

ADVENTIST REVIEW

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

FEBRUARY 27, 1992

*Who
Are Crying
for Our Help
Today?*

Trumpets Will Sound

I read with great interest your Second Coming issue ("Trumpets Will Sound," Jan. 2). I was particularly responsive to Cheryl R. Merritt's article "Youth and Young Adults." She voiced many common fears and childhood beliefs we have about Christ's return.

I have spent years trying to neutralize fears and horrors that have become associated with the Second Coming. Even today adults from my parents' generation often speak with doom and dread when discussing President Bush's conservatism or changing events in the former Soviet Union. If Christ's coming is an exciting event, why is the focus so consistently upon the horrifying events of "the time of trouble"? This served only to make me dread the last days, and feel guilty doing so.

As a mother of two small children, I have made it a goal to share only the exciting, incredibly wonderful aspects of Jesus, heaven, and His second coming. Worry and anxiety will come naturally as a part of growing up in a world with many problems. My second goal is to impart a sense of trust in our heavenly Father. My children need to know He keeps us safe and guides us, and that one day at a time is all we should concern ourselves with.

I have to ask myself, How and what would Jesus teach our children about His coming? Would He focus on persecution, death, and horrible things, or would He want them to know the joys His coming will mean to them personally? I choose the latter. I want this event to evoke only feelings of anticipation and visions of happiness, not of dread and insecurity. I want my children to grow into adults who can cherish the thought of His return, not shrink from it.

Denise Richards Hodgkin
Provo, Utah

"The goal of preaching to all people in all nations is impossible" ("Can We Hasten the Advent?"). What a surprise and disappointment to see this statement

in an Adventist publication. It is directly contradicted by Christ's own statement in Matthew 24:14.

Is the goal possible? "With God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). And when He tells us to preach the gospel to all people, He will speak through us by His Spirit as we give Him opportunity (Mark 16:15; Matt. 10:20).

Just as one man delayed the conquest of Ai by Joshua and his army, so "one relatively small movement" can delay God's plan in our time; and just as the shepherds came in "haste" (*speudo*) at Christ's birth, so we can "hasten" (*speudo*) Christ's second coming (Luke 2:16; 2 Peter 3:12). *Haste* and *hasten* are not used "only in passing" in either verse and are the English interpretation accepted by nearly all Bible interpreters. It is also in agreement with the conditional nature of prophecy and God's dealings with everyone in all ages. The destruction of Nineveh was postponed because of the actions of the people, and the entry of Israel into Canaan could have been hastened if they had responded to God's instructions.

God has set the day for Christ's return, but it is based on His foreknowledge of our actions and motives. If we don't do our appointed work, it will be our loss and may result in the loss of others (Eze. 3:18). Let's recognize and accept our responsibility.

J. Stanley McCluskey
Redlands, California

In fairness to the writer of this article, we should note that "The goal of preaching to all people in all nations is impossible" is followed by "The works of the Holy Spirit are the key to the work that prepares the world for the return of Jesus." The article thus emphasizes the need for the cooperation of human effort with the divine.—Editors.

The Second Coming issue of the *Adventist Review* is wonderful. What a joy to read on Sabbath.

Those who study the Bible and read regularly the Spirit of Prophecy know

already that the true believer is constantly expectant of the arrival of the King of kings. Only to nondoers does the time seem extended. God is working according to His schedule. Puny man, prone to sinfulness, is not going to delay or ruin anything. It will happen "in the fullness of time." Our job is to pray, help others, love others in any way we can, study, and see to our own thoughts and actions that they reflect His love and consideration for others, no matter who they are or where they are from.

Mary H. McLaughlin
National City, California

Saving Teeth

Dr. James ("Heaven's Plan for Saving Teeth," Dec. 26) has neglected the most important factor in preventing tooth decay: fluoride. I don't wish to minimize the importance of Dr. Steinman's research findings; I was exposed to them early in my dental education. While certain infant and childhood nutritional deficiencies can predispose persons to tooth decay, numerous studies have shown adequate intake of fluoride during tooth formation to be the single most important measure that can be taken to prevent decay later in life.

One of my duties as a general dentist in the U.S. Army Dental Corps is to screen new recruits for disabling dental conditions. It is obvious by just a quick look at a panoramic X-ray and inside the mouth which of the new soldiers received the benefit of fluoride and which ones didn't.

Even with decay-free teeth, a person can still lose them all to periodontal disease (gum disease). To prevent it, proper hygiene (brushing and flossing) is indispensable. Myren R. Severin, D.D.S.

U.S. Army Dental Corps
Radcliff, Kentucky

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.

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Cover photo by ADRA

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On Being Mature

When will you ever grow up!" exasperated parents often exclaim, not only to their teenagers but even to each other. Unfortunately, childish behavior is not confined to children; it manifests itself also in adults, who ought to have outgrown it. Maturity does not come automatically with the passing years. Many a person who is physically mature remains socially and spiritually stuck somewhere in childhood.

The Lord wants us to "become mature" and to "no longer be infants" (Eph. 4:13, 14), to "stop thinking like children. . . . But in your thinking be adults" (1 Cor. 14:20).*

What are the signs of maturity? In a newspaper column awhile back Ann Landers presented an eight-point definition that serves as an excellent checklist for social and spiritual growth.

The list begins: "Maturity is the ability to control anger and settle differences without violence or destruction." Becoming angry at what others do to us is a childish reaction unworthy of an adult Christian. It robs us of the opportunity to talk things over calmly and constructively. It leads to acts and words that we are sorry for later.

Patience, charity, and forgiveness provide the antidotes for this all-too-human response. Jesus set the example here by forgiving His enemies. Paul advises us, "Love is patient, love is kind. . . . It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs" (1 Cor. 13:4, 5).

Deferred Gratification

The checklist continues: "Maturity is patience. It is the willingness to pass up immediate pleasure in favor of long-term gain." This is my favorite definition of maturity. Psychologists call it the ability to accept deferred gratification.

How much pain is caused by the inability to wait! Rather than work for and save

their money, people have to have it *now*, so they steal it or gamble for it. Teens and adults must have sex *now*, so they commit fornication and adultery. Instead of saving up for a purchase, we go into debt because we can't wait. Many choose "to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time" rather than focus on the ultimate reward (Heb. 11:25). Our eternal salvation depends on maturity in this area.

"Maturity is perseverance," the list adds. Children quickly become frustrated and give up; adults keep on keeping on in the face of opposition and setbacks. The mature have a sense of duty and a stick-to-itiveness that won't let them quit till the job is done. "Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete" (James 1:4).

Related to this is the next definition: "Maturity is the capacity to face unpleasantness and frustration, discomfort and defeat, without complaint or collapse." A mature person accepts the fact that this world is no bed of roses, that life is not fair, that we live in enemy-occupied territory. A true adult resists the temptation to say "It's no use" or "I give up."

In addition, "maturity is humility. It is being big enough to say 'I was wrong.' And, when right, the mature person need not experience the satisfaction of saying 'I told you so.'" Children argue over whose fault it is. So do most adults, sad to say. Why is it so hard to accept the blame? Because we want people to think we're perfect. Hey, they know better! Why do we have this great need to be right all the time? Unless we confess our faults to God and each other, we're lost.

Our next definition observes: "Maturity is the ability to make a decision and follow through. The immature spend their lives exploring endless possibilities and then do nothing."

How often we say to children, "Make up your mind." God says to us, "How

long will you waver between two opinions?" (1 Kings 18:21). If this indecisiveness infects our spiritual life also, we are in even greater trouble. Far better to make a mistake than to dither endlessly.

Another test: "Maturity means dependability, keeping one's word and coming through in a crisis. The immature are masters of the alibi. They are conflicted and disorganized. Their lives are a maze of broken promises, former friends, unfinished business, and good intentions that never materialize."

Even When It Hurts

The person who will dwell with the Lord is one "who keeps his oath even when it hurts" (Ps. 15:4). Nothing in church life frustrates more than a member you can't count on. If people can't count on us, can the Lord? The road to you-know-where is paved with good intentions. How we appreciate one whose "word is his bond."

