the week, but who spend all Sabbath sleeping. I cannot believe that this passage was meant for everyone. College students sometimes have slept only three hours in three days. The Sabbath was meant for relaxing and refreshing ourselves from the week's trials.

ANTHONY NEELY
Greensboro, North Carolina

Letters should not exceed 250 words and should carry the writer's name, address, and telephone number. All will be edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's meaning will not be changed. Views expressed in the letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or denomination.

ADVENTIST REVIEW

April 27, 1989



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General paper of the
Seventh-day Adventist Church

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COMING NEXT WEEK



◀ **"To Preserve the Remnant,"** by Charles E. Bradford. The NAD president writes of God's historic purpose for His chosen people.

■ **"Where Are Our Missing Members?"** by Monte Sahlin. Surveys reveal who they are and why the back door swings.

■ **"Does the Church Really Need Me?"** by Chris Blake. First in a six-part series on the church and its young adults.

■ **"They Call Me Mom,"** by Sharon Pitman. A childless couple from Missouri adopts two brothers from Guatemala, and then two more.

Cover photo by Meylan C. Thoresen

Vol. 166, No. 17



WRATH OF GRAPES

This past month two grapes nearly turned the American world upside down. Following a phone call from a terrorist in Chile warning of poisoned fruit, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) seized 2 million crates of fruit arriving in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Miami. In Philadelphia, 150 FDA inspectors examined nearly 400,000 crates of grapes and found two grapes with traces of cyanide.

The poison found was "not enough, it turns out, to give a toddler a stomachache," according to *Time* magazine (Mar. 27), but "the country was thrown into a panic." Although grape acid rapidly decomposes the poison, "a generalized fear of fruit" prevailed. The government advised citizens not to eat fruit from Chile, which includes most of many fruits sold in wintertime.

As a result, \$4 million worth of additional fruit from Chile was held up and another \$15 million piled up on Chilean docks, throwing 20,000 workers out of their jobs and threatening 200,000 more. Chileans felt the U.S. had vastly overreacted, but the FDA commissioner said he would rather be "safe than sorry." So would the Oregon state police, who took off "on a high-speed chase to overtake a school bus transporting a child whose mother had inadvertently packed grapes in her daughter's lunch box."

Commented *Time*, "The chance of dying from a cyanide-laced piece of fruit was infinitesimally small compared to the possibility of being run over by the proverbial bus on the way to the supermarket."

As *Time* pointed out, "while all

the fuss was being made over the slight possibility that some fresh fruit had been poisoned, hundreds of other perils . . . were overlooked." Indeed. Smoking is now estimated to kill more than 300,000 people in the U.S. every year, yet the tobacco industry is allowed to advertise its products, and the government subsidizes tobacco farmers. Drunk drivers cause half or more of all road and highway fatalities—22,000 in 1987—yet little is done to stop

How easy it is to major in minors.

them, while alcohol is advertised, glamorized, and sold freely. In the last two years for which statistics are available, 1984 and 1985, nearly 63,000 people in the U.S. were killed by guns, more than during the eight-year Vietnam War. Yet the outcry against guns is a mere whisper compared with the outrage over the war. In fact, more effort seems to be invested in protecting guns than in protecting people from them.

We appear to be more easily alarmed by some substance that might possibly harm or kill a few people, such as artificial sweeteners or hair coloring, than by those things that slaughter human beings by the tens and hundreds of thousands every year. The government is quick to ban items that harm laboratory rats when given in what

would be impossible doses for humans, even though no damage to people has been shown. If only the same zeal were demonstrated toward proven killers!

To the Pharisees, Jesus said, "You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former" (Matt. 23:23, NIV). While nothing the Lord has commanded is unimportant, we often neglect the most important while concentrating on lesser duties.

Clean Living No Guarantee

A recent newspaper report stated "They neither smoke or drink, yet a group of Tennessee fundamentalist ministers fares poorly for heart risk." It explained that these pastors were "four times as likely to have high blood pressure and three times as likely to have cardiovascular problems as the average U.S.A. male." Why? They tended to be overweight, were eating poorly, and were inclined toward a sedentary life. The conclusion of a doctor conducting the study: Clean living by itself doesn't guarantee good health.

Of how many Adventists could the same be said! We don't smoke, drink, or eat meat, yet we abuse sugar and fats, eat too much, exercise too little, and suffer from stress and negative attitudes.

In the spiritual arena, we are faithful in Sabbathkeeping and tithing, but so often come woefully short on "the more important matters" of love, kindness, unselfishness, thoughtfulness, courtesy, tact, and tolerance.

Paraphrasing Revelation 19:15, Julia Ward Howe in her "Battle Hymn of the Republic" spoke of the Lord's coming as a time when He would be "trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." When that day arrives, let's not be found counting grapes while thousands perish around us.

EUGENE F. DURAND



FIVE POSSIBILITIES

Eleven years ago the editor of *Life and Health* magazine ventured forth in print five predictions for the Adventist Church during the coming decade—the decade we're just about to close the door on.*

Making no claim to prophetic insight, Leo R. Van Dolson, later to become a *Review* associate editor, blended his hopes and anticipations into five possibilities for the church in the 1980s.

Have they come true? Yes, no, and maybe. After reviewing them, you can formulate your own answers, not to judge his predictive batting average, but as he wished, "to stimulate thinking and even response on the part of each one who reads this."

He prefaced his remarks with that heartfelt desire expressed by many of us years ago: "We Adventists, of course, hope that we will not be here in the 1980s. Our current emphasis is on finishing God's work before the next General Conference session in 1980. In fact, it has been said that the big D for Dallas will actually stand for disappointment if we do actually have to hold another General Conference session—disappointment that we have not completed the task we set for ourselves at the 1975 session."

1. A More Loving Fellowship. Elder Van Dolson wrote that the "church of the eighties will be a more loving fellowship than it is at present. There will be more unity, sharing, communion, and compassion. . . . Perhaps this condition will be brought about by some form of overt pressure or even persecution. If not, greater love certainly will precipitate persecution, which in turn will result in our needing each other

more and depending more on each other."

2. Greater Lay Participation. "The next obvious trend," wrote Van Dolson, "and one that represents probably our greatest need of emphasis right now, is that of greater lay participation. . . . There is no way that the paid clergy can ever finish God's work. In fact, I am wondering if we are not coming to a time when the paid clergy will have priced itself out of the market."

"What I believe will happen by the middle of the eighties, if time should last, is the development of a strong cadre of lay, self-supporting pastors and denominational workers."

3. More Dynamic Worship Services. "As a result of the growing lay participation," Van Dolson saw "a swing away from the current liturgical trend to a more realistic and meaningful form of worship" that would get members much more involved and create "a new and dynamic format for the Sabbath school."

4. Priority of Outreach Evangelism. Van Dolson felt that the 1976 Annual Council action on the priority of evangelism "will really catch on. This means, of course, that a dramatic shift in basic objectives must take place among Adventists, with much more emphasis being given to outreach than to building institutions."

"I wonder," mused Van Dolson, "if the church as a whole yet realizes how earthshaking the 1976 Annual Council action really was. If taken seriously, it will mean that budgets on every level, including that of the local congregation, will

include, perhaps for the first time, priority on outreach evangelism."

5. Total Dependence on the Spirit. Van Dolson felt the "most dramatic shift of the next decade will undoubtedly be away from dependence upon men and what men can do to dependence upon God and the direct intervention and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We anticipate that soon the time will come when committees and plans will not be able to keep up with the direct providential leading of the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

Greatest Days Ahead

While futurists in the late 1970s were looking with pessimism upon the coming decade, Van Dolson asserted that the coming decade "is the most optimistic imaginable since it is based on a promise that comes from God Himself that the greatest days are yet ahead."

Answering the question of whether or not we have achieved these five possibilities during this decade is difficult—subjective at best. But a quick review shows that in certain geographical areas our church has made, and is making, gigantic strides forward—in the areas of lay involvement, Sabbath school and worship services, soul winning, and dependence upon the Spirit.

