

ADVENTIST REVIEW

Weekly News and Inspiration for Seventh-day Adventists

November 9, 1989

Annual Council Highlights New Division

Also votes on:

- ☐ Women's Ordination
- ☐ League Sports
- ☐ Global Strategy



Historic motion:
a Soviet Division of
the world church.

Missing

After reading "The 'Missing' Tell Us Why" (Sept. 7) through twice, "painful" indeed is the word. Almost without exception, the writers' eyes are on stumbling, bumbling, erring, sinful people. The letters make you want to wrap your arms around them, pull them aside, and tell them about the perfect Pattern for us to copy and become changed into the same image.

It is encouraging to realize the missing are not all missing the "good ole Review."

KENDALL M. ABBOTT
Luther, Oklahoma

"The 'Missing' Tell Us Why" should be read by every SDA church member. Each should ask himself, "Does any of this apply to me and my home church?"

My father was a pastor and an evangelist for more than 30 years, and we were members of churches all across the United States and eastern Canada. Every one of these letters applied to one or more of those churches that I have been a member of. It is time that we stop and think how our influence and our church affect the lives of those around us.

AUDREY MCCLINTIC
Eustis, Florida

Why don't these folks ask "What can I do for my church?" instead of "What can my church do for me?"

EVELYN FIELDER
Yucaipa, California

I am one of those who left the church, and I wish that instead I had acted positively about some things that bothered me.

We all make mistakes. If we who see others' mistakes plainly would in a kind way help them to see what they are doing wrong and pray with and for them and try to help them, maybe the mistakes could be

turned around and made right before they become major.

RUBY BELLOWES
Silver Spring, Maryland

This is simply to thank you for the especially good September 7 issue. My special favorites were your editorial on women's roles, your remarkably candid letters from the "missing," and Ms. Henson's piece on surviving a "holy war." Their concepts fit together.

In spite of the uniquely human quality of reason given us by God, too often the leadership of our church assumes that we, the members, are unable to profit and grow by exercising our reasoning abilities. Too often in the past the reality of grappling with the complex, many-sided problems of a Christian life within an Adventist context was smoothed over, and prepackaged answers were handed out with the expectation that all was taken care of.

If we are to remain a vital, healthy body of believers, exercised, fit, and ready for the conflicts of life—to say nothing of the "last days"—we need to deal openly, realistically, and charitably with problems and with each other. Thank you for giving us that option.

NANCY MARTER
Silver Spring, Maryland

You should be commended for your open editorial policy. Those honest letter writers who voice their problems to the denomination need an avenue through which they feel they can be heard and helped. The benefit that we as church members receive from these letters can only be balanced by our personal participation in working to rectify the problems that were so thoughtfully expressed in "The 'Missing' Tell Us Why."

Last night as Sabbath began, our family was sitting around the kitchen table. I was so impressed with the first letter that I proceeded

to read all of them aloud to my family. The heartfelt appeals of each letter came through loud and clear to each of us. There was a yearning for Christian love, fellowship, understanding, and a freedom to discuss openly Christian problems in our church.

BEN E. YOUNGBERG
San Jose, California

Often we cannot see Christ because we are looking at others or self. I have searched the Scriptures for a word from God teaching us: "If your fellowman treats you right, then reach out in love." I couldn't find it! Do we attend church to be served or to serve?

I thank our heavenly Father that His Son did not decide to go back home or elsewhere, where He was treated with more respect before His ultimate act of love: Calvary. Let us praise God and thank Jesus Christ and look to Him instead of others. He advises us to trust no man but Him. That includes ourselves.

JEANE E. LUNDE
Citrus Heights, California

I appreciate your taking the risk of running the letters from the "missing." They were all so poignant and touching. They were full of an honesty that shows us so much about a part of our church we would rather not see.

DOUGLAS COOPER
Angwin, California

"The 'Missing' Tell Us Why" is bringing unusually heavy mail. We will print a further selection of responses next week.

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

November 9, 1989

General paper of the
Seventh-day Adventist Church

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Cover by Gordon Engen

Vol. 166, No. 45



Today's "instant" families, p. 14



Health message in Korea, p. 19



Reaching the far north, p. 20

EDITORIALS

4 Devotional Secrets

Spiritual strength, hope, and healing are found where they have always been: in quiet communion with God.

by William G. Johnsson

5 The Bully

In the battle of the Lamb and the dragon, we are not to join with the one who appears to be winning, but with the One who has already won.

by Gary Patterson

THEOLOGY

10 How History Ends

Understanding the millennium helps us grasp the way good will finally triumph over evil.

by Jerry Gladson

LIFESTYLE

14 Welcome to the Stepfamily

With stepfamilies soon to outnumber

traditional families, we need to learn how to help them succeed.

by Barbara L. Darling

NEWS

6 Newsbreak

A report from Annual Council, held October 3-10 at the General Conference.

19 Worldview

Health message shakes up Korea. Project *Steps* reaches Alaskan villages. R&H chorus holds 19-year reunion. Students sample missions.

DEPARTMENTS

2 Letters

13 Faith Alive!

17 Adventist Scrapbook

22 Bulletin Board

23 Children's Corner

24 Reflections

COMING NEXT WEEK



◀ "Liberating Solitude," by Charles Scriven. When you stop to listen to God's voice, you find strength to be serene and smile with joy.

■ "How History Ends," Part 2, by Jerry Gladson. The millennium can be compared to the changing of the guard, as the old evil order gives way to the new.

■ "Flavors of Manna," by Sylvia Church. "God is so good," Rita exclaimed. "I've been praying all morning that He would send me just one egg."

■ "Teen Pregnancy," by José Chavanz. The Pacific Union is showing what the church can and should do about this sensitive issue.



DEVOTIONAL SECRETS

In the mountains of India there is a sunlit glade known only to God and me. It speaks to me still of unhurried communion with the Creator, of healing and wholeness.

Noelene and I went straight from Avondale College to India. After a few months in language school, we joined the staff of Vincent Hill School, nearly 7,000 feet up in the Himalayas. There we were "parents" for boys aged 8 to 18. I taught a full load of classes, took morning and evening worships, supervised the chicken industry and the woodcutting detail, guided the MV Society, planned ball games and social programs, and went to town (we walked) only on boys' day. We had no assistant dean; we served for more than a year before we had a weekend free from the dormitory.

How did we survive? Because of that sunlit glade. I would go there regularly—between classes, whenever I could find a spare slot. I would be alone: only trees, sunlight, mountains, and God. And I would come back refreshed to carry on.

I last saw that glade many years ago—more years than I can grasp. They tell me the glade is gone now, victim to timber-getters.

But I have found a new sunlit glade. In fact, since leaving the mountains 26 years ago, I have found it in Pune, India, at Spicer Memorial College; in Berrien Springs, Michigan; and for the past nine years in Silver Spring, Maryland.

My living room in the early morning makes the Himalayan glade seem like a time warp. But the two are joined, are one. The one Creator,

my Lord, comes to me now as He came to me then.

Any day that I don't go to that glade is never the same for me. I need that time of quiet communion, of unhurried prayer, of meditation on the Word, of freedom from telephones and TV.

I believe Ellen White was absolutely right: "Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, 'Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee'" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70). We are to give our all: all our hopes, dreams, fears, tasks; and we are to receive His all: all His grace, love, strength, wisdom.

Starving Adventists

The Lord spreads a banquet for His people every morning, but Adventists are starving. We are weak and sickly, uncertain about God, burdened with cares, worried about the future, flabby in faith, lukewarm about the church, sluggish in mission.

God's path of healing is the same as it has ever been: in quiet communion with Him, in feeding on His Word. Listen! The Saviour of the world, when He came to earth, found it necessary to go aside for frequent talks with the Father. Do we think we are stronger than He is? Do we think we can make it on our own?

We don't need any spiritual gimmicks, any new programs to help us to pray or to study the Bible.

Prayer? We simply open our heart to God as we would to our best friend. We tell Him everything. And

then we stop and listen to what He has to say to us.

The Bible? Simply read it. Read it all. Read it right through. Then start reading it again. Many excellent modern translations are available—I like the New International Version, but one can find plenty of others in the Adventist Book Center or another Christian bookstore.

For many years I taught religion classes, the New Testament in particular. Perhaps that background led me to the pattern of personal Bible study that I fell into way back. Starting January 1, I begin reading the New Testament in the original Greek. By early April I have finished it, then I switch to the Old Testament—but in English (my Hebrew has rusted out!). By late September I complete Malachi and go back to cover the New Testament once more in the original before the old year closes.

Enriching Life

That is my "devotional secret." It works for me, enriching my life day by day and year by year. But we each must find our own secret. For example, my wife has a completely different pattern for continually reading through the entire Bible.

We desperately need revival and reformation. Individually. Corporately. This is our greatest need.

But there will be no revival or reformation without a return to personal prayer and Bible study. However, when we *do* get back to the individual devotional life, God will renew us. He will come to us like the dew on the new-mown grass; He will come like the dawn; He will come in the marvel of the gift of Himself.

The sunlit glade still waits.

Do you have a devotional secret to share with readers, something that enriches your devotional life? Send it to: Devotional Secrets, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600.

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

GUEST EDITORIAL



THE BULLY

What is more disgusting than a bully? Everyone encounters one sometime in life. As a child I can well remember shunning certain streets or neighborhoods to avoid just such an obnoxious fellow. If things don't go his way, the bully rains verbal and physical abuse on any defenseless individuals who happen by.

A bully's domineering injustice has always been repugnant to me. One day as I was driving through town, I saw a large, chunky boy about 12 years of age viciously picking on three little boys. He had pinned one of them to the ground and was striking him repeatedly while the other two watched in terror, too intimidated to give assistance.