Our list ends with this famous observation: "Maturity is the art of living in peace with what we cannot change, the courage to change what we know should be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference." We need God's peace to accept the inevitable and avoid tilting at windmills. We need His wisdom to know when to do battle and when to subside. And He has promised us peace, courage, and wisdom to take the mature approach.

If you're not fully mature yet, take heart and press on as did Paul, who confessed he was still working on it (Phil. 3:12-14). He told the church about Epaphras' prayer—"that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured" (Col. 4:12). That's my prayer too.

* All texts in this article are from the New International Version.



When Wisdom Takes the Low Road

Recently I studied the life of Solomon. In rediscovering the brilliance of his reign, I became excited. He was truly a master builder, international businessman, administrator, mathematician, judge, biologist, philosopher, and diplomat.

At the start of his 40-year reign, Solomon asked God for wisdom to lead His chosen people. He besought the Creator for the divine power of discernment. His widely quoted appeal for divine wisdom served as a base for his reign and prepared the way for his landmark achievements. Consider the following:

Builder. Using a master design crafted by God's own hand, Solomon built the Jerusalem Temple. The structure became a widely known symbol for the living God. Noblemen marveled at its beauty.

He also built palaces for himself and his wife, Pharaoh's daughter. His palace was complete with an ivory throne, hanging gardens, pools, vineyards, orchards, and all kinds of fruit trees.

Outside Jerusalem, Solomon built defensive strongholds in Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Beth-horon, Baalath, and Tadmor (1 Kings 9:15-18).

International Merchant. To finance these operations, Solomon developed a sophisticated trade network. According to *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (vol. R-Z, p. 405), he developed a seaport at the Gulf of Aqabah and formed a trade fleet with Hiram, king of Tyre. He exported copper and iron in exchange for gold, silver, and ivory. Solomon also cornered the horse and chariot trade, importing horses from Cilicia and chariots from Egypt. He then sold these items to the Hittites and Aram.

As a result of these ventures, and the trade routes he controlled, Israel's king amassed untold riches. Scripture says that "the weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents [about 25

tons], not including the revenues brought in by merchants and traders. Also all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon" (2 Chron. 9:13, 14, NIV).

The extent of the young monarch's riches is underscored when one considers that gold and silver became as commonplace as stones throughout Jerusalem (2 Chron. 1:15).

Renowned Counselor. Solomon's wisdom brought him wide acclaim throughout the earth. Kings, ambassadors, philosophers, and wise men traveled to Jerusalem to seek his counsel.

"God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. . . . Greater than all the wisdom of Egypt" (1 Kings 4:29, 30, NIV).

In short, Solomon had it all—untold wealth, unfathomable wisdom, unparalleled acclaim. While bathing in the innocence of youth, God made him the capstone of a regime that was to sparkle with the clarity of precious jewels. Unfortunately, while Solomon reached the heights of wisdom, he plunged to the depths of wickedness.

Spiritual Decline

Ellen G. White notes that the same insidious, imperceptible factors that led to Solomon's decline often beset Christians today (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 61-74).^{*} Chief among these was his failure to maintain a spirit of self-sacrifice.

When choosing a master craftsman to superintend the Temple construction, he didn't allow God to provide a worker who had the spiritual discernment for the noble task. Instead Solomon contracted Hiram of Tyre (2 Chron. 2:13, 14), who demanded high wages, which helped to spread a spirit of covetousness.

This mood was seen also in the monarch's driving ambition to surpass other

nations in power and grandeur. His extravagant building projects burdened the Israelites with heavier taxes.

Another element advanced Solomon's downfall. Solomon did not take advantage of Israel's strategic trade location as a missionary tool. His diplomatic alliances were often built on commerce and intermarriage. He squandered the intimate contact he had with neighboring rulers.

As a result of his polygamous diplomacy, Solomon turned from Jehovah and began worshiping false gods. He built idolatrous shrines and practiced heathen rites. And as Solomon's character plunged, so did the vitality of all Israel.

Fortunately, Solomon turned back to God before his death, but his repentance did not erase the damage brought by years of apostasy. In that apostasy his life teaches timeless lessons. It graphically portrays the results of licentious living and testifies to the power of sin. To think that even the wisest man is still no match for Satan's vices! What a sobering thought!

Solomon's life shows what happens when God's people lose their divine purpose, when the church's goal becomes merely self-preservation instead of prophetic proclamation.

Solomon shows us that despite its allurements, enticements, and trappings, life apart from God brings only ruin and destruction.

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord" (Jer. 9:23, 24).

^{*} Much of the following material was drawn from this source.

WORLD CHURCH

Cuban Church Is Alive and Vibrant.

The Adventist Church in Cuba is "dynamic and filled with the spirit of evangelism," says Leslie V. McMillan, Inter American Division communication director. McMillan and IAD secretary Agustin Galicia made a five-day visit to the Caribbean island January 15-20, where more than 10,000 Adventists live.

The IAD officers addressed 200 pastors and workers in Havana. Cuban leaders reported more than 1,000 baptisms in 1991. A Bible seminary is also in operation at the Union office. At present, division leaders say there are no hindrances to the work. Local leaders are planning a program of evangelism as part of the Adventist Church's Global Mission thrust.

SPD Reports Downturn in LE Sales.

An economic recession in Australia and New Zealand has caused a decrease in literature evangelist book sales of \$316,800 (or 15 percent) in 1991. Sales for 1990 were \$2,162,887.

Division publishing director Bruce Campbell says financial pressures and the fear of unemployment have affected sales. The recession brought about a decrease in the number of full-time literature evangelists.

Conference downsizing has also cut back the number of local conference publishing leaders who are available to assist and train literature evangelists.



Evangelist Brad Thorp prays with baptismal candidates.

Prague Series Brings Bountiful Harvest

A two-month evangelistic campaign in Prague, Czechoslovakia, ended December 15, 1991, with 49 baptisms, says Brad Thorp, associate ministerial secretary for the Euro-Africa Division, who conducted the campaign.

Held in the Dom Kultur center, the prophecy series attracted nightly crowds of more than 800. The series also served as a training vehicle for 45 pastors and seminarians. In all, 125 people assisted in the event.

Interest for the program was generated through five-day stop-smoking seminars, stress-management classes, and Bible study interest cards. The program also featured a one-week health emphasis and vegetarian cooking class.

To follow up the effort, 35 Bible study classes are being held.

Turkey Reports Baptism.

The baptism of a 25-year-old person in Istanbul, Turkey, on December 28 brings the number of baptisms during 1991 in the predominantly Muslim country to three, says Leo Ranzolin, a General Conference vice president. The total number of Adventists in Turkey is 12.

"We pray for God's blessing as our workers spread the gospel in these difficult areas," Ranzolin says.

Correction. The correct date for Ellen G. White's presentation at Tramelan,

Switzerland, reported in the article "Cooperating With God" (October 10, 1991, p. 12), is February 4, 1887.

NORTH AMERICA

DAA Has Highest Student Percentage to Enter College.

Of all the high schools in Bismark, North Dakota, Dakota Adventist Academy had the highest percentage of graduating seniors going on to college and other post-academy training in 1991.

According to statistics supplied by the North Dakota Department of Public

Instruction, 94 percent of DAA graduating seniors went on to college. That total compares with 74 percent of seniors in public schools and 65 percent of seniors in private schools in North Dakota.

"This makes an emphatic statement as to how much DAA students, parents, and faculty value higher education," says Berneice Lunday, an academy spokesperson.

Greater New York Triennial Session Concludes.

Church leaders and members of the Greater New York Conference are rejoicing over the conclusion of their forty-eighth triennial session on January 12. At this third meeting of the session, the election of conference leaders for the next three years was completed.

The session on June 23, 1991, reelected G. Merlin Kretschmar as president. Leon Thomassian was reelected as treasurer in July. And Linford Martin, executive secretary was elected at the January meeting, along with several new departmental leaders, among them: Hector Torres, director of Hispanic ministries, and Fenelon Destin, director of French-Haitian ministries.

With close to 100 countries and at least 15 language groups represented, the constituents aimed for equitable representation of various groups in administration, departmental leadership, and committees.

North Pacific Mission Offerings Increase. For the first time in many years

offering for world mission in the North Pacific Union Conference increased, says Ed Schwisow, union communication director.