Nevertheless, Van Dolson's five hopes and possibilities for the Adventist Church seem as fitting today for the church of the next decade as they were for this decade.

We certainly need more caring among members, greater lay participation on all levels of the church, more creative Sabbath school programs and Sabbath morning worship services, a priority on evangelism that goes beyond words and into our hearts, and greater dependence upon the Spirit's leading.

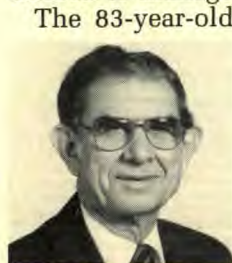
All of us, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, must do our part, for if change is to be effected, we must do it. The corporate church is no one else but us, under God's guidance.

**Ministry*, April 1978.

MYRON WIDMER

China Asks Adventist Church to Operate a Proposed Hospital

Billionaire Hong Kong resident Sir Run Run Shaw has offered to the People's Republic of China \$9 million to help build a state-of-the-art hospital in Hangzhou if, and only if, China would ask the Seventh-day Adventist Church to manage and operate it for five years.



Neal C. Wilson

The 83-year-old's tremendous affinity for the Adventist Church comes after being a patient decades ago of Dr. Harry Miller, the famous Adventist "China Doctor" and pioneer, and from seeing how well Adventists have operated hospitals in Hong Kong and throughout the Far East. An official request to manage the future educational and training

hospital has now come from the Chinese government to the General Conference—the first time that the Chinese government has ever officially recognized the church in recent years.

According to GC president Neal C. Wilson, acceptance of the written proposal would involve the need of the Adventist Church to raise about \$1.25 million annually to finance the salaries of 25 to 30 key health professionals, as well as administrative and technical staff. "Such personnel," commented Wilson, "would be Seventh-day Adventists and most probably would be expatriates." Unless other agreements are reached, after five years of Adventist management the hospital would revert to government management.

The Shaw Foundation's donation of \$9 million would serve as seed money for the educational hospital to be built in Zhejiang Province, 150 miles southwest of Shanghai. The provincial and local government would donate 17 acres of land and the balance of the construction costs, housing for personnel, and additional operational costs.

In addressing this item at the Spring Meeting of the General Conference Executive Committee, Wilson spoke of the tremendous opportunity to provide such help for China—particularly in an area where a large concentration of Chinese Adventists live. But Wilson also spoke of the risks, including the financial challenge, since no money is in hand to undertake such a "major commitment." He said the church would need to solicit the money.

Further Spring Meeting reports by Adventist Review editors Myron Widmer (China) and Carlos Medley (Other Actions).

Wilson also reminded the committee of the purpose of medical institutions: "They are established to relieve the sick and the afflicted, to awaken a spirit of inquiry, to disseminate light, and to advance reform." [Testimonies, vol. 7, p. 104]."

After further discussion, and belief that God was opening doors into China, Spring Meeting members voted to authorize GC officers to negotiate a proposal that would give the church, in cooperation with Loma Linda University Medical Center, full authority to operate and manage the facility for five years.

Other Spring Meeting Actions

■ **Harris Pine Mills Update.** In reporting on the Harris Pine Mills bankruptcy, Don F. Gilbert, General Conference treasurer, told GC Committee members that the latest, though not complete, reports show a loss to the church of nearly \$6.5 million, in addition to the loss of the business.

"This is truly remarkable, considering that all creditors (except the General Conference) will be paid," Gilbert said. "Our trustee John Mitchell says that this was the most successful resolution that he's been involved with. It's another sign that God is watching over His church. This also will guarantee that all the retiree and employee benefits will be provided for."

Approximately \$36.6 million was owed to outside creditors and \$13 million was owed to the General Conference. The *Adventist Review* will carry a final report when all assets are sold.

■ **GC Headquarters Cost Inches Upward.** The GC Committee heard a summary report outlining the construction costs of the new General Conference world headquarters, located about seven miles north of the current headquarters.

Latest estimates for the 300,000-square-foot complex will total \$29.5 million, or \$7.5 million more than previous projections. The new estimates also exceed appropriations authorized by the GC Committee in 1986 by \$4.5 million.

General Conference treasurer Don F. Gilbert reported five reasons for the expected overage: county-imposed regulations (\$1.7 million), changes in construction (\$3.7 million), time delays (\$1.4 million), variances between estimated actual costs of material (\$1.2 million), and unforeseen construction problems (\$4 million).

Committee members approved the additional funds needed to finish the project. Gilbert reported that \$31 million was available to fund the construction. The sources of the \$31 million included sales of current headquarters buildings and other property held by the church, contributions, gains on investments, and special appropriations.

■ **New Stewardship Leader Elected.** Committee members elected **Harold L. Lee**, pastor of the nearly 1,500-member Dupont Park Church in Washington, D.C., as an associate director of the General Conference and



SAM BROWN

North American Division Church Ministries Departments for stewardship. Elder Lee (left), who replaces Samuel D. Meyers (who retired in 1988), has served as a pastor, teacher, and conference and union stewardship director.

NORTH AMERICA

Fire Damages Shady Grove Hospital. An electrical malfunction is believed to be the cause of an early-morning fire that caused between \$250,000 and \$300,000 worth of damage to the administrative offices of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Rockville, Maryland, on April 13.

The blaze damaged mobile trailers being used as temporary administration offices and did not reach the main hospital complex, says Tammy Russell, public relations director.

WORLD CHURCH

Mexican Member Takes Governmental Post. Ulises Park Lee of Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, was recently appointed director of the Department of Services and Estate for the Mexican government's Ministry of Agricultural Reform. In this position Lee will oversee ministry purchases throughout the country.

"This is the first time in Mexico's modern history that an Adventist has been chosen for such a distinguished position," says Dr. Salim Japas, Inter-American Division ministerial secretary.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Islamic Center to Form at Newbold. The General Conference Executive Committee voted April 13 the formation of a Center for Islamic Studies at Newbold College, England.

Commencing on July 1, the center will serve six world divisions of the General Conference and the Middle East Union. With nearly 1 billion adherents, Islam is the world's second-largest religion and the fastest-growing, says Maurice Battle, an associate secretary of the General Conference.

Dr. Borge Schantz (below), Newbold's Religion De-



NEWBOLD COLLEGE

partment chairman and director of the European Institute of World Mission, was appointed founding director. The Newbold center is the first of three study centers that will be set up to focus on Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

Pilot Investment Project Targets Burundi. At the request of the Frederick, Maryland, church, the General Conference Church Ministries Department has approved a pilot investment project that represents a major change from traditional mission offering use.

Under the pilot project, seven Washington, D.C., area churches will establish a \$5 per Sabbath School member investment goal to sponsor the regular ongoing Sabbath School mission program. But all money raised above the \$5 per capita goal will go for building new churches in the Burundi Mission. The goal of the pilot project is to enhance mission offerings through *targeted* promotion.

The results will be studied by the GC treasury to see if this has potential for promoting greater interest in and support for the total stewardship program of the church.

R&H Employees Stage Sunrise Service. More than 100 employees of the Review and Herald Publishing Association (R&H) presented their second annual Easter sunrise memorial service and resurrection reenactment to an audience of more than 600 people. The script was based on *The Desire of Ages*. Props were built, including a tomb and 11 sets of Roman armor. Many of the costumes came from the Review's extensive costume collection made for *The Bible Story* more than 20 years ago.



FOR YOUR INTEREST

Africa Video Update. As of March 31, sales of the *Adventist Review's* Africa video totaled 1,102 units. Proceeds from the video are being used to offset production costs. The video spotlights the work of the Adventist Church in Africa and gives highlights of the 1988 Annual Council held in Nairobi, Kenya.