I jammed on my brakes, backed up, and ran to the scene. The bully looked up in shock, then quickly abandoned the victim in his own flight and fright. It was rewarding to be the hero of the appreciative little boys, and we enjoyed the moment together as the bully vanished around the corner at the end of the block.

Bullies don't pick on anyone their own size. That's part of the definition of bullies. They are unable and unwilling to operate fairly in the society of their peers. Bullies dominate and manipulate the helpless.

Dragon Versus Lamb

The book of Revelation portrays a curious matchup between a Lamb and a dragon. What chance does a lamb have in a contest such as that? One swipe of its claws, one jab of its horns, one breath of its fire, and one gnash of its teeth would render the

lamb skinned, chopped, cooked, and eaten. What chance does a lamb have in a contest with a dragon?

Odd as the Lamb-dragon contest seems, consider the dragon picking on a pregnant woman. How is that for an unfair fight? And if this were not enough, the woman is already in labor while the dragon waits to devour her Infant the moment He is born. Talk about picking on the helpless!

The Child, however, is protected by God, and the woman flees to the desert. When the dragon pursues her there, she is given wings to fly away. So the dragon sends a flood after her. But the flood is thwarted

Victory will be ours, just as it was for the Lamb.

by the earth itself, which swallows it up. Enraged, the dragon then turns on the youngest children of the woman, the last remaining, the "remnant of her seed."

Force comes against peace, wrath against innocence. But in the end the Lamb and His followers escape the dragon. It seems an unlikely scenario—this victory of the Lamb—but it is the message not only of Revelation but of all Scripture that precedes it.

One curious point in this narrative is that the characters—the actors in the scenes—are all real beings except for the dragon. There is a woman, a lamb, a son, the chil-

dren—all real beings that exist in the world.

But there is no such thing as a dragon. It is a fake, a mythical beast. This is not to say that the devil, who is symbolized by the dragon, is not real. But the bully front that he portrays is a fake, the mask of a defeated foe. The Lamb has already won the battle, not by force, but by love.

Bullies are a defeated lot. No doubt, this is much of the reason for their boorish ways. The devil is wroth because he knows that his time is short. And fronting as a dragon—a mythical beast—he takes out his anger on God's children.

Although dragons are fakes, they may indeed breathe fire, may indeed lash with tail and horns, may indeed bite with fearsome teeth. Many are the wounds we suffer from this bully, this front for the devil. But victory will be ours, even in pain and injury, just as it was for the Lamb.

And the Winner Is . . .

As a boy I occasionally had the experience of coming late to a friendly game of baseball, volleyball, or some other team event engaged in by my playmates. After watching how things were going for a while, my natural inclination was to join the winning team. We all want to be winners.

But in the battle of the Lamb and the dragon, we are not to join with the one who appears more powerful. After all, what is more disgusting than a bully in this great controversy? We don't join with the team that appears to be winning. Instead, we join the Lamb, who has *already* won. The outcome of this battle is not in question.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory over dragons. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Gary Patterson
Assistant to the President
North American Division

Role of Women, Sports Top Annual Council Discussion

In what has been called one of the most emotional Annual Council sessions in recent years, church leaders struggled with several sensitive issues, including women's ordination and interschool sports; approved a Global Strategy document; and recommended forming a Soviet Division of the General Conference.

More than 350 invitees and guests from around the world gathered October 3-10 for the first Annual Council session at the new General Conference headquarters complex in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Women's Ordination

After an entire day of intense dialogue the General Conference Executive Committee voted 187-97 to accept two

long lines to address the assembled body. Some committee members saw the commission's recommendations as an attempt to please those who were both for and against the ordination of women.

"This document doesn't represent anybody's thought," said Mario Veloso, South American Division secretary. "Those for ordination of women are not for the document because it doesn't call for ordination. Those against ordination of women are turned off because it allows women to perform essentially the same functions as ordained ministers. This is not a clear decision but a compromise, and creates more discussion on the matter."

In reflecting the same sentiment, Henry Wright, Columbia Union Conference secretary, commented, "The document is consistent with the inconsistency of the church's position on women's ordination over the past 15 years."

Other committee members who advocated women's ordination spoke in favor of the document. "We have here a motion on the floor that lets women perform all functions of a minister but denies ordination," said Herman Bauman, Arizona Conference president. "But I believe half a loaf is better than no loaf."

To explain the rationale for the document, General Conference president Neal C. Wilson said, "Based upon extensive discussions, committees, commissions, and surveys, there exists the probability that approving the ordination of women would result in disunity, dissension, and perhaps schism."

"We tried to clearly affirm a belief that the whole church should stay together on the issue.

That ordination should be a global endorsement.

"We were looking at the issue of unity," Wilson said. "We carefully considered what is probably best, and least disruptive, for the world church at this time. We recognize the escatological mission, the witness and image of our spiritual family, and the need for oneness and unity of the church. We have stated that we wanted women in ministry even though we have said it was not wise to ordain women."

"Also, we didn't feel comfortable with continuing to discriminate between unordained men and women in ministry," he said.

Five days later the Annual Council received a statement of concern developed by women who served on the commission. These concerns were affirmed by responses to a worldwide survey of 1,872 women administrators, professional leaders, pastors, department heads, chaplains, and Bible instructors. The 875 respondents voiced concerns about equality of compensation for female employees within the church, development of employment opportunities, and respect and recognition on the job. They felt that because women have not been ordained, they have been consistently locked out of most leadership positions within the church.



Calvin Rock (center above), a General Conference vice president, chairs a lively session, and Elizabeth Sterndale (right) speaks from the floor.



major recommendations of the Commission on the Role of Women. The first says women should not be ordained to the gospel ministry—a recommendation that will go to the General Conference session in 1990 for consideration.

The second voted recommendation calls for female pastoral associates to perform essentially the same ministerial functions as an ordained minister in churches to which they are assigned if they have completed approved training, are serving in a full-time pastoral-evangelistic-ministerial role, and have been elected and ordained as a local church elder, and if such a plan is approved by the controlling division.

This second provision became final at the 1989 Annual Council by a vote of 190-46 and takes effect immediately. This allows female ministers, like their male counterparts in ministry, to baptize and to perform marriages in states that permit unordained ministers to perform marriages. Reserved strictly for ordained ministers is the right to organize churches and officiate at ordination services.

Before the vote was taken, committee members stood in

By Carlos Medley, Adventist Review news editor.

The statement calls for new policies and procedures that encourage women in church employment and give them greater respect and recognition, including:

- Women's Ministries coordinators on all church levels to coordinate ministries for women—both laymembers and denominational employees.

- Clearly defined career paths for women.

- Special attention to the needs of pastors' spouses, including fair compensation and encouraging team ministry.

- Having a significant number of qualified women on committees at every level of church and institutional organization.

- Implementing inclusive written and verbal language throughout the church in policies, publications, preaching, and teaching.

- A review of job descriptions for all positions not subject to ordination to ensure the way is open for everyone regardless of gender.



The Seabrook Quartet (right) sings at opening night ceremonies, and Phil Follett, Atlantic Union president (left), speaks out on interschool sports.



PHOTOS BY KEITH POTTS

Kit Watts, assistant editor of the *Adventist Review* and a commission member, said, "We need someone to take women's issues to heart, to give them a voice in the church. The eyes of the Adventist women are upon this council. We hope this document will be the basis for more discussion."

Interscholastic Athletics

The issue of interscholastic league sports kicked off another round of discussion. A new policy, established as guidelines last year at the Nairobi Annual Council, sets forth the Adventist Church's stance on interschool league play within its educational system. The action does not allow interschool league play, but allows occasional friendship games at joint social gatherings. And the new policy is interpreted as allowing churches to continue their interchurch leagues.

The measure, approved with a 157-49 vote (more than a three-to-one margin), ignited considerable opposition from North American Division (NAD) college presidents and NAD union conference presidents, who chair the college boards. Many of them spoke against the action because it excluded churches from the restrictions.

Many Adventist colleges have affiliations with athletic or-



Dr. Van Knauss plays the digital organ

ganizations, such as the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics and the National Christian College Athletic Association.

"Students want to see consistency in our church leaders," said Larry Geraty, Atlantic Union College president. "To restrict the competition by our campuses and yet allow competitive leagues in our churches is inconsistent."

Geraty was referring to traditional basketball leagues that have operated for more than 20 years in many Black conferences in North America.

"I am troubled by the questions I'll be asked when I get back to campus," said John Wagner, Union College president. "What biblical principle is working here when we allow sports in a church league as opposed to [an Adventist college] playing a Baptist, Methodist, or other Christian [colleges]."

General Conference vice president Calvin B. Rock said, "When the guidelines were first discussed in Nairobi it was felt by some leaders that an accommodation should be made for inner-city churches that face the challenge of attracting and holding inner-city youth."

"We're not talking about sports in general," says Ted Wilson, Africa-Indian Ocean Division secretary. "We're talking about the glorified atmosphere of league sports. This is not consistent with particular situations, especially in the inner city. It's an accommodation. Nairobi is not the first time we've talked about this."

Though most of the debate centered on North American leaders, overseas

members also voiced concern.

"There's a feeling that this is a North American item," said Walter R. L. Scragg, South Pacific Division president. "But this is the kind of protection we need to deal with the concern of interschool sports."

General Conference education director George Akers summed up the arguments for the document by stating, "League sports introduces an uncontrollable element that deflects the emphasis from a work/witness principle to a play/amusement principle."

"Everything we embrace as legitimate can be achieved in an intramural program," he said. "But league sports generate a spirit of rivalry and animosity. They demand an inordinate amount of resources."

The dialogue continued for several hours, and the measure was voted by an overwhelming majority. However, that vote merely set the stage for a second debate at North American Division year-end meetings October 11, 12, which also voted overwhelmingly to accept the new restrictions on interschool sports.