World mission offerings for 1991 totaled \$2,927,854, a 4 percent (\$114,355) increase over the 1990 total. Church leaders believe the increase is a byproduct of the "Operation Bearhug," a union outreach program that aided the Adventist Church in the Soviet Union, Schwisow says.

For the same period tithe also increased by \$2,605,033 (or 6.1 percent) to \$44,989,666 in 1991.

Korean Students Visit Florida Academy. Faculty and students at Forest Lake Academy became missionaries when 17 non-Adventist Korean students came to their campus to participate in a two-week workshop in conversational English and American cultural studies January 6-17.

"We didn't preach to them," says principal Robert Caskey. "We just tried to show them how Christians treat each other and how our beliefs affect our daily lives."



Academy students witness through intercultural dialogue.

Canadian Communicator Publicizes Local Church.

Since 1986 when Norman Holden (right) became communication secretary for the local Adventist church in Abbotsford, British Columbia,



the community's newspaper has published 1,900 column inches of news and pictures about Adventists. That represents 16 large-format newspaper pages.

In addition to the articles, local television stations have aired many public service announcements for the church because of Holden's work, says Ken Wiebe, British Columbia Conference communication director.

Arkansas-Louisiana Celebrates 60th Birthday.

Church leaders and delegates of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference will commemorate the conference's sixtieth birthday in a special ceremony February 23. A historic plaque will be unveiled for the occasion.

A special series of camp-meetings are also scheduled, including Little Rock, February 28, 29; New Orleans, March 27, 28; Gentry, June 5-7; Shreveport, August 21, 22; and Baton Rouge, November 13, 14.

LLUMC Gets Computer for China Hospital. A national computer manufacturer has given a computer and system software worth more than \$625,000 to help the church, through Loma Linda

University Medical Center, equip the first western-style hospital in the People's Republic of China, reports Albin Grohar, executive director of advancement.

The gift of equipment and software will help implement a comprehensive management information system at the Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, 60 miles from Shanghai. LLUMC will provide medical personnel to the hospital for five years.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

New It Is Written Series Airs in March. It Is Written co-speaker Mark Finley will present a series of new messages entitled "The Thoughtmakers: Ruling the World From Their Graves," beginning Sunday March 22.

Based on Finley's book by the same title, the three-part series exposes false theories and teachings of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud.

In addition to its North American showings, the series will air across Europe via Super Channel.

TRAC 92 Convenes in April.

TRAC 92, a spiritual weekend specifically designed for babyboomers

(ages 27 to 45) will convene April 24-26 in Long Beach, California.

Sponsored by the Pacific Union Conference, the weekend includes workshops covering current issues facing the church, spiritual discipline, the Adventist lifestyle, and ministering to babyboomers.

To register for the meeting write the Pacific Union Conference, Church Ministries Department, P.O. Box 5005, Westlake Village, CA 91359; or call (805) 497-9457.

ALSO IN THE NEWS

Presbyterians Face \$6.1 Million in Budget Cuts. The Presbyterian Church in the United States is struggling to find ways to lop \$6.1 million from its national budget, hoping to stem a flow of red ink that has forced the church to dip into financial reserves for the past three years.

Top staff officials of the 2.8 million-member denomination were given until early March to come up with the \$6.1 million in cuts, a figure that represents more than 10 percent of the church's \$55 million "unified mission budget," reports Religious News Service.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- Mar. 6 World Day of Prayer
- Mar. 7 Tract Evangelism
- Mar. 14 Adventist World Radio Offering
- Mar. 21 Adventist Youth Day
- Mar. 21 Adventist Youth Week of Prayer begins
- Mar. 21 Sabbath School Community Guest Day
- Mar. 28 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Euro-Africa Division

A Matter of Quality

As many of our readers may remember, we published in the January 3, 1991, issue of the *Review* a summary of *Valuegenesis Report 1*. The report described the critical influences of family, church, and school on the development of faith maturity and church loyalty among Adventist young people.

Then came *Report 2* (not published in the *Review*), with the findings of *Report 1* broken down by North American union conference territories. This report was made available to unions in the North American Division.

Now comes the just-released *Valuegenesis Report 3*, which squarely addresses the issue of quality in Adventist schools. We can now ask How good are Adventist schools? and get some answers. This latest round of the ongoing Valuegenesis research supplies answers that give us much cause for joy, others for concern.

Assessing the quality of education at Adventist schools is a formidable task,

given the varied sizes and locations of these entities, and also given the varying expectations from every group that has anything to do with them.

In the summary that follows, Dr. Bailey Gillespie zeroes in on this complex situation as he summarizes *Valuegenesis Report 3*, a careful study of 204 schools in the North American Division. Some Adventists, the report points out, expect church schools to be bastions of truth—places where they think “right” facts will translate into “right” actions. Yet others want Adventist schools primarily to be training grounds for service, or champions of academia, or teachers of doctrine, or . . .

As you can see, the task for the Valuegenesis research team was not easy. But they persisted in their search for those elements that make up a quality religious educational experience.

As with all reports, we must remember that that is just what this is—a report. For it to become more than that will require the efforts of all of us working together under God’s blessing to create positive change.



Sizing Up Our Children and the Schools That Teach Them

Valuegenesis Report 3

B Y V. B A I L E Y G I L L E S P I E

If you could envision what an ideal, top-quality Adventist school might be like, what words would you use to describe it? Consider the following—written by a member when asked this same question during a recent education seminar:

☐ *I see students coming to our school because they want to be there. The education is so Christ-centered that it provides a continual reminder of what it is like to be in close relationship with the Saviour.*

☐ *I see the students in our schools thinking regularly of others first. They are forming their values through a process that always asks first what Christ would do in a given situation.*

☐ *Students here develop equally in all areas of growth: Spiritually, students learn to build a devotional life. Intellectually, students broaden their reach through exposure to great literature, by mastering both scientific and inductive reasoning, and through application of that learning to real-life situations. Physically, they learn the importance of exercise and healthful living through hard work, vigorous play, and distinctive community service.*

☐ *The school functions just like a Christ-oriented family—concern for others is central. That's my dream of a quality Adventist school.¹*

Quality Instruction

What is quality religious instruction? Does it involve helping people *become* spiritual? Should religion be central in an Adventist school, or should it be just one of many concerns dictated by the demands of contemporary life? Is there also a responsibility to provide excellence in all areas of the curriculum?

These kinds of questions have engaged the Valuegenesis team throughout its task of researching the faith, values, and commitment of Adventist youth, parents, and church workers.

Everyone recognizes that one obvious benefit

of having a Christian school system is that of opportunities for youth to be confronted with life issues often avoided in public education—questions such as who created the world? What difference does it make if I am committed to God or not? What is the process by which I make informed critical choices that will benefit my life spiritually? How can I develop a *Christ-centered* life and at the same time develop *intellectually*? How can I be properly trained for future education or the workplace? How do I make “right” decisions? All these are questions whose answers inform that quality we seek in our schools.

What we have learned from the Valuegenesis research project is that we have a school system that can be characterized by the grand opportunity that it provides for significant religious instruction and education. But what more is required? How do you make our schools an experience both in understanding truth *and* in finding a personal relationship with Jesus—both qualities of a mature faith, according to *Valuegenesis Report 1*. Couple these with the concern for service that is inherent in Adventist faith, and you have a formidable challenge.

The purpose of *Valuegenesis Report 3* was to determine what it means to have a *quality* religious educational system and then to use that criterion to evaluate all types of Adventist schools.

Remember, *Valuegenesis Report 1* examined the family, church, and school as to those factors that enhanced faith maturity and loyalty to the church.

Valuegenesis Report 2 was a local union report showing at-risk involvement. It also provided more evaluations and suggestions about what is needed in each of the unions of the North American Division to assist in promoting faith maturity, loyalty, and commitment.

Valuegenesis Report 3, however, takes on an even more challenging task—answering the question What is it that makes for *quality Adventist education*?

How can I
develop a
Christ-centered
life and at the
same time
develop
intellectually?



Adventist schools
in this research
show a rich
commitment to
the mission of
the Adventist
Church.

In formulating an answer for this question, the coordinating committee² had a significant opportunity to examine Seventh-day Adventist schools—boarding and day, large and small, K-8 and K-12—to determine those factors that could make their ultimate existence a necessity.