If you would like to order the video, send \$24.95 to NAD Distribution Center, 5040 Prescott St., Lincoln, Nebraska 68506; or call (402) 486-2519.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- May 4 National Day of Prayer
- May 6 Community Services Evangelism Emphasis
- May 13 Disaster and Famine Relief Offering
- June 3 Bible Correspondence School Emphasis
- June 10 North American Missions Offering

BY CARMEN SEIBOLD

A Letter to My College Friends

Apologies from one who has gone before

The school year is over for many of you. For some of you, this may be a break; for others, it may be the end of Adventist education. Either way, the end of a school year seems like the kind of occasion when something meaningful should be said. You're probably thinking that you've heard all the profound things you could stand from graduation speakers and other well-meaning people. I wonder, though, whether anyone apologized to you.

I want to apologize to you on behalf of all who have gone before you—those of us who make up the church that shapes the education you've received. We need to apologize to you because we have shortchanged you.

Apology No. 1: I apologize to you that we haven't emphasized the Christian calling. We've used the word *call* to describe only what motivates theology majors. But God calls everyone.

I've thought a lot about calling and vocation ever since I had a disturbing conversation with a committed

Adventist young man. He felt that a talented fellow student would "waste her potential" working for the church. Not understanding the concept of calling, he saw no contest between the choice of a well-paying job and the modest lifestyle that marks church employment.

When Christians don't give enough emphasis to calling and ministry, many gifted young people will squander their lives in careers, relationships, and recreation that fall short of fulfilling their potential. Without a sense of calling from God, some let happenstance direct their lives. But even if you are motivated by personal career goals, don't conclude that whatever comes easiest to you is what God most wants you to do.

God's calling may surprise you. God doesn't limit our lives according to the world's preconceived expectations and roles. Remember how Martha was upset when Mary didn't do the work she was expected to as a woman? Jesus' response shows that our relationship to Him is more important than compliance to roles.

God calls us to discipleship, and discipleship challenges us to find God's way in the midst of many competing possibilities. Any way except God's way through life is second best.

Apology No. 2: We have failed to let you know that culture isn't permanent, and that its values are often opposed to God's intentions for us and for history.

Consider the recent joint survey by the



American Council on Education and UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute. The survey revealed that a record number of freshman college students think financial prosperity is an "essential" or "very important" goal. The same students gave a record low priority to the necessity of developing a meaningful philosophy of life.

Such attitudes suggest that we as churches, institutions, and parents have accepted culture's materialistic values. As we've become affluent we have bought in to the world's definition of success.

I apologize because the life we've modeled for you has more to do with the secular agenda of getting ahead than with the biblical agenda of living our faith. Frankly, the promises of Christianity are not for wealth and success.

Some choices you may be tempted to make actually oppose God's design for our world. Other choices, while not bad choices, may mean you spend your life doing pointless things, things without ultimate value. All of us need to be more critical (in the analytical sense of the word) of the values that shape our life choices.

Apology No. 3: I'm sorry that we've made Christianity seem less exciting, fulfilling, and powerful than other options you see. We often refer to some glorious *tomorrow* when God will act decisively once and for all, but we live as if *today* has no connection with that tomorrow.

We're often impotent concerning the big issues of the present and the challenges of the future. We're too preoccupied with an idealized church past. Nothing should be more satisfying than growing under God's direction to become the moral and spiritual leaders of the world. You would have liked that, too.

Too often we've told you, "Be patient. Don't rock the boat. Keep things comfortable and peaceful. Don't walk in paths where we haven't walked before you." No wonder you've decided other options are more interesting!

But God's tomorrow has already begun. God's plans will be realized — with us or without us. Although we are all invited to be a part of them, many of us have ignored the invitation. So you see a lot of us paying lip service to the biblical vision but not making a difference in the world today.

Don't *you* ignore the invitation. God wants you to make as much of a difference as an apostle Paul, or a Martin Luther, or a Mother Teresa. He longs for you to live the most satisfying life possible. Don't be seduced into accepting second-class happiness, the kind that you can wrestle for, buy, and secure for yourself.

Please don't use these apologies as excuses to perpetuate our failures. We hope that you'll see what you've missed and be motivated to find these things for yourself. Don't let our failure cheat you out of what is rightfully yours. And in the bargain, show us what we're missing that Christ can do in our lives, relationships, jobs, and churches. □



Carmen Seibold is the wife of a pastor and an M.Div. student at Fuller Theological Seminary in California.





This sculpture of Christ wears a smile similar to that seen by the author on a painting in the same little church in Santiago.

WHY NOT A SMILE?

Calvary from a different angle

BY LAURIE WILSON

I woke up early that morning—New Year's Day, 1982. Traveling alone, I was tucked away in a tiny room in

a small building in the old section of an ancient city in northwest Spain. But it was time to explore, so I put on some warm clothes and set out.

The city, Santiago de Compostela, dates back to the ninth century. Back in the early 800s someone discovered, as tradition has it, the tomb of the apostle James, whose remains had been transported from Palestine to what is now the province of La Coruña in northern Spain. Alfonso II built a church near the sepulchre, and around it the city grew.

Santiago became a very popular place for pilgrims, and in fact was one of the centers of the first spiritual movement that united the continent of Europe. The Romanesque style of architecture began there,

and was carried to the world by pilgrims.

I was on my own "pilgrimage." Not to pay homage to some dust, though I was curious, but to be there and to see what I could see. Sometimes I think I could be a professional tourist, paid to wander, to experience, to share—a mercenary tourist. I'm not a student of art, nor of architecture, but I usually visit the requisite museums and don't miss many churches or cathedrals. I travel for the sake of movement, to say that I've been, and I usually learn something in the process.

Visiting Landmarks

That day was no different. I headed out past the cathedral where the apostle's remains are enshrined, and on to other landmarks pointed out on the tourist map.

A small church, open and empty, drew me inside. I left damp footprints on the pavement. On to a convent, where I heard an a cappella choir—beautiful, until I got too close. The sun, already risen, peered around some hills as I arrived at the marketplace, already buzzing with activity. I poked around a bit and found myself next to a tiny church.

I decided to go inside for a closer look. The building was obviously old—plants growing from between the stones, and all. Inside, a service was in progress; and not wanting to disturb the worshipers, I confined my exploration to the foyer. A quick look around didn't reveal promise of the spectacular, so I began to leave.

As I stopped to glance at a picture of Christ on the cross, my bored curiosity contemplated the idea that if you'd seen one renaissance painting of the Crucifixion, you'd seen them all. There are certainly plenty to be seen, and they all try to capture the misery of the day. But I stopped and looked anyway, my eyes starting at the foot of the cross and moving up.

My emotions reacted violently. *Blasphemy!* screamed my mind. Shocked, I could only stare at the Man on the cross. A smile illumi-

nated His face—a peaceful smile, a beautiful smile, a smile that interrupted the darkness of the scene. My thoughts rebelled.

From Shock to Praise

Who does he think he is, this artist, painting a picture like that? How can he presume to picture the darkest moment in the history of the world that way? In the midst of final agony, physical pain, separation from the Father, the whole terrible focus of the ugliness of sin upon Him—and a smile on His face? I left the church, disturbed.

The message took a long time to sink in. Why not a smile? True, the Son of God died leaving some hurting, bewildered people. He was killed by a broken heart, crushed by the horrible weight of sin. God's Son was lifeless. Yet in that very moment, the greatest battle ever fought was won, victory assured, God's plan complete. His wounds signaled the end of death. Why not a smile?

To See That Smile Again

The summer of 1986, I returned to Spain, drawn by the desire to wander again, to visit old friends, to see the smile on His face.

Mom and I made our way to the northwest corner of Spain. Unfortunately for us, my mind had not retained some important details—like which city that painting was in. I had two choices, both old cobblestoned cities. We first stopped in La Coruña, the capital of the province. If the painting wasn't there, I could at least show my mom the only Roman-era lighthouse that still worked. We walked around awhile, not finding the painting. Eventually we asked at the tourist office.

Spanish tourist offices are marvelous things, usually filled with helpful people, wonderful maps, and free posters. The man we talked to had never heard of the painting I tried to describe, nor had his cohort; but they did give me the name of someone who would. Don Felipe Senen, curator of the nearby archaeological museum, would probably

Tradition should not keep my mind from exploring new avenues, new thoughts, for more meaning.

be able to help. We went in search of him.