Constitution and Bylaws Changes

In another major action, the committee recommended

sweeping changes of the General Conference constitution and bylaws, which will go to the General Conference session for approval. Many of the changes will give the North American Division (NAD) less prominence as a division and make it more like other world divisions.

For example, NAD departmental directors will no longer be a part of the General Conference (GC) staff. Associate departmental directors will no longer be members of the General Conference Committee, as is already the case with other divisions.

The changes also increase the ratio of members to delegates for the General Conference session. Currently a portion of the regular delegates is allotted each union mission or conference at the rate of one for every 5,000 members. The membership total is usually changed every General Conference session to keep that portion of delegates at 1,100.

Under the new proposal, which would take effect in 1995, the delegates in this category would be capped at 1,000 and allotted on a percentage basis of union membership to total church membership.

In addition to the regular delegates apportioned by world membership, each division, union, local field, union of churches, and attached field is allotted one regular delegate. There are 968 at-large delegates who will be seated at the session, making a total delegation of 2,639.

Other Actions

In other business, the committee:

■ Received an update on the five-year Harvest 90 campaign. As of June 30, the Adventist Church had 1,861,506 accessions since the Harvest 90 campaign began on July 1, 1985. This represents 93 percent of the Harvest 90 goal, which concludes at the General Conference session in 1990. The second quarter of 1989 was the best in the history of the church, with baptisms totaling 171,811, or 1,888 per day. The record baptisms bring the total church membership to 5,970,445 as of June 30.

Carlos Aeschlimann, associate General Conference ministerial secretary and Harvest 90 coordinator, believes the Harvest 90 goal of 2 million baptisms will be reached before December 31—six months before Harvest 90's conclusion.

■ Approved a global strategy document for the church. The document proposes the establishment of a Seventh-day Adventist presence in every population segment with 1 million or more people by the year 2000. The church has already reached 3,200. About 1,800 must be reached—that's 180 per year for 10 years.

■ Heard a progress report on a proposed Adventist World Radio (AWR) station. AWR leaders currently are trying to raise \$7.3 million to build a new shortwave station in northern Italy, reports Tulio Haylock, associate General Conference communication director and AWR board chairman. The station would reach 1 billion people in Europe, north Africa, the Middle East, and the western Soviet Union.

In its initial phase, the station would be powered with 250- and 100-kilowatt transmitters. The project will be benefited by a special General Conference session offering to be received on March 10, May 19, and during the 1990 General Conference session in Indianapolis. During the Annual Council session,



Lowell Witz

church leaders made personal pledges of more than \$34,000 for the project.

■ Approved a budget of \$159.8 million for the General Conference's operations and disbursements for 1990. This represents a 2.1 percent increase over the 1989 budget.

■ Appointed Lowell Witz, formerly associate director of Information Systems Services at the General Conference, director of that department. Witz replaces George Ramsey, who is now full-time director of Adventist Personnel Services at the General Conference.

■ Recommended that the *Church Manual* Committee use inclusive language in all gender references where appropriate.

Stage Set for Soviet Division

"It was undoubtedly the most touching moment of the Annual Council." That's how one observer described the historic occasion as Nikolai A. Zhukaluk, president of the Association of Seventh-day Adventists in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, presented a motion to recommend to the 1990 General Conference session the formal approval of the Soviet Division of the General Conference. The motion passed unanimously.

The action followed a motion by Mikhail Kulakov, president of the Association of Seventh-day Adventists in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, to record appreciation to the Soviet authorities for their cooperation—a motion that also passed.

To highlight the occasion, Valdis Zilgalvis, president of the Baltic and Byelorussia Union Conference, presented a painting of red and white roses to General Conference president Neal C. Wilson. Red and white are the colors of Latvia.

The unanimous vote to recommend creating a new division—to become the church's eleventh—represents an affirmation and acknowledgment of the miraculous openings that the Adventist Church has experienced within the past three years in the Soviet Union. The church has been allowed to establish a seminary, a farm, and three new unions.

Currently the church is negotiating with World Lab, a non-governmental foundation under the Soviet Academy of Sciences, on joint sponsorship of a publishing house, reported Harold F. Otis, special assistant to the GC president.

"This is a time of great emotion," said Zhukaluk. "It seems we have come to a time the church was longing for. For many years we've waited for this moment."

Zilgalvis presents a painting to President Neal C. Wilson



Outreach opportunities include:

- An invitation to print Bibles for United Bible Societies
- An invitation from the Soviet authorities to minister in the 800 prisons and labor camps throughout the country.
- A visit to Leningrad by the Loma Linda University heart team to perform surgeries.

"A Decade of Healing"

The opening night of Annual Council each year centers in the General Conference president's report. Customarily, this address summarizes the progress of the worldwide church and challenges delegates to meet new opportunities and perhaps dangers.

But the 1989 council broke with tradition. President Neal C. Wilson devoted only a short part of his report to world highlights—such as the recent baptism of 4,557 in Papua New Guinea, before a Sabbath camp meeting crowd of 50,000; Columbia Union's Friendship Camporee; the new college outside Sao Paulo, Brazil; and the growth of the church in the Soviet Union. Wilson spent most of his time in developing a spiritual theme as he called for "a decade of healing and reconciliation."

Basing his appeal on Isaiah 61:1-3 and Luke 4:16-21—Jesus' mission to bind up the brokenhearted—Wilson said, "There's too much brokenness in this church." He spoke of broken homes and broken families, broken hearts and broken health, broken promises and broken relationships.

Calling for Adventists to stop putting "labels" on others, Wilson said, "We're so unforgiving when it comes to some of these things. Somehow we just don't seem to know how to forgive; and we don't seem to know how to forget. We're not very good at giving people a second chance."

A well-known physician stated that half the patients in his mental hospital could go home immediately if they only knew they were forgiven. Grace and forgiveness bring healing. "What this church needs to go along with Harvest 90 and global strategy is a decade of healing and reconciliation," he said. Healing and reconciliation do not mean compromise of principle. If God's people would work together in this atmosphere, the Lord promises that there "would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189).

Turning to specifics, Wilson spoke of the recent reconciliation among Adventists in Hungary. After 14 years of separation the two groups have agreed to come together (see *Adventist Review*, Oct. 5, 1989). He also expressed pain at the idea of entities of the church trying to settle disputes through a legal process. "This type of thing is incompatible with the gospel, and unless we change and follow God's formula for reconciliation, it could very well ruin the church," Wilson said. "In dealing with people," Wilson observed, "too many times we are willing to hide behind a legal judgment to escape a moral responsibility."

Wilson referred to an "outstanding administrator" who, because of poor judgment in certain financial dealings, was re-

By William G. Johnsson, *Adventist Review* editor.

lieved of responsibility and found himself virtually cut off from the church. For all practical purposes he was a forgotten person, and suffered in loneliness and isolation from his former fellow leaders. Through all of this, however, Elder Des Cummings, Sr., has remained loyal and has served as an elder and Sabbath school teacher in his local church. In a move toward healing and forgiveness, Cummings has just been issued honorary ministerial credentials by his conference and union.

Taking up the rumors surrounding Elder Morris Venden, Wilson said, "I believe this is the time to bring closure." Any person must be considered innocent until shown to be guilty, and after two years of investigation the allegations remain unproved. Further, "one of the incriminating charges that has been widely circulated concerning a physical abnormality has been medically certified as untrue."

In summary Wilson stated, "In a situation like this, it is very difficult to make an unqualified statement of either guilt or innocence. However, since there seems to be reasonable doubt, I believe that he should be presumed innocent, as he has consistently maintained." The matter should now be left in the hands of the Southeastern California Conference, which employs Venden as a minister.

Elder Wilson's message was pastoral, bold, and moving. It set a high tone for the 1989 Annual Council.

Church Gains a Philanthropic Boost From PSI, Chan Shun

This year's Annual Council session had a special added attraction for many Adventist institutions and churches. Former Hong Kong garment manufacturer Chan Shun, who recently established the Chan Shun foundation, announced more than \$6 million in new grants.



Chan Shun

Shun, who has helped finance Adventist ministries around the world, was honored in the morning devotional service on October 5. That evening at the annual Philanthropic Services to Institutions (PSI) dinner Shun announced new grants to 15 Adventist institutions and churches.

During the program, North American Division president Charles E. Bradford and Milton Murray, PSI director, gave more than \$82,000 in challenge grants to 12 hospitals, academies, and colleges.

Also, Murray gave a \$3,000 check to each of the three Adventist college teachers chosen as recipients of the national Zapara Award for Excellence in Teaching for 1988-1989. The recipients were Larry Williams, associate behavioral science professor at Southern College; Dr. Ephraim Gwebu, associate chemistry professor; and Dr. Richard Rice, religion professor at Loma Linda University, La Sierra campus.

William Miller and the triumph of premillennialism

BY JERRY GLADSON

William Miller gazed thoughtfully at the passage open before him. He couldn't escape the words of Revelation 20. His rough and calloused hands, weathered after years of farming the rocky New England soil, gently fingered the Bible. He thought about the War of 1812, when he'd served as an infantry captain at the Battle of Plattsburg, on the shore of Lake Champlain. The outnumbered American forces had won over the British against overwhelming odds. He had all but given up belief in the providence of God. That victory went a long way toward restoring his faith.

Now his restless mind had brought him to the mysterious book of Revelation. Could his conclusion about Revelation 20 and the millennium be correct? He had no Harvard theological degree. How could he go up against the theological giants of the day? Trembling, he took a quill pen and scratched boldly on the paper before him: "The popular views of the spiritual reign of Christ, a temporal millennium before the end of the world, and the Jews' return are not sustained by the Word of God."¹

Against the Popular View

These words placed Miller squarely against the popular view of the millennium. According to many in the nineteenth century, the present age would simply merge with the biblical millennium. Chris-

tianity would spread until the entire world would be converted, including the Jews, bringing 1,000 years of peace and righteousness. At the end of the millennium, with the triumph of the gospel, Christ would return. This view is known as *post-millennialism*, because it places the return of Christ *after* the 1,000 years. It enjoyed such popularity that Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), founder of the Disciples of Christ, called it the "Protestant theory,"² because most Protestant churches held to it in one form or another.