Valuegenesis Report 3 is an in-depth study of 204 schools, chosen to be representative of all schools in the North American Division. For this third report, a 32-item index of school quality was created (see Chart 1). It fell naturally into some 10 areas. Participation in all 10 would indicate a “quality” school—one that was fulfilling the mission and purpose of Adventist education.

What follows is a brief look at how we are doing. Theoretically, and for the statistical purposes of *Valuegenesis*, the school that participates in each of the 10 areas could be construed as having significant quality in those areas that Adventists believe are important to social, intellectual, and most important, spiritual maturity.

Those areas can be grouped into the following categories: staff training; commitment to Adventism; religious education programming; academic programming; climate issues such as caring community, effective discipline, enthusiasm, resources, mission and governance, and systems of support.

Let's Begin With What We Know for Sure.³

□ On the average, Adventist schools evidence 16.5 of the 32 quality indicators. Eighteen percent of schools have 20 or more of the 32 indicators. Thirty percent of the schools achieve between 11 and 15 of the indicators, while only 9 percent have 10 or fewer in their schools.

□ The three school quality indicators found most commonly among Adventist schools are these: “Teachers feel an obligation to promote the faith of students,” “[The] school’s mission is widely shared,” and “Teachers are committed to Adventism.” This is reason to celebrate. Adventist schools in this research show a tremendous dedication to teaching on the part of instructors, deep devotion to the Adventist message, and equally rich commitment to the mission of the Adventist Church.

Too often we criticize teachers for something that this research just does not see. On the whole, Adventist teachers are providing a great deal of the religious nurture that local conferences have not been able to supply through the hiring of dedicated youth pastors.⁴ In essence, teachers are doing more than they have been asked to do.

□ The three school quality indicators *least often* found in Adventist schools are these: “Teach-

Chart 1: Indicators of School Quality*

Commitment to Adventism

- 94% Teachers committed to Adventism
- 75% Students committed to Adventism
- 68% School staff endorses Adventist standards

Religious Education Programming

- 25% Schools offer quality religious education programs
- 15% Students benefit from religious education programs
- 95% Teachers feel an obligation to promote the faith of students
- 88% Teachers actively serve as religious educators

Staff Training

- 80% Teachers have a B.A. degree or higher
- 82% Teachers certified by Adventist Church
- 37% Teachers certified by the state
- 64% Principal has advanced degree

Academic Program

- 28% School offers quality academic programs
- 44% Students are committed to learning

Climate: Caring Community

- 25% Teachers are perceived as caring
- 21% Teachers are involved with students
- 19% Teachers refrain from “putting down” students

Climate: Effective Discipline

- 46% School maintains order
- 34% Discipline is fair
- 19% Students avoid at-risk behavior

Climate: Enthusiasm

- 66% Teachers experience high job satisfaction
- 22% School has real school spirit

Resources

- 32% School has financial health
- 65% School has good physical facilities
- 70% Teachers have access to good teaching materials and supplies
- 58% School has stable or growing enrollment

Mission and Governance

- 79% School has clear mission
- 95% School’s mission is widely shared
- 66% Teachers are involved in forming education policy

Systems of Support

- 62% School has support of pastor(s)
- 63% School has support of parents
- 44% Teachers communicate with parents
- 81% Teachers have support of school administrators

* Percentage is of all schools combined, reported by appropriate constituencies.

ers refrain from putting down students," "Students avoid at-risk behavior," and "Students benefit from the religious education program." This latter conclusion is based on the finding that in the vast majority of schools less than 75 percent of students claim that religious education programs help them grow in faith. Here is the other side of the coin. Somehow, students are perceiving that their teachers do not care deeply about them, and that their schools are not spending the resources and creativity needed to provide quality religious learning experiences in all areas of religious experience—doctrine, service, devotional life, application, and values.

□ Among types of schools, the average number of the 32 school quality indicators range from 14.3 in K-12 schools to 18.7 in K-6 and K-8 schools.

□ Among K-6 and K-8 schools, smaller schools exhibit more school quality indicators than larger schools, yet among K-12 and 9-12 schools, the pattern is the reverse, with larger schools evidencing greater quality than smaller schools.

□ On several important school quality indicators, Adventist schools outperform public schools. These include college attendance rates for graduating seniors, the amount of homework students do, and the absence of discipline problems.

Five Comparisons

In five comparisons, Adventist schools seem more effective than schools in other networks. For example, Valuegenesis research indicates that 66 percent of students graduating from Adventist senior academies enter colleges and universities. This exceeds the public school rate of 30 percent and 51 percent for Catholic schools (see Chart 2). In addition, the amount of homework required is often a significant indicator of the quality of a school.⁵ Valuegenesis shows that Adventist academy students do on the average about double the homework that their public school peers do.

And some especially exciting information indicates that Adventists do one of the best jobs of any private school system in the United States at making schooling available to ethnic minorities. This rich texture of ethnic diversity is a positive feature of the family of God in our schools. Our students have an opportunity to learn, associate, and experience the various cultures that this diversity celebrates.

Areas of Weakness

What are the antidotes needed for Adventists to confront the problems the church school system faces? What must we do if the school system is to grow in spite of the current church demograph-

ics, which suggest that the number of school-aged children of Adventists in North America has declined? One suggestion in *Valuegenesis Report 3* is "to focus anew on school quality, to pursue purposefully an intentional campaign to improve the academic, religious, values, and cultural dimensions; and to communicate with new vigor and intensity why Adventist schools are both good and distinctive."⁶ What is indicated, however, is that even Adventist schools are in a competitive market now, and the kind of environment they create for quality learning and religious commitment to be developed is important.

What has become clear are some relative "soft spots" in reported school quality. These can become a primary concern for school boards, lay advisory groups, and conference educational policy committees in the next decade. The "soft spots" in need of improvement include "the financial health of the schools," "the fact that many schools do not have a stable or growing enrollment in spite of their quality," and "the fact that many teachers fail to communicate with the parents of the students enrolled."

In addition, all three of the caring climate indicators appear to be low, even though a majority of students perceive teachers as caring and supportive.⁷

As demonstrated in *Valuegenesis Report 1*, a significant school effectiveness indicator is the quality of the religious education. The higher the quality, the more students increase in faith and loyalty to Adventism and to Christ. Tragically, this is one of the weakest of all of the areas shown in the research.

Based on the returns from more than 10,000 students, relatively few report that the religious education activities have a strong influence on



"Soft spots" in school quality include finances and a caring climate.

Chart 2:
Percent of High School Seniors Entering Four-Year Colleges or Universities

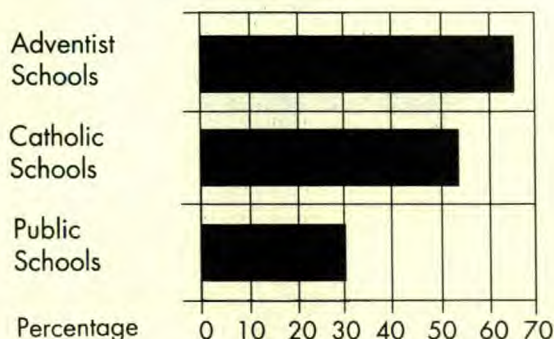
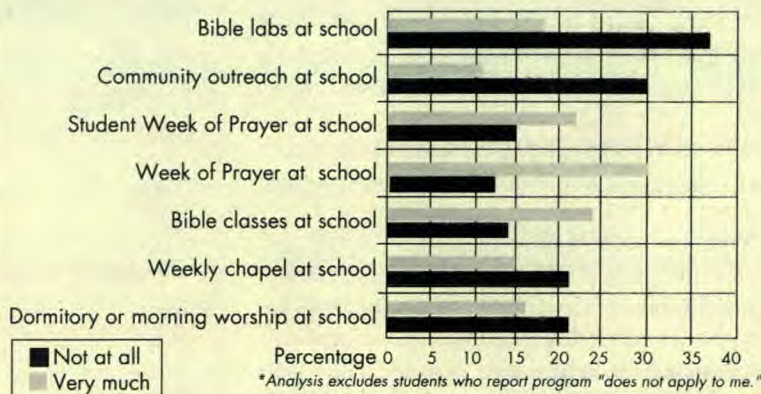


Chart 3:

How much have each of the following helped you develop your religious faith? *



We need to spend time to apply Christianity creatively to the activities of school life to increase the religious educational impact on students.

their faith, and the perceived quality of programs seems to decrease with their movement through the upper grades. For example, younger students report a stronger impact than the older ones with regard to those factors that the church provides for their religious growth in the educational setting. Perhaps what is even more startling is the fact that there are so few actual religious activities that can be evaluated. Some time must be spent to apply Christianity creatively to the activities of school life to increase the religious educational impact on students. (See Chart 3.)