When I finally met Señor Senen, he told me the only picture he knew of like that around there was in Santiago. (That had been my other choice.) The church was near the university and the Plaza de San Felix, or San Fiz in the local tongue. The painting was done by a San-

tiago native around 1960. I thanked him, and we took the bus back to the train station, where we caught the train for the short ride to Santiago.

There I found the market, the plaza, the church. It all fit together now. But the church was closed. I spoke to two older women who were selling vegetables next to the church. Did they know anything about the church? Yes, one of them said. This was the oldest church in town (the tourist brochure confirmed that), and there was a painting inside like the one I described. The artist had died four or five years ago, and his widow had given the piece to the church. The other woman said she had never been inside the church. "You haven't?" responded the first. "You really ought to sometime. It's nice inside."

What a pity, I thought. So close, and yet so far.

I didn't get to see that smile again, though we stayed the night and tried again the next morning. The church wouldn't be open until later in the afternoon, and we had a train to catch to Lisbon. So I left, my memory augmented but not refreshed.

Lessons

There are a few things I always want to remember about those journeys.

One, that tradition should not keep my mind from exploring new avenues, new thoughts, for more meaning.

Two, that I not sit a few feet away from inspiration, never bothering to investigate because it is always there.

And three, that I never neglect the victory won for me so long ago. □



Laurie Wilson is editorial assistant for Listen magazine. This article was first presented as a morning devotional at the

General Conference in January 1989.

CURIOUS ABOUT WORLD CHRISTIANITY?

The World Christian Encyclopedia reveals amazing Christian phenomena.

BY RUSSELL STAPLES

Have you ever been curious about how Christianity is flourishing or surviving in the 223 countries of earth? Or the changing shape of missionary endeavors, even those of the Seventh-day Adventist Church? If so, then you should look at David Barrett's recently published *World Christian Encyclopedia*.¹

The *World Christian Encyclopedia* (WCE) is the successor to a series of *World Christian Handbooks* that published information about the status of Christianity. But the new book goes so far beyond its predecessors that it has created an entirely new stage in our knowledge of the demography of Christianity.

WCE editor David Barrett, an aeronautical engineer who became an Anglican missionary in East Africa, felt that Christian churches should have more information than was available to plan programs and evaluate achievements. His engineer's skill with numbers and computers brought religious statistics into the computer era and created a book of immense value to churches and mission agencies.

If anything, WCE holds greater significance to Seventh-day Adventists than to most other Christians. For the first time ever, such a resource includes an objective accounting of Adventist Church members worldwide and in each country where they live. Barrett lists 6.2 million adherents to the Adventist faith (versus our own church's statistic of some 5.5 million official members) and finds Adventists in 193 of the 223

countries of earth. (See global table.)

Barrett attempts to classify every person according to such criteria as country, ethnic affiliation, language, and especially religion. As it is a *Christian* encyclopedia, most of its pages categorize, classify, and describe global Christian affiliation and practice. Much of this is set in a historical perspective. The result is a 1,000-page book containing nearly 470 tables, thousands of pictures, 26 maps, and a set of indexes and listings of names, places, persons, and denominations that outranks the yellow pages.

Global Insight

The first chapter gives a graphic survey of global Christianity in the twentieth century.

The second chapter presents a historical survey of world evangelization from the time of Christ to the present. In this and a subsequent chapter on evangelization, Barrett reveals his own missionary concern, a concern that probably provided the motivating drive needed to sustain the 14 years of research and journeys to 212 countries required to produce the volume.

Further sections include information on culture (again for the missionary) and the methodology employed in enumerating and calculating statistics.

The central 650-page section is a systematic survey of religion in the 223 countries of earth, with two major tables for each country. The first table gives the religions practiced and their adherents. The second lists

Christian denominations, adherents, and annual change (growth or decline). Also included are a series of global statistical tables and maps.

What We Have Learned

Perhaps the most pervasive and striking impression upon paging through this encyclopedia is that of the universality of Christian faith. Christianity alone, of all the religions, has managed to make itself at home in all countries, with the possible exception of Tibet—and in a considerable number, as Barrett shows, under conditions of difficulty. This is no hollow victory. It can be seen more clearly today than at any time since Jesus walked by the shores of Galilee that Christianity appeals to people of all races, cultures, and languages. Christianity is the majority religion in approximately a third of the countries on earth.

The WCE has dramatically influenced thinking about mission priorities and strategies, for it not only provides mission agencies with reliable statistical information but reveals many unrealized possibilities for mission.

For instance, Barrett finds 78 million "crypto-Christians"—a category of Christians left undiscovered and unlisted in previous surveys. Crypto-Christians are believers who for various reasons have not announced their secret profession and who may be thought by their friends to be members of another religion. In Saudi Arabia, the heartland of Islam, for instance, "exist large numbers of Arabs . . . holding privately to Christian beliefs, or who have become Christians through house groups or through radio programs, all of whom prefer to remain as secret believers."² Barrett estimates some 600,000 crypto-Christians live in Japan, where only 3 percent of the population is officially accounted Christian. And, interestingly, the Bible has become a best-seller in Japan.

Barrett's consistent work in trying to trace crypto-Christians has sparked a great interest by both Christian churches and mission

agencies. Knowledge of this fact has equipped missionaries with a fifth sense, as it were, to recognize Christian commitment in unlikely-appearing candidates and has spurred reflection on how to engage such persons in the Christian community.

Striking Impressions

One of the most striking impressions the *WCE* makes upon one's consciousness is the fact that 95 million persons belong to independent Christian religious movements (listed as "non-White indigenous"). We have known about these movements, but to see them statistically listed in country after country (even several Adventist offshoots are listed), and to read Barrett's descriptions of their religious vitality, force the missionary-minded Christian to reflect on a number of issues. Why do these groups exist? Do they stem from dissatisfaction with the formality of somewhat pale and anemic forms of worship? Or from revolt against church discipline and structure? Or perhaps from a feeling that no room exists for the practice of the charismatic and healing force of Christianity in the mission churches? And self-consciously one perhaps might ask, Is their existence a result of missionary failure? If so, it becomes a challenge to our own spirituality.

More important, the consciousness of this vast expression of religious vitality forces one to think of the missionary opportunity of communicating the three angels' messages to this effervescent segment of the Christian community.

Countless other amazing Christian phenomena either pop up out of these pages or slowly emerge as one works with the *WCE* and compares table with table. Barrett shows that Christians are forward-looking and progressive, and more than this, that they are readers. A significant percentage of the new publications in the Third World is Christian religious material—both in the periodical and book markets. One thinks immediately of the publish-

ing activities of early Adventist pioneers and of the tremendous missionary opportunities publishing still affords the Christian church.

Barrett not only documents the process of global urbanization (by the year 2000 more than one half of the world population will be urban-dwelling), but shows that Christians as a whole are far more urbanized than the general populace. This leads one to think of the challenges of the world's Christian and non-Christian cities and, in the light of this challenge, of the usual Adventist attitude toward the city.

In section after section the *WCE*

Changing demographics challenge Christian thinking.

portrays the changing demographic shape of Christianity. In 1900, two thirds of all Christians lived in Europe, the U.S., and the Soviet Union. By the year 2000, three fifths of all Christians will live in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. After centuries as the predominant faith of the Northern Hemisphere, Christianity about 1980 shifted to a Southern Hemisphere non-White majority.

In 1900 the largest single ethnolinguistic bloc of Christians lived in Russia. By 1980 the largest group was in North America. By the year 2000, Barrett predicts, the largest ethnolinguistic group will be the Spanish-speaking mestizos of Latin America. Already Spanish is the number one language of Christianity—with 206 million speakers versus 196 million English speakers. One of the major implications of this demographic shift is the need to ensure the struc-

ture, function, and financing of the church organization.

Surprises and interesting information abound on every page. More can be learned about the Adventist Church in most of the country surveys than is available in the General Conference *Annual Statistical Report*—for example, the ethnic composition of the church and the percentage of adherents who attend church regularly. It is nice to note that in most countries the percentage of Adventists who attend church services weekly is higher than in most churches, but there is quite a difference among Adventists from country to country.