What did Miller put in place of the 1,000 years of peace?

He insisted that Revelation 20 taught Christ would return *before* the 1,000 years. The millennium wasn't an age of tranquillity. On the contrary, it brought about the destruction of the present order. He held, in other words, to what we now call a *premillennialist* viewpoint. Christ's coming marks the beginning, not the end, of the millennium.

This obscure New England farmer challenged the millennial views of his day. Miller scarcely realized it, but he, along with others, helped some nineteenth-century theologians recover an idea about the millennium that had characterized the church during its first three centuries. The early church had been premillennialist, clinging to a vivid hope of the soon return of Jesus.

Why all the fuss about such an

obscure topic? Part of the answer lies in the intriguing, cryptic language of the Apocalypse. We enjoy probing mysteries, particularly when they pertain to the future. But more important, understanding the millennium helps us grasp the way good will finally triumph over evil.

Definitions

The term *millennium* (from the Latin *mille*, "thousand," and *annus*, "year,") doesn't occur in the Bible. But the idea certainly does. Revelation 20:1-10 mentions a 1,000-year period when Christ reigns with the martyrs and those who have come forth in the "first resurrection" (verses 4-6).^{*} This period starts with the first resurrection and the binding of Satan (verses 1-6) and culminates with a second resurrection, the loosing of Satan, and the final destruction of evil (verses 7-10).

When you go beyond this simple description, however, disagreement really begins. Some, known as *amillennialists*, think there will be no millennium at all. By taking the 1,000 years as symbolic, they believe there will be no reign of Christ on earth—or in heaven—between the final states of the righteous and the wicked. The Second Coming leads directly to the judgment and the fate of all humanity. If you include amillennialism, then those 10 verses in Revelation 20 have led to three different major views about the millennium, and to

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many lesser opinions besides.

Premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism separate further into complicated subcategories. Sadly, the timing and nature of the 1,000 years finds no agreement among Bible students. Let's briefly trace the origin of some of these views.

Origin of Postmillennialism and Amillennialism

As we have noted, Miller struggled against the postmillennial view. Its idea of the triumph of peace and justice over all the earth was extremely popular in the nineteenth century.

This view has much in common with amillennialism, because both hold that the period otherwise known as the millennium is really the "church" age, the time when the gospel will prevail all over the world. And the church age is now under way. The major difference between amillennialism and postmillennialism is that the former treats the 1,000 years as symbolic, while the latter regards them as literal. We can therefore probably trace both these views back to a common source: Augustine.

While witnessing the barbarian hordes overrunning the mighty Roman Empire, Augustine used the

teaching of the millennium to speak to the times. On August 24, 410, the Visigoth Alaric sacked Rome. The city, inviolate for nearly 800 years, stood raped and burning against the Italian sky. The whole world appeared broken, convulsed with social chaos brought in by myriads of the invading armies. Pagans blamed it all on the abandonment of the old Roman gods, a charge that implicated the Christians.

In answer to pagan charges, Augustine turned to Revelation 20. For 13 years (c. 413-427) he returned again and again to this passage while composing his classic work *The City of God*. His understanding of the millennium appeared to be new, although we now know he borrowed it from Tyconius, a fourth-century African Christian. But it was Augustine, not Tyconius, who turned the discussion of the millennium into channels from which it was not to escape for 13 centuries.

The 1,000 years, Augustine reasoned, began with the incarnation of Christ. The first resurrection therefore had to be understood spiritually as the conversion of sinners. The second resurrection, when the "dead in Christ will rise" (1 Thess. 4:16), comes at the end of the millennium. That meant the present "church" age was witnessing the gradual triumph of the church over the powers of darkness. "The church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven," he wrote. "Accordingly, even now



William Miller's studies led him to oppose the popular view of the millennium.

Sadly, the timing
and nature of
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His saints reign with Him.”³ Strictly speaking, this is an amillennialist position, but as you can see, it also provides a basis for postmillennialism.

Augustine’s interpretation, which finds in the chaos of history the stuff of divine triumph, has persisted in both these views. Pointing to the progress of Christianity since the Reformation, postmillennialist Loraine Boettner claims that the future millennium is a “golden age of spiritual prosperity during this present dispensation, that is, during the Church Age.”⁴ “This reign,” similarly asserts amillennialist Anthony Hoekema, “is not something to be looked for in the future; it is going on now, and will be until Christ returns.”⁵

Dispensational Premillennialism

While William Miller pondered the effect of his “new” millennial idea, still another understanding of the millennium was taking shape.

Widely held today, this interpretation started with John N. Darby (1800-1882), a former Anglican priest turned Plymouth Brethren. Darby taught that Christ would return in two stages. The first would be a secret coming to rescue the church before a great tribulation engulfed the earth; the second, a visible coming, this time in company with the saints, to set up the divine kingdom. Then followed the millennium. Working back from the millennium, Darby went a step further and divided the whole history of the world into distinct pe-

riods, called dispensations. God’s way of working with humanity differed in each of these periods. Hence Darby’s view is called dispensational premillennialism.

This theory might have died with Darby had he not left behind 40 books and about 1,500 assemblies. His books and followers carried his ideas throughout the English-speaking world, finding supporters in such well-known religious leaders as G. Campbell Morgan and Henry A. Ironside.

Eventually they attracted Cyrus I. Scofield (1843-1921), a Confederate Army veteran and pastor of a small Congregational church in Dallas, Texas. Scofield took dispensational premillennialism out of the closet and made it a household word. Defining dispensations even more carefully than Darby, Scofield found seven ages in world history.

The first, Innocence, prevailed in the Garden of Eden. The second, Conscience, stretched from the Fall to Noah; then came Human Government (Noah to Abraham); Promise (Abraham to Moses); Law (Moses to Christ); Grace (the church age); and the Kingdom (the millennium). He supported his theories in study noted in the margins of the *Scofield Reference Bible*. First published in 1909, within 50 years this Bible sold nearly 3 million copies! “The extent of this influence has been so vast,” observes Robert Clouse, “that in many evangelical circles today the dispensationalist interpretation prevails.”⁶

Dispensationalism builds squarely on Darby’s idea of the two-fold second coming of Christ. When Christ finally returns visibly to set up His kingdom, He rules over the restored Jewish nation at Jerusalem. During the millennium that follows, Old Testament promises to Israel, including sacrificial worship, will be fulfilled in a reconstructed Temple. Two resurrections, separated by 1,000 years, mark the boundaries of this millennial reign. □

*Scripture quotations in this article are from the New International Version.

¹ William Miller, *Apology and Defense* (1845), p. 7, in T. H. Jemison, *A Prophet Among You* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1955), p. 187.

² Alexander Campbell, “The Coming of the Lord,” *The Millennial Harbinger* 1 (January 1841): 5-12, in Leroy Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1954), vol. 4, p. 412.

³ Augustine, *The City of God*, book 20, chap. 9, in *The Nicene and Post-nicene Fathers*, 1st series, vol. 2, p. 430. Cited in Froom, vol. 1, p. 483.

⁴ Loraine Boettner, “Postmillennialism,” in R. G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1977), p. 117.

⁵ Anthony A. Hoekema, “Amillennialism,” in Clouse, p. 169.

⁶ Clouse, p. 12.



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IS IT EVER RIGHT TO LIE?

BY CALVIN B. ROCK

Is it ever right to lie? Our little girl has terminal cancer. She has become very suspicious of her condition, but we have not told her the truth, as it would probably make her worse. We feel guilty because friends tell us we are living a lie.

A lie is any statement—verbal or nonverbal—made with the intent to deceive, a conscious misrepresentation of the facts. Lying usually involves either exaggeration, withholding information, distortion of information, or just plain prevarication—the conveying of misleading or false impressions.

The scriptural statements “Thou shalt not bear false witness” and “Lying lips are abomination to the Lord” provide sobering reminders of God’s disdain for even common deceptions.

Most Americans lie regularly in such everyday matters as personnel recommendations, time card notations, income tax returns, job applications, customs declarations, private and commercial sales transactions, etc. Simple statements such as “I’m glad to see you” or “You’re looking well” and even “Pastor, I enjoyed your sermon” can involve lying.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference between lying (intending to deceive) and managing information, or even being silent, for the good of another. Telling the truth means more than revealing all the details. Because truth is one of the divine characteristics, it involves respecting the rights, emotions, and welfare of others. From this perspective, the statement “You are going to die” may be true, but if it will traumatize the patient or hasten a

person’s demise, it is not in the strictest sense “the truth.”

Christ’s statement to His disciples “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John 16:12), His restrained responses before Pilate (Matt. 27), and His absolute silence before Herod (Luke 23:8-10) are examples of truth-telling that illustrate the point.

So you are not wrong in not revealing all the sad facts to your child. On the other hand, please remember that the dying have their rights. Many suspect that death is imminent. For them, gently answering questions about life after death is better than avoiding the issue. Even children who face death have “unfinished business” that they have a right to complete, such as giving away their toys and making funeral requests.

The major considerations, then, of which you must be aware are What is a lie? or conversely put, What is the truth? and What are the rights of the one whose life is ebbing away? Your decision is difficult, delicate, and very personal. Therefore, it should be actuated by principles such as those above, rather than by the uninformed definitions of one’s friends.

Since VCRs have become so popular and many films are shown at our schools and churches, why do some preachers still talk against going to the movies? Everybody is going to theaters, anyway—not only our young people. Why should we put members out of the church for attending movies? Can’t we be honest enough to change with the times?

I find at least three persuasive reasons for our traditional posture against movies.