What About the Type of School?

One debate among Adventists has to do with the relative impact of school type. Do boarding schools or day schools have the advantage in regard to the quality indicators examined? There is no clear answer here. It is a common assumption in school circles, particularly in non-Adventist school systems, that boarding schools have the advantage—in climate, resources, academic rigor, and other indicators of quality.

However, the Valuegenesis study finds that this assumption does not apply to Adventist schools. Boarding schools average 15.3 of the 32 quality indicators compared to 14.6 among day schools. This difference is not statistically significant. There are specific differences on various indicators, however. Boarding schools in our denomination have the advantage in staff training, orderly climate, staff endorsement of Adventist standards, and the support of pastors and parents. Day schools tend to have the advantage in students committed to learning, financial and instructional resources, and stability in enrollment.

Boarding and day schools seem to have similar ratings regarding the religious education program area, too. What we learn, however, is that no boarding or day school has the advantage as regards involvement in at-risk behaviors. Neither type of school communicates better with parents. And all are in need of improvement.⁸

And Finally

What happens to the Valuegenesis report is really the key to understanding its significance. Schools in the North American Division are beginning to analyze creatively the implications of the study and make the necessary plans for change.

And how do we make changes? It is through prayer, commitment, creative assessment, and positive action that dreams become reality.

For your copy of the new North American Division book *Valuegenesis: Faith in the Balance* (310 pages), send \$10.95 plus \$.75 postage to La Sierra University Press, Riverside, CA 92515. Or contact your local Adventist Book Center. (California residents, add 7.65 percent state tax to your order.) If you would rather be billed for your order, please phone (714) 785-3454.

¹ Member response in a Vision to Action session in the North American Division, 1991.

² Valuegenesis coordinating team members were V. Bailey Gillespie, Ph.D., professor of theology and Christian personality and director of the John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry; Stuart Tyner, director of marketing for La Sierra University; Steve Case, Ph.D., youth pastor, Carmichael Seventh-day Adventist Church, Northern California Conference; Charles T. Smith, Jr., Ph.D., North American Division Board of Higher Education; and Peter L. Benson, Ph.D., and Michael Donahue, Ph.D., of Search Institute, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

³ The following information is taken from Peter L. Benson and Michael J. Donahue, *Valuegenesis: Report 3, A Study of School Quality* (Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1991), pp. 1, 2.

⁴ To this end the John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry at La Sierra University has been established. In direct response to the Project Affirmation Risk and Promise Report, this youth ministry research and resource center was established in 1991. Should you like to be included on its newsletter mailing list to receive updates on the Valuegenesis report and information about youth ministry in the Adventist Church as well as workshops that are designed for local lay youth leaders, please write to the Hancock Center for Youth Ministry, La Sierra University, Riverside, CA 92515. Or fax your message to (714) 683-0997.

⁵ U.S. Department of Education, "What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning" (1986), p. 41.

⁶ *Valuegenesis Report 3*, p. 3.

⁷ The criteria set for quality academic programs and quality religious education programs were quite high and stringent. In both cases, a school is said to have attained effectiveness only if 75 percent of its staff (teachers and principal) rate the program as "excellent." Had we taken a less stringent approach by setting the criteria to a rating of "good" or "excellent," the indicator achievement would have risen to about 90 percent in both cases. But because overall academic quality and religious education quality are so crucial to the success of Adventist schools, requiring a rating of "excellent" seemed warranted by the committee of researchers.

⁸ Anyone wanting to study the school types in detail is invited to obtain *Valuegenesis Report 3* from his or her local union or conference educational secretary.



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Government Aid to Education



By Calvin B. Rock

Our academy needs money badly. I know of a number of government programs that we could well utilize to benefit our operation, but our church members in this area are so conservative that the board refuses to apply for many gifts that would be of assistance. What is our posture regarding this aspect of church and state?

The Bible provides examples indicating that government grants, under proper circumstances, are not evil. Both Ezra (Ezra 6 and 7) and Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2) accepted state moneys for church projects. Furthermore, our prophetess writes: "The Lord still moves upon the hearts of kings and rulers in behalf of His people, and it becomes those who are so deeply interested in the religious liberty question not to cut off any favors, or withdraw themselves from the help that God has moved men to give, for the advancement of His cause" (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 202).

None of the above, however, suggests indiscriminate acceptance of federal moneys. Experience in many countries has taught us that governments often impose their standards on institutions in which they have invested financially. While imposition sometimes occurs even without government investment, it is much more likely with it.

In the United States, the civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, gender, creed, and national origin, and the assurance of compliance powers established by what was the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare give government strong regulatory authority over recipient institutions.

For these reasons, in the North American Division church policy requires that the union conference committee and the

NAD legislation and religious liberty committee evaluate all local conference or institution grant applications. College and university participation in grant programs in the U.S. and Canada is reviewed by the NAD Board of Higher Education and the NAD committee, as well as by the union and General Conference auditors.

Proposals for equipment, research, and academic programming (religion

Governments often impose their standards on institutions in which they have invested financially.

faculty activities excepted) are usually approved, as are those involving direct student aid. Proposals involving construction (brick and mortar) are rarely approved.

Leadership is vitally concerned not only about the type of grant received but also about the level of grant dependence. You may study our full position in policy HC of the NAD policy book.

I believe organ transplants are so much better than putting our bodies into the ground to rot and letting people suffer. I think Christians should be required to share their body parts. I cannot understand the selfish refusal of so-called believers. Do you agree?

A number of serious questions arise with respect to transplants, whether from

a cadaver or between living persons. Cadaver donations raise fewer questions, but even there such considerations as the documented wishes of the deceased, the will of the family, and the treatment or mutilation of corpses present serious moral issues.

The primary questions regarding living donor (inter vivos) transplants involve the differences between sharing renewable parts (i.e., blood and bone marrow), nonrenewable parts (i.e., heart and liver), and paired nonrenewable parts (i.e., corneas and kidneys). The gift of a nonpaired, nonrenewable body part (heart or liver) is regarded as altruistic suicide—giving one's life for another. That decision is rare but real, and requires sober reflection.

The donor also faces the question of suitability, including age and health. Examples of the latter are screening the blood for AIDS and the use of organs from terminal versus nonterminal donors.

The health-care team also has ethical responsibilities. It must provide counseling and instruction to donors, as well as recipients and their families, and make fair distribution of body parts.

Does God approve transplants? I have no doubt that He does. After all, our Lord gave His life to save us. Willing our bodies to science or sharing parts while alive reflects unselfish sacrifice. I do not agree that these decisions (even donating one's blood) should, as you suggest, be required, but they do demonstrate the highest Christian charity and deserve our positive consideration.

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

Who Are Crying for Our Help Today?

*Serving
humanity in the
spirit of Jesus*

BY B. LYN BEHRENS

The following is a condensation of a devotional presented at the 1991 Annual Council in Perth, Australia.—Editors.

The man lay in a crumpled heap on the road—naked, bruised, bleeding—scarcely alive. Gone was his well-dressed business appearance, present earlier in the morning as he headed for the city. Now he was just another victim of violence.

The first man upon the scene of the crime quickly assessed the danger that lurked nearby and hastened on to ensure his own safety. The second man to pass that way paused to check it

out. The victim looked hopeless. He quickly decided not to become involved, and hastened on about his own business.

Would a third traveler do likewise? No, this was to be an “encounter of a different kind.” Without fanfare he set about his self-appointed task. In spite of personal risk, he chose involvement, quickly translated into action: first aid, transportation, prepayment care.