I have found that the initial response of most Adventists to whom I introduce the *WCE* is a subdued sense of pride that 6.2 million Adventist adherents are listed. But this is generally overshadowed by the sense of satisfaction that here, for the first time in a major published survey of Christianity, Adventists are objectively and systematically included among the denominational families that make up the Christian church. This is a significant fact. It is as if the door has been opened and we have been welcomed into the family of Christian denominations.

Even though the *WCE* has a special significance for Adventists, this should not blind us to its major utility. The *WCE* contains a wealth of information that can help the church refine and sharpen both mission priorities and strategies. □

REFERENCES

¹ David B. Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, A.D. 1900 to 2000* (Nairobi, Oxford, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

² *Ibid.*, p. 603.



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God, the Divorcé

BY JO ANNA LEE

*"I have likened the daughter of
Zion to a lovely and delicate
woman." ¹*

*"Your maker is your husband—
the Lord Almighty is His name." ²*

*"I gave faithless Israel her
certificate of divorce and sent her
away because of all her
adulteries." ³*

The tragic news of an impending divorce among our family members or friends leaves our hearts trembling. Our own tremors of discomfort may cause us to focus on ourselves and withdraw from the divorced and their pain. And the divorced may find themselves quarantined in an empty house, looking out at life through mist-covered windows.

Abandonment by spouse and friends may leave the divorced feeling deserted by God, too. When their cries to make sense out of their pain seem unheard and unheeded, they wonder if God also condemns them, for doesn't He say He hates divorce?⁴

But the Great Lover of the universe understands the intensity of such pain. He too is divorced.⁵ As one who has Himself experienced heartrending lament, He brings healing and understanding that no one else can.⁶

PHOTO BY MEYLAN C. THORESEN

My Cry

Lord, I gave up everything for him—
everything I was,
everything I had,
everything I dreamed to be.
But it wasn't enough!
The expensive perfumes,
the embroidered robes,
tenderness and love—
Nothing lured him back.
He took the bed I had prepared for him
and gave it to other lovers.
He despised my most precious gifts
and shamed me before my friends.
What was given for recovery
he squandered in adultery.
Life, which promised hope and love and joy,
has turned to pain and loss and loneliness.
I feel violated,
angry,
alone.

God's Lament

I know.

*I gave my wife everything she could desire—
white linen, delicately embroidered,
ointment for her eyes,
shoes which glisten with brightness,
and jewels for her hair.*

*I imported the finest foods—
oil pressed from the olive,
spice of rarest aroma,
water from an ever-flowing fountain,
fine flour, carefully sifted,
honey, delicately sweet.*

She became famous.

*People everywhere honored her
because of her beauty, her wisdom, her wealth.*

*But I could not satisfy her—
she preferred strangers.
Her beauty, and my gifts
were lavished upon her lovers
as incense before a foreign god.*

*She robbed the poor,
ignored the hungry,
despised the homeless.*

*Our sons and our daughters she taught to love
expensive apparel, cut stones,
golden ringlets
and luxurious homes.*

Oh, how I loved her!

I begged her to come home, but she would not.⁷

What more could I do than I have done?⁸

My eyes are worn out with weeping;

My soul is in anguish;

I am exhausted with grief.⁹

My Response

Today, as I walked through the rain

I knew that You were crying too.

Your pain seemed so intense,

so profound,
so unmitigated,
so eternal.

Your tears bathed me—
and I am refreshed.

□

REFERENCES

¹ Jer. 6:2, NKJV.

² Isa. 54:5, NIV.

³ Jer. 3:8, NIV.

⁴ Mal. 2:16.

⁵ Jer. 3:8.

⁶ Heb. 2:18.

⁷ Eze. 16.

⁸ Isa. 5:4.

⁹ Lam. 2:11.

Jo Anna Lee is a pseudonym.



chosen to go topside and make sure all the turnbuckles were tight.

As I worked in the rain and wind, with waves crashing over me, I occasionally looked up to the bridge, wondering what was going on up there in the pilothouse. *It must be as chaotic up there as down here*, I thought. I could imagine the helmsman hopelessly spinning the ship's wheel, trying to stay on the proper course, while the engineer shouted that the engine rooms were flooded and the navigator reported that we were lost somewhere in the South

seas, and my appreciation grows for the way God's universe rests safe within His mighty hands. While the storm of rebellion rages on Planet Earth, we must rely upon His abiding presence and sustaining grace. We can by faith rest in God in the midst of the storm; we may know, no matter how tempest-tossed our ship, our Father stands at the helm and has everything under control.

Ellen White discusses three Bible heroes who, in the midst of confusion and struggle, when rebellion and tyranny filled the earth, received visions of God as an overruling power—mightier than any earthly king. God opened before Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John coming events, all of which were in His hands.

Isaiah lived in a time of peril and crisis for both Judah and Israel. Under strong kings they had grown prosperous, but prosperity brought spiritual and moral decline. The people clung to the outward forms of religion but knew nothing of its meaning and power. Surrounded by threats from foreign enemies and life among a perverse people, Isaiah became deeply depressed.

A View of the Temple

In his discouragement, he sought God at the holy Temple. While standing in its precincts, "suddenly the gate and the inner veil of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he was permitted to gaze within. . . . There rose up before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. . . . On each side of the throne hovered the seraphim. . . . These angel ministers lifted up their voices in solemn invocation, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory' " (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 750).

When perils encompass God's people and the powers of darkness seem about to prevail, God calls upon them to look to Him, seated upon His throne, directing the affairs of heaven and earth, that they may take hope and courage. After seeing the Lord high and lifted up and hearing that the earth is full of His glory, "the prophet was nerved

STEADY AT THE HELM

Looking to the Captain amid the storms of life

BY RICK LAVENTURE

The Vietnam War found me in the Navy. My first time out to sea I could tell, even before we cleared the Tokyo channel, that heavy seas lay ahead.

New Army jeeps made up our cargo, filling the hold and covering the topside, where they were buckled down to the main deck.

Three or four days out to sea we hit a raging storm. Ten- to 40-foot waves made life on board resemble a roller coaster ride that never ended.

The pounding and rolling caused the cargo of jeeps to shift. After several had fallen over the side, I was

China Sea. In my mind I could see the captain in a frenzy, barking out orders and worrying about the threat to his ship and cargo.

That evening I reported for my first watch duty on the bridge. The storm had become a full-blown typhoon, and I dreaded spending the next four hours in what I thought would be a madhouse.

When I arrived on the bridge, an unexpected sight greeted me. Every man stood at his station: the lookouts strapped into their corners of the bridge as they searched the horizon with their binoculars, the helmsman steady at the wheel, the navigator plotting the ship on a true course. Out on the flying bridge, perched high atop his pedestal chair, the captain, his feet spread against the railings to keep him from falling, joked with another officer as he dunked a doughnut into a cup of milk.

Here I thought the ship was falling apart, while in reality everything was under control! The captain had complete confidence in the integrity of his ship and the ability of his men.

Now, as a Christian, I often think of my first adventure on the high

for the work before him. The memory of this vision was carried with him throughout his long and arduous mission" (*ibid.*, p. 751).

Ezekiel served as a prophet in exile. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came against Jerusalem and led into servitude tens of thousands of Judah's chief people, including Ezekiel. After 586 B.C., almost all the people were taken to Babylon, the Temple was burned, and Jerusalem destroyed. Only a few of the "poor of the land" remained as vinedressers and husbandmen (2 Kings 25:12). God sent Jeremiah to reveal His purposes to the Jews who remained in Judea, while Ezekiel served as Heaven's spokesman to the captives. Weighed down with sorrowful memories of his homeland and with the continued idolatrous rebellion of his people, Ezekiel became known as the mourning prophet. The land of his fathers lay desolate, and Jerusalem was left depopulated, while he and his people were strangers in a cruel land. No wonder his soul was distressed night and day.