□ Most films glorify violence, sexual promiscuity, and other vices that impede Christian growth. By placing ourselves unnecessarily under such influences, we disobey the biblical warning “Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

□ The sordid lives of many, if not most, Hollywood personalities disqualify them as our role models. It is still true that “by beholding we become changed” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 355).

□ The Christian’s presence at movie theaters provides a very questionable witness. Some justify their movie attendance by reminding us that they see only *good* films. While that is surely better than viewing *bad* ones, it still leaves us with a major problem. We are our “brother’s (and sister’s) keeper,” and our neighbors who see us at the movies don’t know about our choosing just the good films. Our presence at any movie theater tends to sanction this activity categorically.

Showing selected movies in our own facilities provides an excellent alternative. The proper response to the fact that some leaders make unwise selections for SDA viewing is not to declare movie theaters safe, but to counsel such people and try to improve the quality of their choices.

Moviegoing is not a test of fellowship or a reason for church discipline. Historically, we have had strong sanctions against it, but in actuality it falls in the category of vegetarianism, rather than that of Sabbath work or using alcohol.

The fact that many attend the theater does not make it safe. Majority behavior should not become our barometer for what is best.

Calvin B. Rock, a general vice-president of the General Conference, holds doctoral degrees in ministry and religious ethics.

It's difficult to grasp the intricacies of a stepfamily, sometimes even for those who are part of one. After all, its composition involves any of the following: mom, dad, stepmom, stepdad, his kids, her kids, our kids (which means sister, brother, stepsister, stepbrother, half sister and half

WELCOME TO THE STEPFAMILY

How to adjust to a "package deal" marriage

BY BARBARA L. DARLING

brother). Add all the other components, including a passel of extended steprelatives as well as ex-in-laws who, remember, are still grandparents, aunts, and uncles, not to mention the ex-spouses and perhaps their new families, and one begins to see the complexities involved.

The stepfamily, however, is a steadily emerging breed to be reckoned with: remarriage will be the most common form of marriage in the 1990s. If current trends continue, stepfamilies will outnumber traditional families by the year 2000.

As Adventist Christians, we would do well to learn about stepfamilies. Simple arithmetic tells us that as the numbers swell nationally, our church will be affected too.

We should, of course, promote premarriage education and partners' lifelong commitment to each other. But unfortunately, some marriages don't work; others dissolve when a husband or wife dies. And if we are actively evangelistic, we will attract new members whose family life is in transition.

Just what is it like to be part of a stepfamily, a family that exists instantly when a man and a woman say "I do"?

Because of the nature of the "package deal," the husband and wife don't get to adjust to each other and then gradually expand from a couple to a family. From day 1 they start with an intact family. The only choice is to learn on the job, so to speak.

Even for a man and woman who love each other it is a risky adventure. (Sixty percent of all remarriages end in divorce.) And their children? They may not have wanted these two to marry each other (or *ever* marry again, for that matter). They may not like either the new parent or the new children who move in.

Some couples admittedly start out in a more favorable climate than others. One man, when proposing to his wife-to-be, invited *her* children along and asked them for their permission to marry their mom. Luckily, he got it.

Another woman was told by her therapist, "Your daughter may never like her stepfather, but that's OK." It may be "OK" in clinical terms, but it sure can put a damper on the stepparenting relationship.

"Who Am I?"

Understandably, "Who am I?" could well be the refrain rippling through stepfamilies, particularly those newly formed.

Mom may now have a different last name than her children's, making them feel like outsiders. And the stepparent often has no idea as to the boundaries of his or her role. "You can't tell me what to do—you're not my dad (or mom)" is the phrase all stepparents dread.

Everybody faces multiple adjustments. Neatnik kids may end up sharing a bedroom with a stepsibling who never heard the words "Clean your room." Shy, quiet types might find themselves competing for attention with extroverted stepsiblings who effortlessly capture the limelight.

The mother who was home all day with the kids may be the direct opposite of the stepmom who

thrives on 10-hour days at the office. The dad who played ball with his kids nearly every night may be compared to a stepdad whose most athletic pursuit is walking outside to retrieve the newspaper.

With a stepfamily, you can't just take new players and attempt to reconstruct a family like the originals. While stepfamilies try to blend and become one family unit, the fact remains that stepfamilies aren't the same as their biological family counterparts.

Be Realistic

Stepfamilies have a distinct nature. As one stepmom put it: "You can't make stepfamilies into a 'natural' family, and it's best not to try. The stepparent who believes the myth of *The Sound of Music* stepfamily, where children follow the new parent around like the Pied Piper, is in for a big shock. It's more realistic to let children discover for themselves what role they want to play in this new setup. Do they want to be cooperative or rebellious, withdrawing or participating? They

need to discover for themselves which way works. We can encourage and guide them, but we can't make them *pretend*."

An "ours" child often helps draw the stepfamily together, giving each family member a child that everyone is related to equally. But even that may not work without repercussions.

"Having a child of our own made us feel more like a cohesive family, but years later we realize it made my daughter feel more of an outsider," comments one stepmother. "She felt, and still feels, that the child of our own is more special to us and that she doesn't quite belong."

Expect Conflicting Emotions

Children aren't the only ones with conflicting emotions. Parents deal with their share, too.

"Don't raise your expectations too high for your *feelings* toward your stepchildren," warns one stepdad. "Concentrate on your *behavior* and *actions*. One of the things that create a guilty feeling in stepparents is that you don't feel the same natural out-

flow of love and wonder that you feel with your own children. What you feel, you feel. You just have to be kind and care *intellectually*. Eventually the feelings will develop."

And while the kids undergo every imaginable version of sibling rivalry, they are not the only ones who experience jealousy.

"Sometimes I feel jealous of my wife's relationship with the kids," admits a stepfather. I want to be an equal parent, and I cannot always be. Sometimes that's very difficult."

Explains a stepmother, "In all honesty, I think my husband has some unresolved conflict about my relationship with *his* children. Sometimes when the kids and I are doing something together, he will intervene to get his kids realigned with him. I feel I should be trying to get closer to his kids, but I don't know what to do about my husband's reactions."

Eventually, stepparents come to realize that each of them has a unique relationship with each child. Neither parent can really intercede or redirect those relationships.

"I spent a lot of time trying to get my husband to understand my daughter and my daughter to understand my husband," recalls a stepmother. "In the meantime they were not talking together at all about their feelings. They relied on me to be the middleman. 'Tell your daughter . . . ' 'Mommy, will you ask . . . ?'

"I tried for a long time to patch up hurt feelings and mediate quarrels. It didn't work. I just got burned out, and the others didn't grow in their responsibility to handle their own relationships."

Stick Together

Successful stepparents seem to have one thing in common: They recognize the necessity of working to-



gether in unity as a couple even though they don't agree on everything. Writes *Stepparenting* coauthor Jeanette Lofas, "Couple strength is primary."

When the going gets tough and the kids try to divide and conquer (and yes, your adorable cherubs *will* try), stick together.

One stepmother relates how on hikes her stepdaughter used to edge her out in order to walk next to her father. Soon the stepmom would find herself trailing along behind them.

As a solution she suggests that her husband could have shown his daughter that the marriage relationship is primary by waiting for his wife to catch up, then slipping an arm through hers and walking on together.

Counseling gets high ratings from successful stepparents, too. They recommend that about-to-be-blended families definitely seek professional counseling whether they think there are problems or not—and include the children.

"If they think there are no problems, someone in the family is hiding his or her feelings," one stepmom says. "The counseling session acts as a forum for everybody to just express his or her feelings, which is very difficult in some families."

A Christian Perspective

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, many of the stepparents I interview try to determine what Jesus would do with their problems.

Explains a stepdad, "I try to think of things in the context of our Christian teaching instead of in the context of secular justice—who's right and who's wrong."

One couple has seen their values shift since they became Christians. One stepmother told me, "Each of us used to think, *What am I getting out of this?* Now we are willing to look at how our decisions and actions affect others, mainly, in this case, our children. With this higher goal in mind I can more easily let go of slights and injustices today."

The Learning Curve for Stepparents

1. Learn to place your spouse and your marriage first and foremost, accepting how difficult this can be when your child and your spouse have opposing viewpoints and each one is imploring you with that desperate "Don't fail me now" look.

2. Learn empathy for your spouse's concerns. To help his wife feel less like she was working to support her husband's prior family, one husband suggested that his wife save from her salary, for her own use, the same amount he paid out to his former wife in alimony.

3. Learn to accept your relationship with your stepchildren at whatever level it exists. You can't force children to love or respect you, but you can open the doorway for those feelings to develop.

4. Learn to listen to each family member. Unless you have serious reasons for believing otherwise, trust that what you're hearing is the truth.

5. Learn to concentrate on praising good behavior instead of criticizing bad behavior.

6. Learn to let go of your way and to compromise.

7. Learn not to keep score. Is it more important that the laundry get done or that you fight over who did it last time?

8. Learn to focus on the desired outcome rather than the barriers to achieving it. Ask yourself what you can do to make things work.

9. Learn to forgo asking for details about your spouse's ex-mate and their marriage. Make your own memories together.

10. Learn to bury your pride and be the first to love. Maybe next time your spouse will beat you to it.

11. Learn to rely on the Lord continually. Recognize that you can't always fix your problems, but that if you turn them over to God, He'll fix them for you.

So why would anyone willingly Smerge into a stepfamily? For those who enter a second marriage (and among those who divorce, 75 percent remarry), the struggle can be worth it.

For the rare occasion when your stepchild "slips" and calls you "Mom." For the Father's Day when the card says "Love," and her kids' names are signed on it too.

For the thrill when your spouse's children confide in you just the way you own do. For the times when you see siblings and stepsiblings play together and enjoy every minute of it. For the days when you learn to laugh before you cry.