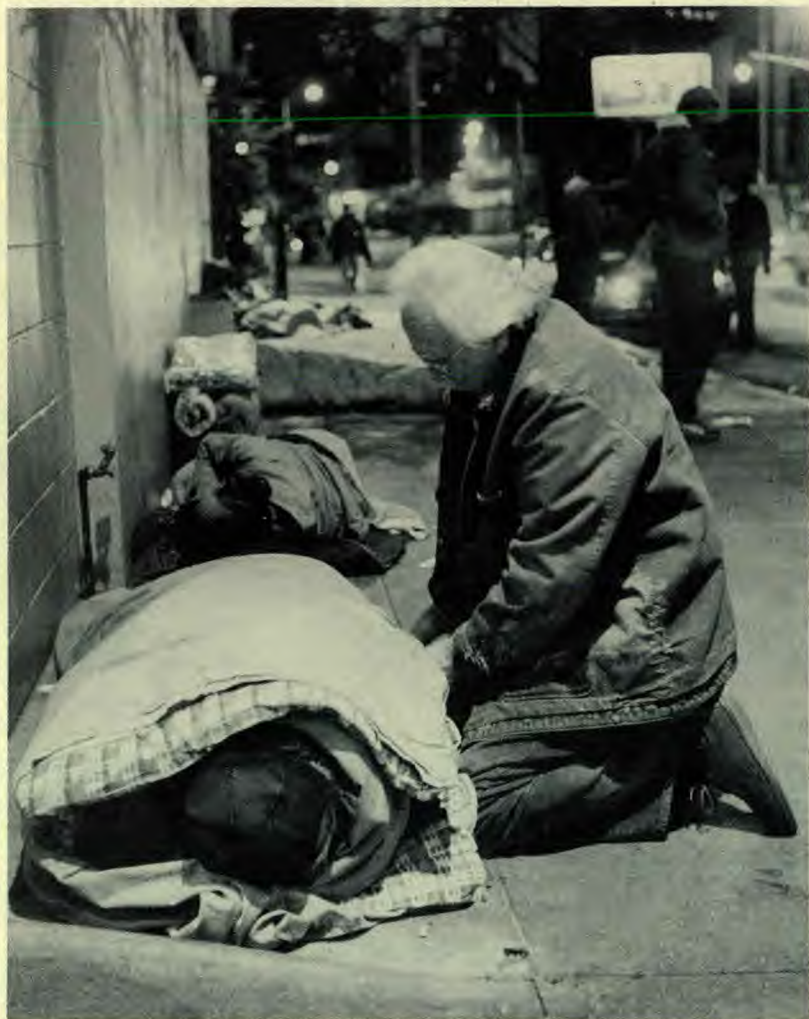
The events on the Jericho road 2,000 years ago speak to the issues, attitudes, and order in our contemporary society, and of our opportunity for involvement. Embedded in Christ’s story of the good Samaritan are sharp contrasts of selfishness with selflessness; hatred and indifference with agape love; brokenness with healing, health, and wholeness; and the kingdom of this world with the kingdom of heaven.

Reflect with me on the actions of the robbers, the priest and the Levite, the victim, and the Samaritan so that we might understand our own institutional and individual responsibilities.

Of the robbers we read in Luke 10:30: They “stripped him [the victim],” “beat him,” and left him “half dead.” * Yes, they were violent, selfish men intent only on their own gain.

In August 1990, world leaders gathered in Oslo, Norway—heads of state, former political prisoners, authors, educators, scholars, artists, and Nobel laureates. They had come from many countries, including Africa, the former U.S.S.R., Malaysia, Great Britain, El Salvador, China, Czechoslovakia, Japan, U.S.A., and Poland. They were drawn together by a common concern—distress over the violence and turmoil of our global community.

Elie Wiesel (the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize recipient), together with other conference sponsors, attempted to dissect the “anatomy of hate.” Hate, Wiesel said, wears many masks besides violence. “It comes disguised as racial or religious superiority, as patriotism and revolution.” Hate, he said, is “the cancer at the root of human relationships.” And although it’s been with us since the beginning, he noted, “it remains an uncharted sickness in the human soul.”¹



This was the disease of the robbers on the Jericho road.

Apathy or Compassion?

But what of the priest and the Levite? I would propose that although violence is a symptom of the "hatred disease," Christ's story speaks of a far more prevalent and insidious and deadly disease of the human soul: the sickness of apathy and indifference. Luke 10:31, 32 indicates that the priest and the Levite "saw" and then "passed by on the other side." It is the same "sickness" that has tolerated centuries of slavery, has been blind to the atrocities of Auschwitz, promotes the sale of tobacco to balance trade deficits in nonindustrialized countries, and ignores irresponsible toxic waste disposal. It is a sickness of individuals, families, nations, and the world. This was the disease of the priest and the Levite.

What of the victim? Luke 10:30 says that the man was left "half dead." Yes, the man on the road to Jericho was physically traumatized, but it is imperative to remember that individuals can be also mentally, emotionally, and spiritually broken.

Brokenness comes at different times, in different ways, for different reasons. At times it is the logical consequence of poor choices and behaviors: A 14-year-old girl six months pregnant—the result of an evening of unsupervised and unwise dating; the minister's son, a drug addict—angry at God and society; the 50-year-old woman dying of lung cancer as a result of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day for 20 years. At times it is unfair, as innocent persons are victimized by the poor choices and behaviors of another: the businessman of sterling integrity left penniless by his dishonest partner; the faithful wife of 24 years dying of AIDS, infected by her unfaithful husband; the grandparents struggling to cope with their spastic and retarded grandson, orphaned and disabled by a drunken driver who walked away from the tangled vehicles unharmed.

But regardless of when, how, or why it happens, brokenness always hurts, leaving the victim in need of healing and wholeness. Brokenness cracks the insulation of our world, allowing the chill of reality to awaken us, and prompts us to

ask real-life questions, and to search for real-life answers.

Finally, the Samaritan. Luke 10:33 says that he "saw" the man, he "took pity" on him and "went to him." One can't help speculating about the inner goodness of this man. Possibly, it was born of his own encounter with social injustice and discrimination. Clearly he had risen above bitterness and hostility, and had chosen to remain sensitive to the hurts of the battered and bedraggled of the world. This man's selfless love and kindly actions turned the broken world of a stranger "right side up again."

This kind of love can be defined as a principle. It is displayed in the person of Jesus Christ. The terse phrases of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 clearly describe it—what it is and what it's not:

Love is patient—kind.

Love does not envy or boast.

Love is not proud—rude—self-seeking—easily angered.

Love keeps no record of wrongs.

Love always protects—trusts—hopes—perseveres.

Love never fails.

As Jesus Loved

Two thousand years ago God entered human history in Jesus Christ. He came to show us the unseen Sovereign Lord of the universe; to introduce the kingdom of heaven, where world order is "right side up"; to forgive, to heal, to re-create, to save, and to live love in the midst of hatred and indifference.

Pause with Him at Jacob's well as He asks a woman for water. She was a social outcast because of her questionable moral conduct. She was thirsty for human acceptance. He offered her Living Water that changed her forever.

Observe Him stoop low over the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda. An invalid for 38 years. He asks, "Do you want to be whole?" Then He commands, "Get up, pick up your mat and walk."

Stand silently and watch the Sinless One disperse a mob of religious leaders who tested Him with the case of adultery. He wrote their sins, not in cement or on a billboard, but on the ground of the marketplace where they would be erased by countless feet. Condemned, they vanished, leaving Him alone with her. Then hear Him gently say, "Neither do I con-

demn thee: go, and sin no more" (KJV).

Today our challenge, responsibility, and opportunity are to turn the world upside down through sharing Christ's love in the community.

We must ferret out the components of effective witnessing and sharing. Ellen White reminds us that "God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to heavenly angels. . . . But in His infinite love He chose to make us coworkers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 79). This passage clearly defines a twofold responsibility: *ministry* and *message*, *doing* and *saying*.

Ministry Through Action

Let us first consider the loving ministry of our deeds. Matthew 25:31-46 records the parable of the sheep and the goats and speaks of the King's commendation at the end of time of effective ministry that flows from unconscious goodness.