Pilothouse of the Universe

It seemed like the end for Zion, scarred by the trauma of captivity. But in those turbulent times Ezekiel beheld a whirlwind coming from the north. In vision he was carried away to the "pilothouse" of God's universe, where he saw strange wheels intersecting one another, moved by four living creatures. High above all these he beheld "the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (Eze. 1:26).

"There were wheels within wheels in an arrangement so complicated that at first sight they appeared to Ezekiel to be all in confusion. But when they moved, it was with beautiful exactness and in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings were impelling these wheels, and, above all, upon the glorious sapphire throne, was the Eternal One" (*ibid.*). In the midst of all the confusion on earth, Ezekiel saw the throne room of God,

with its court attendants, in all its glory. Heaven remained in complete order, a precision operation. God was in control.

In another time of confusion and strife on earth, when Satan tried to quench the fire of faith carried by the apostles and the new Christian church, God opened before John the future of His people.

The apostle languished on the island of Patmos, separated by the sea from the work he loved—preaching the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Was he forgotten by God, no longer useful? And what of the message—would it fail without him, the last survivor among the disciples?

Assurance of God's Care

God showed John that his work was not done; he was yet to be of great value to God and the church. The message given by John was so important that Christ came from heaven to give it to His servant. "He gave him an assurance of the Saviour's interest and care for His people by revealing to him 'One like unto the Son of man,' walking among the candlesticks, which symbolized the seven churches" (*ibid.*, p. 752).

John saw the throne of God, and heard the anthems of joy resounding through the heavenly courts. His mind was swept from the confusion and anxieties of earth to Mount Zion, where he witnessed the faithful standing before the Lamb of God (see Rev. 7:9-14).

The lessons of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John "are for our benefit. We need to stay our faith upon God, for there is just before us a time that will try men's souls" (*ibid.*, p. 753). Satan, like a torpedo, wants to strike us from beneath, to sink us by hurling storms along our route.

We could stay our minds on the problems and anxieties that threaten our church, but that would paralyze our faith and hope. Like Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John, we need a vision of Christ in His magnificent throne room. We need to see "how closely heaven is connected with the events taking place on earth and how great is the care of God for those

who are loyal to Him" (*ibid.*).

Our vision today can also be found in the sanctuary. No other Christians lift up the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary as do Seventh-day Adventists. Our belief allows us to see the exalted Christ, sharing the throne of Deity, ministering in our behalf, and sending the Comforter to our side.

Rainbow's End

I still remember the day my ship finally sailed out of that storm. With the dark clouds behind us and a brilliant sunset off our starboard bow, there appeared the most vivid rainbow before us. I remember the captain changed the course of the ship, attempting to sail as close as he could to one of the elusive legs of the rainbow. What a comfort that beautiful rainbow brought, as it signaled the end of the storm and smooth sailing ahead. But through Christian eyes it represents even more—an assurance of God's eternal love and care.

There is a throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. Isaiah saw it when he beheld God sitting high and lifted up. Ezekiel witnessed the same glorious sight and described the rainbow above God's throne. When John gazed into the throne room of the universe, he too saw that brilliant arc of light. In their darkest hour God took their minds off the crisis and gave them a vision of order and peace and the glory of God.

Every believer's eyes can be attracted to the heavens that shine in beauty above us. In prayer and study we can obtain glimpses of the holy sanctuary where Christ steers the universe with precision. Even when skies become darkest, God would have us look up in faith to catch the rainbow of promise. □



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pastors the Sara-
sota, Florida, Ad-
ventist Church.*

THE RV AND ME

BY KATE MARLEY

It was one of my more unusual dates. We were on our way home from an afternoon activity. Joe was describing his two-week-old dream of taking off a year from his stress-filled life as a corporate attorney to traipse through Canada in a recreational vehicle filled with paperbacks. I tend to like people who are quirky, and I liked Joe.

Sometimes the episodes of life play like a made-for-TV movie. In the middle of our conversation, what should we see parked on the side of the road but an RV with a "For Sale" sign in the window. Caught in a moment of spontaneity, we circled the block to park and get a closer look at the 1978 Dodge Flair. The price was right, and the owner lived nearby. Within minutes we were investigating the storage areas inside and checking the cushions for rips.

"Thank You for Your Time"

Satisfied that the interior was "workable," we asked the owner to start up the engine. Despite its having only 45,000 miles, the engine did not sound like the purr of a kitten. A couple belts were loose and frayed, a hose leaked, and the accelerator stuck. At that point, my mechanically untrained mind would have told the owner "Thank you for your time." But Joe was more knowledgeable. "Nothing that couldn't be fixed fairly easily," he said. A sale was in the making. Joe's dream was beginning to merge with reality.

The rest of the evening, all Joe talked about was how he could fix up the 10-year-old Dodge. He would add a generator, refinish the cupboards, add another auxiliary battery, and of course give the engine a major overhaul. Already a modest

1978 23-foot RV was becoming transformed in Joe's imagination to be a Cinderella palace, a vacation villa—a virtual dream home.

Seeing the Potential

Mulling over my extraordinary date the next day, I was struck by the parallels of the experience to life. Not so unusual—comparing life to an RV! I thought about how Joe and his soon-to-be-owned RV were closely similar to God and me. Joe was not buying a brand-new \$40,000 motor home with deluxe interior and fine-tuned engine. Instead, he was buying a 1978 RV with more than a few nicks, and an engine that ran a little rough—but with potential for refurnishing and fine tuning.

In the same way, God has bought me—not a sinless being perfect mentally and physically, but rather a sinner caught in the lifelong process of death. But with potential, nonetheless. Just as Joe visualized a dream, God visualizes a dream. And to the extent those dreams can become reality, they will. Joe will spend hours making his RV into what he wants it to be. And to the extent I let Him, God will spend my lifetime making me into His image.

The best part is that to the extent the dreams cannot merge with reality, the owners will fail to notice. Joe will be too busy enjoying the fruits of his labor to notice its minor inadequacies. God, on the other hand, fails to notice my inadequacies because He cannot see them—they are covered with the life of Christ.

Of course, this analogy, like every analogy, breaks down at some point. After all, just how far can one carry an analogy between a used RV and its owner, and a sinner and God?

Unlike the overhaul of the RV, which is essentially limited by the creativity and ability of the owner, my "overhaul" by God is limited by me.

Which brings me to one of the major flaws I find in my nature. Why do I fight God's transformation of my life into His dream for me? I know and believe that God's dream for me would make me happiest, both now and for eternity. Yet continually, day after day, I choose my way over His will for me.

It's not a matter of salvation, really. I have accepted that I cannot save myself, that no matter how much I become like God, I still have done nothing to accomplish my salvation. It's a matter of realizing that God's law is really just the owner's manual for my life, so to speak. By ignoring it, I could conceivably get through my allotted 70 to 80 years just fine. But why do I settle for just OK when I could have more?

The Ultimate Rule

I hope that day by day I will internalize the words of David, who wrote that God's will is the ultimate rule of the universe. It can transform my soul. His words are true and will broaden my mind. His rules are best for making me unbelievably happy, and for opening my eyes to the real good in life. And finally, following God's will is a formula for success and happiness that is timeless. Therefore, more to be desired is God's will for me than gold, "yea, than much fine gold."

The choice is mine—to rise to a level of living that is higher than anything humanly designed, or to survive in mediocrity. When I think about it, it is really no choice at all.

Kate Marley is a pseudonym for a young professional.

My Church is a column written by young adults for young adults. If you wish to contribute to this column, send your submissions for My Church to Adventist Review, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

Three Baltimore Worthies Stand Firm for Sabbath

These courageous members put their jobs on the line.

Three recent converts demonstrated the kind of determination that characterized the three Hebrew worthies who stood for their faith with the threat of the fiery furnace before them. In this case they took their stand for the Sabbath though threatened with loss of income and job.

Gary Elias made his first contact with Adventists during an evangelistic meeting held at Baltimore First church by Ohio evangelist Pieter Barkhuizen. Upon giving notice to his employer, a multinational corporation, that he could no longer work on Sabbath, he was immediately given a memorandum threatening censure if he pursued this course.