For the satisfaction of cherishing a life together with a spouse you

truly love. For the hope of providing the children—his, hers, and ours—with a meaningful sense of family, even if it's a family formed from a little bit here and a little bit there.

For those moments when everything clicks, when you look around the dinner table and proudly realize, "This is it. This is my family." □



Barbara L. Darling is a former newspaper and magazine editor. She now works in public relations, lives in Boulder, Colorado, and is a stepfamily member.



JOSHUA HIMES: MILLER'S DOORMAN

BY JAMES R. NIX

One hundred fifty years ago—December 8, 1839—Millerite Adventism began to change from a small, rural predominately one-man affair to a major revival movement. For more than eight years the “old farmer,” as William Miller called himself, had preached mostly in small towns and villages in northern New England, going from place to place in response to invitations. He was a good preacher but not a good promoter. The idea of renting a large hall in a great city and employing publicity to draw a crowd probably never occurred to him.

While traveling and lecturing in Massachusetts in October of 1839, Miller received an invitation to speak at the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston. The letter was signed by Joshua V. Himes, the pastor.

A few weeks later Miller met Himes, one of a group of ministers who had come to hear him lecture at Exeter, New Hampshire. Al-

though Himes had only a brief contact with Miller, he was sufficiently impressed to renew his invitation. Miller accepted, and on the eighth of December, 1839, began preaching in the city of Boston.

Little did Miller realize that as Himes listened day by day to the lectures, great thoughts were stirring in his mind. This pastor was different from other preachers whose churches Miller had visited. Here was a man of action, a born promoter, one whose name would soon be linked with every discussion of Millerism.

Himes confronted Miller with the question “Do you really believe this doctrine?” Upon receiving an affirmative reply, Himes asked, “What are you doing to spread or

diffuse it through the world?”

Miller assured Himes that he was doing all within his limited powers. Himes did not dispute this, but insisted that despite all of Miller's faithful efforts, his great message for the world was hardly known. Himes, who now had accepted Miller's views, could make only one commitment: “I laid myself, family, society, reputation, all, upon the altar of God, to help him, to the extent of my power, to the end.”

Himes could not understand why Miller had not preached in the large cities. Miller explained that he had

gone only to those places where he had been invited. Himes inquired whether he would be willing to go with him “where doors are opened.” Miller assured him he would. “I then told him he might prepare for the campaign,” said Himes; “for doors should be opened in every city in the union, and the warning should go to

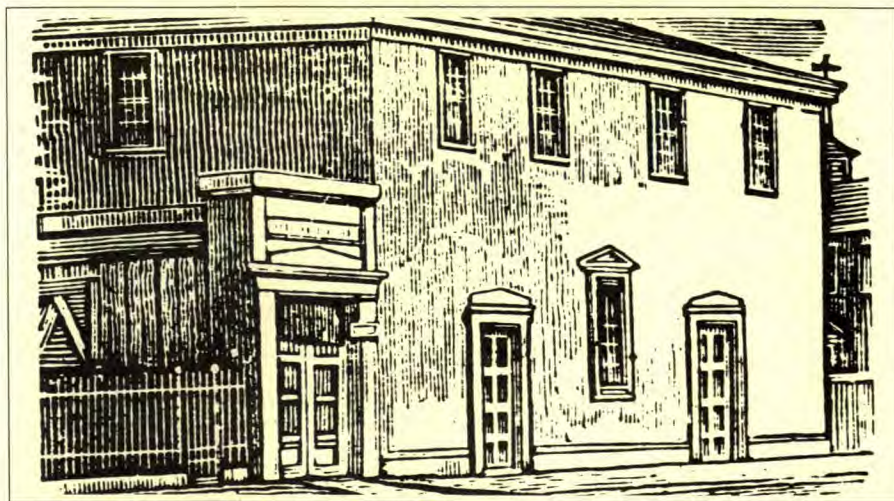
the ends of the earth! Here I began to ‘help’ Father Miller.”¹

Within weeks Himes was launched on a new career that made him the chief organizer, promoter, and publicist of Adventism. Not only did he help secure Miller's repeated return to Boston, but also arranged for him to visit New York, Philadelphia, and Washington. Himes in time published papers, including the *Signs of the Times* in 1840,² and the *Midnight Cry* in 1842.

Thus the beginning of the Millerite Adventist movement's expansion can be traced to that series of lectures given by William Miller in the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston, 150 years ago.



Joshua V. Himes



Hime's Chardon Street Chapel where Miller first preached in Boston.

¹ F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry*, pp. 75-77.

² R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, p. 37.

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George R. Knight

The frightening possibility of
BEING ADVENTIST WITHOUT
BEING CHRISTIAN!

ANGRY SAINTS

V I T A L B O O K S F O R 1 9 8 9

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Kenneth R. Wade

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154 pages. US\$3.95, Cdn\$4.95.

Call your ABC to order. 

Health Message Depresses Meat Prices in Korea

Weimar adds fitness program for U.S. Koreans.

Providential openings in South Korea last fall made possible the January-February airing of 13 hours of health education on national television by Adventist physician Sang Lee (see *Adventist Review*, July 20).

The TV series, a documentary produced and sponsored by KBS (the Korean Broadcasting System),

chicken prices have ever been declining in recent weeks due to a 'vegetarian boom' stirred by Dr. Lee Sang-gu, a Korean medical doctor residing in the United States." This brought public protest from the meat and dairy industry. Attempts were made to discredit Dr. Lee, and his relatives were reportedly threatened.

But an April Gallup poll of a cross section of 1,500 people showed 81.5 percent of the population favoring the NEWSTART health principles. Twenty percent of those supporting the principles say they are attempting to practice the new healthful concepts in lifestyle. Sales of the book *NewStart!* by Vernon

Foster, M.D., translated into Korean recently, have increased.

Because of this wide acceptance and support, Dr. Lee has been invited back for more appearances on

KBS-TV and to address the national convention of the Korean Christian Association of Disabled Persons.

Weimar Institute was flooded with calls and letters asking about the live-in health program. Best known for business leadership training, the Korean Human Development Institute took charge of organizing all arrangements for 26 Koreans to fly to Weimar Institute last month and participate in a NEWSTART lifestyle program for Koreans, led by Dr. Sang Lee. Ten other Koreans from the U.S. participated in the program. Various adjustments in the program to accommodate the many non-English-speaking participants were made, including the use of seven Korean translators.

Other adjustments included serving cabbage and vegetable dishes and mung-bean jelly for breakfast, as well as providing translation in hydrotherapy while Weimar College students applied treatments. The group has responded well to the lifestyle adjustment program, including the importance of the spiritual dimension in lasting health.



Koreans enjoy Weimar NEWSTART Lifestyle program.

featured Dr. Lee presenting the principles of the NEWSTART lifestyle program punctuated with interviews of prominent U.S. health authorities at the National Institutes of Health, UCLA, Harvard, Stanford, Weimar Institute, and other institutions. Nationally recognized Norman Cousins, Herbert Benson, Candace Pert, and Robert A. Good participated in the interviews and confirmed the scientific explanation for the therapeutic impact of lifestyle change and faith on physical and mental health.

The documentary aroused fervent interest among millions of South Koreans. Overnight, Sang Lee became a health "hero" and celebrity.

But the economy of the country was shaken. The *Korea Herald* of February 25 reported, "Pork and



Even the food was "translated" into Korean at Weimar.

By Tim Ish, public relations director, Weimar Institute, Weimar, California.



Baptismal candidates Noel Tomaganuk and Eugene Hunter stand between Pastor Kichul Kim and his wife Sunghee.

Alaskans Take Steps to Christ

Abitterly cold and persistent wind blew across the snow-covered tundra as the small commuter aircraft from Hooper Bay landed at the Bethel airport in southwest Alaska. The two-mile-wide Kuskokwim River lay frozen from shore to shore. Arctic twilight cast a deepening gloom over the vast expanse of white, but bright lights blazed in Bethel where a warm welcome awaited Noel Tomaganuk, who had come to this isolated population center to find out more about God's truth.

Many months previous, Noel, like thousands of others in villages and towns scattered throughout Alaska, had received a packet in the mail. In every Eskimo and Indian village, the post office provides a gathering place where friends and acquaintances meet. Excitement pervades the crowd as each one watches to see if the mail plane has brought him or her some mail.

On this day everyone in Hooper Bay, a lonesome outpost on the Bering Sea coast, received a packet from Project *Steps to Christ*. In a scene duplicated all over "bush" Alaska, people tore open the white envelopes to discover a gift for them—the book *Steps to Christ*.

A Seeker Found

As Noel Tomaganuk read the book, his heart was deeply moved. He wanted to know more. Though reared in the Covenant Church, many questions about the Bible welled up in his mind.

By Frank Stokes, director of Church Ministries, Alaska Conference.

Eagerly he applied for Bible studies by mail. As the mail planes brought the lessons from Anchorage, he took his Bible and completed each one. Diligently he searched the Scriptures, comparing text with text.

In comments submitted with his lessons, Noel made obvious his genuine search for truth. Soon he was put in touch with Pastor Kichul Kim, of the Bethel Seventh-day Adventist Church.

That cold winter day he had come

to Bethel to visit our church. Pastor Kim and Noel Tomaganuk discussed the truths the latter had been studying. Noel decided to be baptized and return to Hooper Bay to encourage other members of his village to study the truth. As a result nine people sent in requests for Bible studies. Pastor Kim was asked to come and conduct services in the local Covenant church.

In a glacial valley across the bay from Seward, a port city 125 miles south of Anchorage, stands Alaska's new maximum security prison. Project *Steps to Christ* penetrated its high walls. Bible correspondence courses reach inmates who are discovering true freedom in Christ.