"*I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.*" In this connection, consider the scope of the programs operated by ADRA.² Tons of food are delivered in the wake of natural and other disasters, and hungry people are taught how to maximize their crops. But more particularly, observe the gentle rocking of a wasted Kurdish infant gulping formula, whose young eyes—aged by hunger—piercingly search to discover if this person looking down at him may be trusted.

"*I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.*" Consider the work of Adventist student missionaries as they dig wells to provide cool, clean, uncontaminated water. But more particularly, observe a rescuer pause to share his own water with a man buried alive in earthquake rubble.

"*I was a stranger and you invited me in.*" Consider the shelters for the homeless in the inner city that substitute warmth, food, and a bed for icy winds, scraps, and the hard pavement. But more particularly, observe the aged woman, wrinkled and tired, pacing the floor, cradling her 1-month-old great-granddaughter—abandoned by her drug-addicted mother, an infant experiencing the pain of drug withdrawal.

"I needed clothes and you clothed me." Consider the crates of clothes shipped by Dorcas workers to unclad, shivering people half a world away. But more particularly, observe the joy of a schoolgirl holding her first new dress, not worn and torn like all the others, discarded to be used by second-class citizens, but white and soft and frilly, special for church.

"I was sick and you looked after me." Consider the worldwide Adventist Health System, which each year serves millions of sick people around the globe, immunizing infants to prevent measles and whooping cough, or using the sophisticated science and skills to transplant a tiny heart (the size of a walnut) into a 3-hour-old infant—a gift of life. But more particularly, observe love, forgiveness, and acceptance as a godly parent cares for a prodigal son who has returned home, destitute of friends, devoid of self-esteem, filled with guilt, dying of AIDS, the result of lifestyle choices.

"I was in prison and you came to visit me." Consider the ministry to thousands of nameless men and women whose physical freedom has been restricted but whose hearts and minds have been left free to explore meaning, God's gift of pardon, and re-creation into Christ's likeness. But more particularly, observe the Christian teacher, who, fully knowing the scope of the crime, nevertheless reaches out in friendship, creating a bridge to new beginnings.

Yes, it is very clear that "loving ministry" is being expressed in many ways today both through our church programs and institutions, as well as through the special human-to-human encounters that occur countless times each day.

More Than Preaching

Mark 16:15 records Jesus' directive to "go into all the world and preach the good news." What does it mean to "preach good news"? Is this commission fulfilled through the work of ministers, through Sabbath sermons, evangelistic series, formal Bible studies, and Revelation seminars? I would answer yes, but much more. I believe that it is time for every child of God, regardless of profession, education, social status, gender, or ethnicity, to understand his/her responsibility, and to accept the chal-

lenge of graciously sharing the good news of a loving, saving God. Speaking of that which is real in their own lives. Speaking to all who are ready to learn.

Christ showed us how to share good news: There was the Sermon on the Mount. But there was also the one-on-one encounters with Nicodemus and with the woman at the well. It was Sabbath worship in the synagogue, but it was also in all places, under all circumstances. It was hours of dialogue, but it was also the briefest encounters. It was through story, through everyday experiences, through

*Christ was ever observant,
watching for cracks
of brokenness in the lives
of those He encountered.*

thought-provoking sentences, through probing questions.

Christ was ever observant, watching for cracks of brokenness in the lives of those He encountered, sensitive to learner readiness. He arrested humanity's attention and implanted within the souls of men and women spiritual explosives that transformed lives.

Just as hydrogen must combine with oxygen to form water, so *loving ministry* must combine with *gospel message* to bring living water to the soul. Our health-care system must provide the highest quality of loving care, *as well as* the gracious sharing of "good news," not just by the chaplain, but by all health-care professionals. Our educational programs must ensure not only academic excellence but also personal development through implanting and nurturing values and attitudes, and by facilitating lifelong spiritual development. As individuals, regardless of profession, we must combine action and message in all our ministry.

Bobby was 3 years old. Unconscious and dependent upon life support, he lay propped up in bed in the intensive care

unit, head swathed in bandages. Three days before, Bobby had been a blond-haired, blue-eyed, inquisitive child. Mid-morning, Bobby and a little friend had explored his parents' upstairs bedroom. In the bedside table drawer, he had discovered his father's loaded pistol. Looking down the barrel with his right eye, Bobby pulled the trigger. The bullet exploded through his eye across his brain, exiting from the back of his skull, destroying all the tissue in its path. Now Bobby's life hung in the balance. But regardless of whether he lived or died, Bobby's family would be forever changed.

Bobby's father could not accept any responsibility for the tragedy. He spent his time alternating between berating and ridiculing Bobby's mother or drinking and drifting into a drunken stupor. Mother felt condemned by everyone and most particularly herself. The child protection agency had closed down her preschool nursery. She accused herself of bad parenting. But over and above all this hurt, she longed to find a God she knew about but with whom she had no personal friendship. That night, two years ago, Bobby received expert medical care, but equally important, Bobby's mother received "good news" of a loving, forgiving, healing God.

Today, as individuals, professionals, servant leaders, God's children, it is our challenge and the challenge of every child of God to resist the allure of possessions, prestige, position, and power and to remain committed to serve God and humanity. It is our responsibility and the responsibility of every child of God to maintain our connection to the Vine, through study and prayer, and to grow in wholeness, bearing the fruits of the Spirit.

* Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

¹ From his Nobel acceptance speech, Oslo, Norway, December 10, 1986.

² Adventist Development and Relief Agency.



Dr. B. Lyn Behrens is president of Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California.

GOD'S TIMING

*A first-person
account of the
struggle to
accept answers
to prayer that
sometimes are
“Yes,” and
sometimes are
“No.”*

I sat across from the lawyer in his conference room waiting to sell my house. My throat was dry, my heart was pounding, and tears were very near the surface. Memories threatened to overwhelm me. Past pain, future hope, present joy, and relief all converged in this room. Tears would be the most accurate way to express my feelings, but I bit my lower lip, determined not to cry.

My mind jumped back four years to when I first sat in the room. Bob and I believed our being

there was a direct answer to prayer. All of 1986 we'd looked for our dream retirement home on a lake. And finally in September we handed over the check and signed the papers that made one ours.

Some of the houses we'd seen were too small, some were too awkward, and all were too expensive as long as we stayed in our Boston home.

Our dream house became available the same week Bob's tumor was found. Some called it luck. We called it Providence, a proof of God's



BY JOYCE RIGSBY

TERRY CREWS

timing. With major surgery imminent Bob decided to retire: we would sell our Boston home and buy the dream house at last. It stands on the edge of a clear New England lake. As I write, the rising sun is suffusing the sky with pale pink and rose. The leaves on the trees surrounding the lake are brilliant yellow, orange, and red.

I fell in love with the house the first time I saw it. Located on a private road just five miles from my mother and a daughter, it had a modern kitchen, a spectacular view, and the best beach on the lake. I knew it would be the perfect place for Bob to recover.

There was one hitch. We had not advertised our Boston house for sale. And the owner of the lake house had to have a sure sale within a week. "God," I pleaded, "what shall I do? Would You lead us to this house without also helping us buy it? Please give me an idea."

Then I thought of a real estate friend in charge of housing at the hospital where Bob worked. He had evaluated our house the year before. I made an appointment.

In his office, I got to the point without delay. "As you know, Bob just had surgery. I need to sell our house immediately so we can buy one I found. Our present house is close to the hospital and would be ideal for any employee to live in. Will you buy it?" He agreed.

All in One Week

So while Bob was still in the hospital, our house was sold, and we had the money needed for a down payment on the lake property. The timing was incredible. I wanted to shout aloud from the housetops! God had helped me find the perfect retirement home at just the time we needed it—and then sold our present house, too. All in one week!

We moved October 1. The trees framing the lake were an ever-changing riot of color reflected in the water. Boat docks had been taken up for the winter, and ducks were the only swimmers. It was incredibly quiet and peaceful. After 30 years of sharing Bob, a gynecologist, with women in labor, I finally had him to myself.

My hopes and God's timing meshed perfectly. I was thankful for answered prayer.

Because Bob had started gaining

weight and feeling better in August and September, I had blocked out the possibility of metastasis. Then toward the end of October, Bob saw the doctor again. He said the cancer was all through his lungs and there were spots on his brain.

"Oh, God," I pleaded again, "I need him so much. I can't live alone without him. Please intervene and stop this disease that's threatening his life. It's not time for him to die."