Gordon Engen of the General Conference Religious Liberty Department assisted Gary in saying just the right thing to his supervisors. A total of four warning memorandums threatened him with the loss of his job. At one time it appeared so obvious that he was about to be fired that he began seeking another job. Any day could have been his last. Gary's attitude mirrored that of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: "You may take away my livelihood, but know this: I will not dishonor God by

breaking His holy Sabbath day."

Edward Kirkconnell works as a mechanic in the automobile service department of the country's largest department store chain. Ed and his

but I will work evenings, except Friday, and will work on Sunday any time you need me."

Carol Jones made her first contact with the Baltimore First church dur-

ing a campaign held by James Stevens of New Jersey. She held a supervisor's position at the post office. Her director made it very clear from the beginning that it would be impossible for her to keep her job if she was unwilling to work on Saturday. I turned to the Sabbath rights file sent to me by the Religious Liberty Department to help me prepare a letter to her supervisor. She started looking for another job.

A prayer session at Baltimore First church kept Carol's name before the throne of grace every hour for 24 hours.

The Lord's cause triumphed, and all three have remained on the job. Gary Elias received a new company car, a promotion, and a rating next to the highest possible in the corporation. Edward Kirkconnell is respected for his commitment. His company no longer puts him on the schedule for Sabbath duty. Carol Jones had to take a difficult shift (she checks in at 4:00 a.m.), but is happy in her new faith.

In this age of Laodicean lethargy and compromise, God still works for those who commit their lives totally to Him.



From left to right, Edward Kirkconnell, Carol Jones, and Gary Elias stood firm for their faith when threatened with loss of their jobs.

wife attended the pastor's evangelistic campaign at the Baltimore First church and decided to go all the way with Christ. When the company threatened termination of his job, Ed succumbed and continued working on Sabbath mornings. About a year had gone by when, during an appeal, he determined that he must stand up for what he believed.

Determined Words

I spent a few moments with Ed and his supervisor. Ed's words were filled with determination: "I have been studying with the Adventists, and have decided to be baptized this next Sabbath and join the church. I can no longer work on the Sabbath,

By Les Fowler, pastor, Baltimore First church.

Conference Provides Classes for Aliens

Southern California helps 700 become U.S. citizens.

When 1 million illegal aliens in Southern California applied for temporary residency under the United States' first amnesty program, Community Services director Dan Robles made sure the Southern California Conference was there to help.

Under phase one of amnesty in 1986, Robles and several conference churches helped hundreds gain temporary residency by aiding them with Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) documents.

Now the California Community Foundation (CCF) has awarded the conference \$10,000 to support phase two, in which temporary residents will take classes to gain permanent U.S. residency. With 15 teaching sites and more than 700 students, the conference program was one of more than a dozen to receive aid from the foundation. As a nonprofit organization that funds worthy community programs, CCF presented checks to each program organizer during a meeting on December 3.

Costly Program

Robles admits that the money was needed. "The program is very costly," he says.

INS requires that temporary residents attend 60 hours of classes in English, U.S. history, and U.S. government in order to complete phase two and become eligible for permanent residency. To meet those requirements, the Southern California Conference offers a 20-week session, with a three-hour class one night a week.

With the expense of teachers, materials, and sites, the program will

cost about \$40,000. Since community service and conference budgets covered only about \$33,000, the program's cost could not have been met without CCF's aid.

Classes, which began November 8, filled quickly. "Response was so great that within a week we had to

turn people away," reports Robles. "The students are enthusiastic, grateful, and eager to learn. And teachers find the experience rewarding. We're planning a grand graduation service."

Various conference workers have donated time to help with registration procedures, case management, and in-service training for teachers. Dr. Mario Negrete, conference associate superintendent of education, showed teachers how to use INS instructional materials.

CCF urged Robles to write a proposal for funding. With help from

Radio Reaches Troubled Seeker in Burma

Chin Chu, a Burmese Buddhist, found no satisfaction or hope in his religion. As he searched for a true faith, he found that Christianity had the answer for him, and so joined a Methodist church in his hometown.

A police officer, he later transferred to the town of Pyapon. There he got into a contention with his senior officer and was charged with insubordination—unjustly, he felt.

As a result, he was transferred to another town, Myaungmya. This new station was better in many ways, but Mr. Chu felt dissatisfied because of the way he had been treated and wondered how to get even.

One day as he walked along carrying his portable radio, suddenly a beautiful song that he had never heard before rang out loud and clear (in his Burmese language) without his having turned the dial: "Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring, Jesus is coming again! . . . Coming again, coming again, Jesus is coming again!"

Impressed, he marveled at such a beautiful song. It made him forget his anger over the officer who had wronged him. He took note of the address announced on the

radiobroadcast coming from Adventist World Radio/Guam—Box 17, Poona, India—and sent for the free Voice of Prophecy Bible correspondence course offered. Daily Voice of Prophecy radiobroadcasts are prepared by the Burma Union Mission in the capital city of Rangoon and sent to AWR/Guam for broadcast.

A music lover, Mr. Chu could not forget the beautiful song that kept ringing in his ears, "Coming again, coming again, Jesus is coming again!" He wondered what kind of people sponsored such an inspiring program and wanted to become acquainted with them.

Mr. Chu studied all the lessons from his police station headquarters until he had finished the course. He found in the lessons much new light about the true Sabbath, the temperate life, and Bible prophecies. Finally he joined the Adventist Church. He says, "I don't have the least feeling against my former church; I am simply following the greater light that has come to me."

By V. Rual Chhina, associate church ministries director, Burma Union.

By Larry K. Davidson, communication intern, Southern California Conference.

Monte Sahlin, North American Division adult ministries coordinator, and Derris Krause of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Robles wrote the proposal that garnered the aid.

The \$10,000 award will go toward case management (guiding clients through the legalization process) and program supervision. Teachers' salaries and other operational expenses must come out of the Community Services budget.

As far as Robles knows, the Southern California Conference is the only conference participating in the national amnesty program, primarily because Southern California has the highest number of aliens. Before holding classes, the conference had to receive INS approval and select qualified teachers. Robles and Negrete attended an INS seminar in Santa Barbara, then instructed teachers in proper procedures. INS district director Ernest E. Gustafson visited the conference office on two occasions and complimented pastors and staff on the work being done.

Although the conference is helping with amnesty primarily as a community service, it does present opportunities for lifestyle witnessing. "Nearly 80 percent of the hundreds we serve are non-Adventists," Robles explains. "By getting involved, we show we are a caring church. The greatest witness will come as these people see the character of Jesus in their teachers. These individuals will attend our schools and churches three hours a week for 20 weeks. We don't preach or give Bible studies, but they know we are Seventh-day Adventists."

Temporary Residency

Because of learning differences, classes have been divided into beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. A program was developed for those who are illiterate not only in English, but in their own language as well.

Students who attend 60 classroom hours will receive Certificates

of Satisfactory Pursuit from INS, regardless of their level of learning. That certificate will allow temporary residents to obtain permanent residency. In five years, they will then be eligible for U.S. citizenship.

The amnesty program was started by INS in 1986 as a means of en-

abling an accurate census count as well as reducing the number of illegal workers, who generally labor under poor conditions. It is intended as a one-time-only program, and will cease in about five years when those who complete phase two become citizens.

Portuguese Group in California Triples Membership

The Southeastern California Conference Portuguese-speaking group, having more than tripled its membership in the past four years, has received a conference go-ahead to organize into a company. The group meets in the Norco church, near Riverside.

"This group is our fastest-growing congregation in the entire conference," says Harold Camacho, conference secretary.

Pastor Edilson Santos began working with 26 members in 1984. They set a goal to reach 50 members and \$25,000 in tithe.

"By the middle of 1987 we had reached this goal," says Santos. "By the end of the year, our total tithe came to almost \$28,000 and our membership to 56, which entitled us to some conference support, although this had to be temporarily delayed because of budget cuts.

"We didn't become discouraged, however," continues Santos. "We just decided to increase our goals. The next year [1988] we reached 96 members and \$57,000 in tithe, plus \$35,300 for our group expenses [minister's salary and evangelism]. Our savings for a new church reached \$43,000."