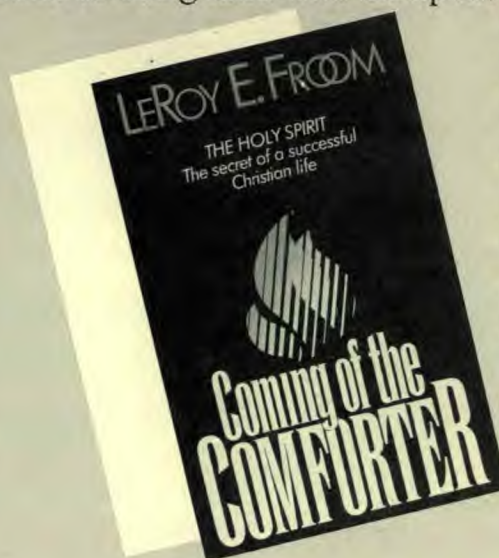
From Point Hope in the far northwest opposite Siberia to Ward Cove in the rain forest of the southeast, requests have come for pastoral visits or correspondence Bible lessons. Heaven alone will tell the results of this methodical outreach into all areas of this vast state.

Coming of the Comforter

Back by popular demand, LeRoy Froom's book answers some of the most vital questions concerning the Holy Spirit. What is the difference between a prick of conscience and the promptings of the Holy Spirit? What are the conditions of being filled with the Spirit? Is regeneration the same as being filled with the Spirit?

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Chorus Sings Again After 19 Years

For the first time since 1970, nearly all the members of the former Review and Herald Publishing House men's chorus gathered on the weekend of September 16 to sing once more. The Frederick, Maryland, Adventist Church provided the setting for this historic reunion, because of its location between the former and present Review and Herald buildings and its place as the home church of the chorus's director, Merrill Dawson, now 87.

A number of the men had gathered for a similar session two years ago, but this occasion brought a far greater response, as 32 singers came from California, Oregon, Florida, Tennessee, and Ohio, as well as from the Washington, D.C., area.

The revived chorus sang gospel songs and hymns from its former repertory at the morning worship service and an afternoon concert. A one-hour practice session that morning and another hour in the afternoon proved sufficient to bring back long-forgotten notes. Lawrence Maxwell, editor of *Guide* magazine during the chorus's years at the publishing house, served as narrator for the afternoon program, as he had done so often before. Conductor Dawson, former Review and Herald treasurer, appeared in as fine a form as when he retired nearly two decades ago.

The men's chorus began in 1962, when it sang for a constituency meeting, with no thought of becoming a permanent group. But the first appearance proved so gratifying that the men, some 40 in all, decided to continue singing together. All were workers at the publishing house, giving a total of 1,000 years of service to that institution, an average of 25 years each. Practices, held during the lunch hour and after work, were faithfully attended, the men recall, be-

By Eugene F. Durand, assistant editor, Adventist Review.

cause the director signed their paychecks! Though not professional singers by any means, they achieved a warm blend of sound that blessed congregations at Review and Herald chapel services, local church vesper programs, and funerals such as that of *Review* editor F. D. Nichol.

The men also developed a secular program that they took to Adventist academies in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia on weekends. Their longest tours took them to New England and the

Oshawa, Canada, publishing house. The Sunday of the recent reunion the Dawsons hosted a dinner for the men, after which they revived some of the songs from their secular program.

The chorus members departed for their homes feeling that they would probably never sing together again, at least on this earth. But in their ears rang a favorite they had sung so many times, including the Nichol funeral, and repeated on this occasion:

"We journey to a city which eye hath never seen;

We journey to a country whose shores are ever green . . ."

Students Get Taste of Missions

Students from Oklahoma Academy and Hartland College in Rapidan, Virginia, took two weeks of school time during April to help conduct a series of meetings on the island of Negros in the Philippines. Sponsored by the Quiet Hour, the meetings were conducted in Dumaguete, the "City of the Friendly People," located on the southeastern coast.

Robert Bird, chaplain at Oklahoma Academy, and Dr. Vernon Barton, a physician from Payette, Idaho, served as speakers for the crusade. Student members of the team included Brian Merrills and Eugene Prewitt, both juniors at Oklahoma Academy, and Craig Cleveland and Robert Benardo, of Hartland College. During the two-week series, the students participated in visitation, special music, Bible studies, children's stories, and filming the nightly meetings.

Working through translators proved a challenge, but the inspiration of active involvement with local laymen and ministers in mission service made it well worth the trouble.

The greatest reward, of course, was to witness the baptism of 187 people on the second Sabbath of



Baptism of 187 climaxes Negros Island meetings.

the meetings. The candidates held hands, forming one long line, and walked into the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean, where they were baptized by pastors of the Negros Mission. The successful meetings resulted from the Spirit-directed efforts of pastors, laymen, and students and the financial support of many concerned members.

Eugene Prewitt expressed the thoughts of all the students when he said, "I can hardly wait to go back and have my own series of meetings."

By Robert Bird, chaplain, Oklahoma Academy.

Obituaries

ACKERMAN, Dorothy Virginia Evans—b. Apr. 3, 1917, Barnsville, Ohio; d. May 27, 1989, Fletcher, N.C. She taught music at Shenandoah Valley Academy, Columbia Union College, Atlantic Union College, Southern Missionary College, and Madison College. At her retirement, she was named professor emeritus of music by Southern College, where a building is named in her honor. Her husband, James E., preceded her in death in 1985. Survivors include two stepdaughters, Jean Killn and Joyce Haynes; a sister, Mary Louise Vollmer; and six grandchildren.

AESCHLIMANN, Maria Dolores—b. Nov. 12, 1903, San Carlos, Chile; d. May 9, 1989, Miami, Fla. She served with her pastor-husband for 60 years in the South American and Inter-American divisions. Survivors include her husband, Alfredo; a son, Carlos; and a daughter, Lucy.

BECKNER, Ethel May—b. Dec. 24, 1899, Pleasant Hill, Mo.; d. Feb. 14, 1989, Gresham, Ore. She served with her husband in Burma from 1924 to 1941. After her husband Robert's death, she worked as a nurse at Laurelwood Academy and at Portland Sanitarium and Hospital. Survivors include five children; 13 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren.

CHANCE, Janice Pearl—b. Sept. 20, 1921, Hamlin, Alta., Can.; d. Apr. 13, 1989, Hermiston, Ore. She taught nursing at Walla Walla College School of Nursing Portland campus for 20 years until her retirement in 1982. Survivors include her husband, Howard; two daughters, Mary Anne Faidley and Betty Ann Loshheart-Hale; three grandchildren; her mother; two sisters; and four brothers.

CONOLLY, Levi Holborn—b. Nov. 24, 1894, East End, Grand Cayman, West Indies; d. Jan. 17, 1989, Grand Cayman, West Indies. He pastored for several years and was president of the Cayman Islands Mission and the Honduran Mission. His wife Lillian and a son preceded him in death. In 1959 he married Elaine Jackson. Survivors include his wife; a daughter, Carrie; and three grandchildren.

EGGERT, Percy Jean—b. Mar. 18, 1911, Oplan, Tex.; d. Apr. 26, 1989, Troup, Tex. She taught school in various places including Tyler Seventh-day Adventist School. Survivors include her husband, Leo C.; four sons, James, Vern, Dale, and Raymond; two daughters, Nancy Farretta and Teresa Smith; three sisters, Josephine Stewart, Kathleen St. Clair, and Patty Virginia Norton; and 20 grandchildren.

GIBSON, Robert E.—b. Aug. 1, 1908, Wakeman, Ohio; d. Sept. 1, 1987, Cleburne, Tex. As a minister, he served 20 years on the islands of Palau, Majaro, Saipan (Micronesia), the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Curacao (Inter-American Division). Survivors include his wife, Mildred; two sons, Daniel and Roger; a daughter, Betty Holdridge; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

GRAHAM, Helen—b. Jan. 23, 1895, Van Wert County, Ohio; d. Feb. 23, 1989, Valley Center, Calif. She taught schools in various states, including North Carolina, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, Alabama, Indiana, and California. Four sons, Amos, Melvin, Wilbur, and Everett, preceded her in death. Survivors include three sons, Arthur, Ivan, and Harry; three daughters, Lena Edsell, Mamie Bender,

and Clara Beardsly; three brothers, Harry, Ira, and Menton Medford; a sister, Mary Medford; 27 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren.

HAAS, Harold Eugene—b. Jan. 17, 1921, Decatur, Ark.; d. Apr. 11, 1989, Altamonte Springs, Fla. He served as dean of boys at Ozark Academy, and later became the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference education and youth director. During the next 30 years he served as principal at various boarding academies, and superintendent of education in four conferences and three unions, retiring in 1981. Survivors include his wife, Margie; two children, Linda K. and Eddie A.; and a grandson.

HARRIS, Paul K.—b. Mar. 14, 1932, Pocatello, Idaho; d. Aug. 21, 1989, Clackamas, Ore. He was principal of San Fernando Valley Academy and Yakima Adventist Academy, as well as math and industrial arts teacher in various academies in Montana, Texas, and California. Survivors include his wife, Naomi; a son, Steve; two daughters, Kari Jane Baldwin and Diane Louise; a sister, Allegra Jane Jennings; a brother, E. Vernon; and four grandchildren.

HILL, Ted E.—b. Aug. 26, 1925, Silver Spring, Md.; d. Mar. 24, 1989, Silver Spring, Md. He served as a literature evangelist and worked for more than 30 years at Washington Adventist Hospital. Survivors include his mother, Ruth F.; a sister, Jean Wagar; and a brother, Glenn H.

HOWE, Walter A.—b. Jan. 10, 1910, Des Moines, Iowa; d. Apr. 5, 1989, Hendersonville, N.C. He worked in the Iowa Conference as pastor-evangelist, and as dean of boys at Oak Park Academy. He became MV and educational secretary in the Iowa, Minnesota, Southwestern, and Central Union conferences. In 1963 he became associate secretary of the General Conference Education Department. Survivors include his wife, Earline; a daughter, Myrna Kelley; two grandchildren; and a sister, Lucille Bogenrief.