Robert Tomlin, conference nurture director, who has worked with this group since its beginning, commends them. "These Portuguese members have been dedicated to sharing Adventism with their Portuguese neighbors and friends. Even through some hard times they kept believing their group would grow," he says.

During those first few years they concentrated on building member-

ship. They wanted Adventists to realize the need for a church to evangelize and nurture the Portuguese-speaking people (many from Brazil) in the area. Sabbath schools had been held in various locations before, not with the goal of becoming a church, but simply maintaining contact with those sharing the same language.

At their first baptism, nine Portuguese-speaking persons were baptized. This encouraged the members toward further goals in baptisms, tithes, and offerings.

"We're planning to organize as a company, now that the conference has approved this step, and eventually become a church with our own sanctuary," says Santos. "The Norco members have made *their church our church*. In many ways they support and contribute to our group.

"Although the Portuguese members in this area do not have a high per capita income, some members return almost 30 percent in tithes and offerings. That explains the group's growth," says their pastor. "We have some people who have spent their lives in mission service. Now retired, they see the upbuilding of this church as their mission field and give it much of their time.

"We tell of these blessings," explains the pastor, "to encourage other Portuguese-speaking people in this area to make this work even stronger."

By Edna Maye Gallington, communication office, Southeastern California Conference.

Sanitarium Develops From Royal Residence Into Modern Health Resort

Skodsborg facilities in Denmark pass ninetieth birthday.

A recent Denmark weekly newspaper reported that in Japan companies provide a regular health checkup for their top managers and department leaders. The article stated that "the Skodsborg Sanitarium in Denmark, north of Copenhagen, has taken up the idea. . . . It is the only health resort in Denmark specializing in such an advanced health checkup."

Once considered a place for health fanatics, the sanitarium now attracts attention for promoting a lifestyle that contributes to international goals. Skodsborg has become a name that adds luster to the image of the SDA Church in Scandinavia.

Originally the buildings were constructed by a lord mayor of Copenhagen who wanted a summer playground for his well-to-do citizens. Several owners followed the lord mayor, until in 1852 the place was bought by the Danish king Frederick VII as a retreat where he and his wife might find peace and quietness away from the city. When the royal couple resided in Skodsborg, they attracted crowds. The royal lifeguard band played during state dinners, and afterward the nobility could be seen strolling in the park.

Buildings Still Occupied

The sanitarium still includes the buildings occupied by the royal parties. Beyond its beautiful church, on top of the hill, a statue of King

By Walder Hartmann, Bible teacher, Danish Junior College.

Frederick VII overlooks the compound. The statue was renovated this summer with private funds as a token of appreciation for what is being done at this modern health resort.

Dr. Carl Ottosen, who founded Skodsborg Sanitarium in 1898, would be surprised if he visited the place today. Treatments and activities have expanded, since the days when diet and hydrotherapy comprised the offerings, to become what journalists now describe as "something very unique."

New Lifestyle Center

The uniqueness of this health institution is seen in the latest addition—Vigor Centeret, a lifestyle center. The center cost nearly \$2 million (Kr13 million) to build and has a capacity of 1,000 visitors per year. Right from its start in 1987, the center has been overbooked.

The fitness room contains a testing station with the most advanced equipment, as well as 70 different pieces of exercise equipment, and a gymnasium and a swimming area with four pools. Before the clients begin their training, they are tested by a team of therapists who analyze the condition of muscles and joints as well as measuring for general fitness. After this, clients begin 25-minute training sessions.

Adding to the value of Skodsborg Sanitarium is its new heart rehabilitation program. The sanitarium can accommodate 140 patients, who usually transfer from area hospitals for further treatment; 100 private guests, who use the sanitarium as a

health resort; and 100 students in its school of physiotherapy.

Patients seem impressed with the service they receive at Skodsborg. Recently an inheritance of more than \$43,000 (Kr750,000) was received from an American woman who had been a patient at the sanitarium. Many patients visit the church for Sabbath services, and the chaplains carry on a busy schedule of visitation.

New ideas and programs for treatment and prevention of sickness are in the planning stage. Over the next 10 years these will be carried out, so when Skodsborg Sanitarium celebrates its one hundredth anniversary in 1998, a modern health resort will be helping its patients and guests to realize that a vibrant lifestyle is part of the heritage of a people who plan to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

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West Africa

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Owusu Ansah Abraham, SDA Church, P.O. Box 22, Kintampo-Jema, B/A, Ghana

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CHILDREN'S CORNER

RAINBOW

By Rachel Whitaker,
written at age 11

Fill in the rainbow
with your crayons
or colored pencils.

Take the red of a cardinal,
And the orange of the sun,
And the yellow of the moon
As it shines when day is done;

Take the green of a tree,
And the blue of the sky,
The purple of a violet,
Hidden and shy;

And you've got a rainbow
That God gave me!

PARKING LOT LESSON

Sometimes God picks strange places to teach lessons. My routine excursion to the local grocery store one Sunday afternoon seemed innocent enough. How was I to know God had erected an invisible classroom in the Waremart parking lot?

You bag your own purchases at Waremart. Since the store hires no boxboys, no one chases down abandoned shopping carts on the parking lot. It's more than annoying to come to the last available parking space on the lot only to discover it's occupied by two or three grocery carts.

Integrity

Large signs posted everywhere beg customers to return the carts to the store. And if there's one thing on which I pride myself, it's returning my cart. I have integrity!

After transferring our groceries into the car and starting to walk the cart back, I spotted a group of teens gathered around a dirty pickup truck. They were a disreputable-looking bunch: loud, joking, greasy, and obviously irresponsible. Instantly, I sized up these delinquents. They were the type who leave their shopping carts behind without thinking twice of shoppers looking for a parking place.

Just as I passed the unsavory quintet, one of them flippantly shoved his cart into a pile of carts nearby and laughed crudely. I almost stopped and offered to take their cart in with mine. *That would show them*, I thought to myself. *Maybe they'd be embarrassed enough to learn a lesson in responsibility.* But, intent on fulfilling my mission, I pushed past them, not

knowing that the invisible class was in session—and that I was the one about to learn the lesson.

Triumphantly I deposited the cart where it belonged. *That's one small cart for Guernsey, and a giant example of Christian integrity for mankind—or at least for Waremart shoppers*, I thought to myself.

I strutted back to the car, feeling deserving of the big pat on the back I knew God was giving me for having done my Christian duty.

As we backed out of our parking space, I was about to bring my husband up-to-date on teenage irre-

They looked loud, greasy, and irresponsible.

sponsibility when I noticed the teenagers pushing their cart toward the store. And not just theirs—but a *whole wagon train of carts!*

The pat on the back I had imagined suddenly felt like a cold slap in the face. The critical words I was about to speak caught like sunflower seed shells in my throat. Quick as a flash it seemed God was scribbling on the chalkboard of my mind, "Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you, because God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others" (Matt. 7:1, 2, TEV).

Class was over and I had failed with flying colors. I had judged those boys by appearances—the way they looked, the way they talked—and had deemed myself better than they. I saw myself as a responsible Christian and them as irresponsible rowdies.

Eye-opener

Suddenly I felt like Adam and Eve must have felt when "their eyes were opened." I felt exposed, with my self-righteous smugness hanging out all over the place. I realized that I was, in fact, no better than they. I had missed the beam in my own eye while trying to remove the speck in theirs.

As we drove off I pondered what had happened. I realized that even if the boys hadn't returned the carts, I was guilty of a greater sin. Maybe it was more neatly dressed and polished, but sin is still sin no matter what clothes it wears.

Through teenage boys God taught me a lesson. Like the poor tax collector in Jesus' parable, they went home justified. I went home with my reward—a foot squarely implanted in my mouth. □



Linda Guernsey is supervisor of electronic publishing at Pacific Press Publishing Association in Nampa, Idaho, and Randy Maxwell is an assistant book editor at Pacific Press.

BY LINDA GUERNSEY AND RANDY MAXWELL