MARTIN, Viola Mary—b. Jan. 22, 1910, Shafter, Calif.; d. May 30, 1989, Loma Linda, Calif. She worked for 17 years in the Medical Records Department at Glendale Adventist Hospital. Survivors include her husband, Burton; three sons, Gerald, Tony, and Rick; nine grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

MELENDY, Ruth Evelyn—b. July 27, 1902, Alpharetta, Ga.; d. Jan. 14, 1989, Olney, Md. From 1921 to 1924 she was editor of the *Columbia Union Visitor*. From 1924 to 1948 she was a bookkeeper at Washington Sanitarium and Hospital. She was a proofreader at the Review and Herald Publishing Association from 1948 to 1964. Survivors include a sister, Idamae.

MONTALBAN, Victoriano—b. Mar. 23, 1909, Nagcarlan, Laguna, Philippines; d. Mar. 1, 1989, Takoma Park, Md. He served in the Philippines as accountant, mission secretary-treasurer, and mission and union president. He helped establish a number of missions and institutions. From 1968 to 1975 he was a General Conference field secretary. Survivors include his wife, Felicissima; son, Rodolfo; adopted son, Armando; two grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

PALMER, Clarence Edwin—b. Aug. 19, 1900, Cooranbong, Australia; d. July 28, 1989, Corinth, Miss. He worked at the Review and Herald Publishing Association for 51 years, the last 13 of which he was

general manager. He retired in 1971 in Daytona, Florida, and later Corinth, Mississippi. His wife, Ruth, and a son, Irving, preceded him in death in 1985 and 1984, respectively. Survivors include two sons, Robert and William; and two daughters, Helen Fister and Adele Ice.

VON POHLE, Donald J.—b. July 27, 1910, Arequipa, Peru; d. Apr. 27, 1989, Orlando, Fla. After serving many years as a pastor, he became education and youth director of the Antillian Union in 1957. His last 14 years of employment were spent at the Inter-American Division office as youth director, and later as transportation and purchasing director. Survivors include his wife, Evelyn; two daughters, Sylvia and Esther; and grandchildren.

To New Posts

Regular Missionary Service

Oren Lee Nelson, returning to serve as maintenance supervisor, Adventist Hospital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and **Willadel Arloene (Gerrans) Nelson** left August 2.

Johannes Gerardus Nikkels, returning to serve as area coordinator, Panama Conference, Balboa, Republic of Panama, and **Esther Ruth (Weber) Nikkels** left August 10.

Lester Aubrey Parkinson, returning to serve as Sabbath school/lay activities/temperance director, Zambesi Union Mission, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, **Priscilla Brenda Yvonne (Hall) Parkinson**, and two children left July 13.

Nationals Returning

Julie Daisy DuBois, to serve as dentist, Grenada Seventh-day Adventist Dental Clinic, Grenada, West Indies, and one child left August 2.

Adventist Volunteer Service

Lloyd Ernest Barber (AVS), to serve as publishing house management consultant, Indonesia Publishing House, Bandung, Java, Indonesia, and **Maidelle Barber**, of Madison, Tennessee, left July 31.

Thomas Eugene Dick (AVS), to serve in senior Elective Clerkship, Policlinica Bella Vista, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, of Loma Linda, California, left August 16.

Melissa Lanell (Saxon) Hanson (AVS), to serve as English teacher, Guam Adventist Academy, Talofofo, Guam, and **Kenneth Dean Hanson**, of Lincoln, Nebraska, left July 20.

Norris Matsumoto (AVS), to serve as relief physician, Adventist Medical Center, Okinawa, Japan, and **Seiko Matsumoto**, of Redlands, California, left July 18.

Anne Marie Pearson (AVS), to serve as teacher, Japan Seventh-day Adventist English Schools, Yokohama, Japan, of Loma Linda, California, left July 26.

Linda Marie Tulloch (AVS), to serve as teacher, Japan Seventh-day Adventist English Schools, Yokohama, Japan, of San Bernardino, California, left July 26.

Darrell Lynn Vaughan (AVS), to serve as physician, Tokyo Adventist Hospital, Tokyo, Japan, **Yukiko (Nishimura) Vaughan**, and three children, of Yucaipa, California, left July 5.

George Whitmore Walper (AVS), to serve as music teacher, Taiwan Adventist College, Yu Chih, Nantou County, Taiwan, and **Lois Almskog Walper**, of Estero, Florida, left July 3.

Adventist Youth Service

Daryl Proctor (PUC), of Sonora, California, to serve as builder/ADRA, Thailand Mission, Bangkok, Thailand, left June 19.

AUNT JESS

BY MARION SCHOEBERLEIN

Cassandra lived with her aunt Jess. They did a lot of happy things together, like going to

the zoo and baking cookies.

One day Aunt Jess took Cassandra along to the nursing home where she worked. At first, though, Cassandra was afraid of the patients, and didn't think it would be much fun.

"Why are most of the people in wheelchairs?" she asked.

"Because they're old and sick," Aunt Jess explained. "It isn't easy for them, Cassie. But I

make them smile. You'll see."

Cassandra watched Aunt Jess bustle around the patients, feeding them, giving them baths, and reading them letters. She talked to them about Jesus, too.

"Sometimes they talk silly to you, Aunt Jess," Cassandra said. "Why is that?"

"A lot of them have something called Alzheimer's disease. They forget things. Most of them are like children. That's why it's good for you to visit them. They'll love you."

"But what should I say to them?" Cassandra was doubtful.

"You don't have to talk. Just listen and smile. If they want to hold your hand, let them. If they want to stroke your hair, let them. They're very lonely, Cassie. Just like you were when your parents were killed in the automobile accident and you came to live with me."

Soon Cassandra was helping to feed the patients their meal and wheeling them around in their wheelchairs. It was fun. One little old lady called her Sunshine.

"Why doesn't someone visit her?" Cassandra asked her aunt Jess.

"Because her children don't have any time for her. Some people are ashamed of old folks. Don't ever get like that, Cassie."

"I'll try not to, Aunt Jess."

Every time she came to visit, the little old lady who called her Sunshine had a big smile. Cassandra fed her ice cream and talked to her about Jesus, just like Aunt Jess.

Then one day the little old lady got sick and died. When Cassandra came to visit, the old lady's bed was empty, and her wheelchair stood by the window waiting for another patient.

"I feel like crying," Cassandra told Aunt Jess. "She always called me 'Sunshine.'"

"I know how you feel, honey. But there are others who think of you as 'Sunshine,' too. It's very important to make the patients happy, even if it's only for a little while."

"I'm glad you brought me here, Aunt Jess," Cassandra said. "I want to spread sunshine just like you!"

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LETTERS TO THE WORLD

Is there anyone in the world who does not like getting letters?

Each afternoon when I get home from work my mind races ahead of me up the stairs to the right front section of my dresser where the day's mail is usually placed for me. What will there be today? A letter to read, reread, and treasure? Something to glance at and discard?

The earliest letters were spoken, with runners taking messages swiftly to their intended recipients. The Greek historian Herodotus praised the Persian postal system of the fifth century B.C. in a passage that has since been adopted and the latter part inscribed on the New York City Post Office: "There is no mortal thing faster than these messengers . . . neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." This statement has become somewhat of an unofficial mail carrier's oath of office.

Essential Qualities

Whether it is a business or personal one, the successful letter must have a few essential qualities.

First, it is conversational, making the reader feel that you are talking to him or her personally. Some of the letters we write and many of those we receive are stuffy, using inflated language merely to impress.

A good letter also has a courteous tone. The receiver is treated as we ourselves would like to be treated.

Then, too, a good letter is concise, every word contributing to its meaning. Unnecessary words discourage the reader's interest.

A fourth quality is thoughtful-

ness. The writer demonstrates interest in the reader, not merely in his or her own message.

With the dominance of the telephone, tapes, and videos as means of communication today, many people lament that letter writing is a lost art, and this may be somewhat true, but there is a kind of letter writing that still goes on.

"In every one of His children Jesus sends a letter to the world," Ellen White once wrote perceptively. "If

I read some letters again and again, savoring every word.

you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live."¹

Paul reinforces this point, designating all of us Christians as "epistles" that are not merely private pieces of correspondence, but letters "known and read of all men."²

Judge Tenderly

"This is my letter to the world," Emily Dickinson announces in one of her poems, and at its end implores: "Judge tenderly of me." A letter invites judgment. What it says creates a reaction in the reader.

That being the case, a few questions are in order about us as letters.

How many of the desirable characteristics of a letter do we bear?

Are we sincere, conveying a simple, clear, forthright message, or are we pretentious, letting our self-importance get in the way of the good news we are supposed to carry?

Are we discourteous? What do our colleagues and neighbors read in our actions? A few months ago a gentleman wrote to compliment the editors of the *Adventist Review* on the attractive Friendship Issue that presents Adventists as loving, caring people. Acknowledging that many Adventists do possess these qualities, the writer asked, "But what about the unloving, the uncaring, rude, selfish, grasping members?" Apparently the writer wasn't satisfied with what he had read in some of his fellow Christians.

My friend Jayne writes me letters that I treasure. They have a calm tone of someone who knows Jesus well and tries to do His will simply, sincerely. Her letters are informative, witty, engaging—a joy to read. I savor every word; they speak to me personally. As I return to them and reread them, they are a source of recurring pleasure. Now, if only we human letters could be like that! □

REFERENCES

¹ *Welfare Ministry*, p. 100.

² See 2 Cor. 3:2, 3.



Judith P. Nembhard is an instructional supervisor of English for the District of Columbia public schools.

BY JUDITH P. NEMBHARD