"Have you considered anointing?" his doctor asked us. I struggled with the

Bob's was a perfect death and a perfect funeral—20 years too soon.

concept. Would I remain able to love and trust God if we asked for special physical healing and the request was not granted?

Finally I realized that no matter what happened we needed a miracle: either Bob's physical healing or God's sustaining me if Bob died. But still I pleaded for, bargained for, even demanded the miracle of healing. I advised God that it would be much easier to heal Bob than watch over me during the long years ahead without Bob's help. I reminded God of my scars that proved how accident-prone I am when Bob isn't around.

Bob was anointed, and improved. But the physical miracle was short-lived. Enough time to see all the children, enough time to consummate the selling of his practice. Again we applauded God's timing in providing a buyer.

Then Bob died. A perfect death and a perfect funeral—20 years too soon. "God's off in His timing," I wept. "I don't want to be a widow for the next 20 years."

My hopes and God's timing did not mesh. While my head understood that God sometimes answers "No" to requests, my heart was saying, "God, how could You not intervene?"

In the days that followed, God always kept many appointments with me—it was

I who was tardy or didn't show. God was there when the phone lines went dead in the house. God was there when rats got into the house and when the water rose to 20 inches in the basement. God was there when the furnace backfired.

And God was there the summer I finally decided to sell our dream home. I needed to make a new beginning. Bob's death ended a period in my life. My time at the lake was the neutral zone. At first I'd been overwhelmed by its emptiness, but there I had come to terms with aloneness. Now I needed to move on with my life.

A New Beginning

Inner signals alerted me that I was ready. I realized I had made the inner realignment necessary for a new beginning. I had learned to be content though alone. And when Bob's uncle repeatedly said "Put your house on the market," I knew that the time had come to stop getting ready to sell the house—and do it! I needed to relinquish the upkeep of a place too big for me and move on with my life.

"It's time to sell the house, Lord," I informed God. Yet I recognized that my timing was not always God's timing. As I drove through the streets and towns of New England I saw "For Sale" signs by the dozens. Some homes were empty, and I knew the owners were paying mortgages here and rent somewhere else.

As unemployment rose, many who had lived here all their lives were now thinking of moving. They had families to support and mortgages to pay, and the economy was not promising. I was glad I had no mortgage and didn't have to move because of a job. Yet the timing for going seemed right.

There were hurdles—physical ones. A neighbor put up a fence to contest what I considered my right of way. Advice ran from "You'll have to take him to court" (I knew I couldn't sell if the house were in the middle of a court case) to "Improve the alternate access." I took the latter advice.

There were hurdles—psychological ones. I would have to break up the last home Bob and I had shared, and make a major move alone. I would have to winnow a few treasures from a lifetime of collecting.

On one hand I couldn't bear the

thought of leaving, and on the other I knew the time had come to leave.

I wondered, "Does God know how important it is to me that I move *now*?" My head knew God knew, yet I wasn't sure the house would sell on the soft market. Reports on television said one house in 14 was selling. People regaled me with tales of how long houses had been for sale and not sold, or how long they had been on the market before being sold at a tremendous sacrifice. I slept poorly, my stomach ached, my head ached. I realized how much easier it is to talk about handling stress than to actually handle it.

Then I remembered a line from a sermon I'd heard years ago. "You haven't

really given something over to the Lord until you're willing for events to go either way." I was inclined to feel that *if* God's timing coincided with my desires, my prayer was answered. I wasn't always willing to accept "No" or "Wait awhile."

God was in control. The real estate agent was capable. I determined to give up worrying.

In retrospect, I don't know why I should have been so surprised when an acceptable offer came from the first person who looked at the house. Or why I should have been so distraught when I thought he might not sign the purchase and sales agreement.

Now the lawyer and I waited for the buyer to arrive with the check so I could

hand over the deed. I marveled at God's timing. God had worked through a capable agent to find the right buyer at the right time. Many tell me, "You're lucky." I call it Providence.

I still don't understand the timing of Bob's death, but someday God will make it plain to me. In the meantime, I'm confident in God's perfect timing and am better able to handle answers to prayer that are "No" or "Wait awhile." ❧



Joyce Rigsby, a freelance writer from Hanford, California, wrote this article while living in Massachusetts.



What Sunlight Does for Us

BY BONNIE MOYERS

What would we do without sunlight? Our days would be very dark, with no sun to help us see when we work and play. Our world would also be very cold without the sun's warming rays—so cold that we might freeze to death. Solar (or sun) power is becoming an important source of heat indoors. Many homes and buildings now have solar heat collectors.

Without our sun we might also be very hungry, for the ground would probably be bare, as plants and trees need light of some kind in order to grow.

With no crops or gardens, we would have to find some other source of food. That would be hard, because so many animals live off vegetation—and if there were no animals, there wouldn't even be dairy products. In underdeveloped countries where tractors are scarce, animals such as horses, donkeys, and cows or water buffalo are also used for plowing.

Light affects our health. If we never had any light, our eyes might go blind



from always being in darkness. This happened to some fish in a cave in Korea. The first ones that entered the underground stream in the cave could see. The next generations of fish had eyes that grew weaker and weaker. Now the fish living there have sightless, skin-covered lumps where their eyes should be.

Just as not enough light can hurt our eyes, we can also be hurt by too much. We should never look directly at the sun. It's so bright that it can burn and damage our eyes. When we are reading or doing other chores involving close work, we must make sure that the amount of light (sun-

light or other kinds) is not so much that the glare hurts our eyes, and not so little that we have to strain to see what we are doing.

Our bodies need some sunlight. Too much can burn our skin, causing redness and painful blisters, and making our skin peel. Too many sunburns can make it easy to get skin cancer later on. But sunshine in reasonable doses (what we can get using a sunscreen that filters out harmful rays) helps our bodies make vitamin D. We need vitamin D to prevent a disease called rickets, which can cause bones to grow weak, crooked, and out of shape. We also need vitamin D to keep our teeth strong.

Sunlight is a good cleansing agent that kills many kinds of germs. A sunny sick-room is not as full of germs as one in which the shades and curtains are always kept shut. The warmth of the sun also helps purify lakes, rivers, and streams.

We should be thankful that God made the sun and that it is so faithful in doing what He tells it to.

Actions of General Interest From the 1991 NAD Year-End Meeting

The following actions, voted by the 1991 North American Division committee meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland, November 3-6, 1991, apply to the North American Division only. Annual Council actions for the world field that are applicable also to North America are not repeated.—Editors.

STATEMENT REVISIONS

STEWARDSHIP REAFFIRMATION STATEMENT—REVISION

VOTED. To revise the Stewardship Reaffirmation Statement that was approved by the 1991 Spring Meeting as follows:

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for increased visibility and prioritizing of wholistic stewardship ministry with special emphasis on tithe and offering education within the division, and

WHEREAS, the present signs of the times and the imminent return of Christ call for faithfulness and accountability of our total resources for Global Mission, it was

VOTED. 1. To challenge union and conference administrators to lead their territory into stewardship revival.

2. To conduct a church ministries stewardship advisory for stewardship directors and union administrators during the 1990-1995 quinquennium.

3. To develop a division-wide strategic stewardship plan and make specific recommendations for its implementation.

4. To request the division to develop a union- and conference-wide network of trained stewardship specialists, pastors, and laypersons.

5. To request union and local conference administrators to provide specialized training and certification for stewardship coordinators/directors, pastors, and specialists.

6. To request the division to develop a stewardship standard for annual evaluation and reporting, including the following indicators:

a. Stewardship education in every church.
b. A shared vision for growth and giving in the local church.

c. The percentage of tithe and mission offerings increase in each local church.

d. The long-range stewardship indicators for greater effectiveness and efficiency.

e. Reporting procedures on how moneys are used.

7. To report the annual progress of the division strategic plan for stewardship to the General Conference officers at the time of the Annual Council and to the year-end meeting.

PRIVATE MINISTRIES GUIDELINES— REVISION

(Supporting Ministries—Guidelines)
(Acceptable Independent Ministries—Guidelines)
(Guidelines for Acceptable Independent Ministries)

VOTED. 1. To accept the revised document, Private Ministries Guidelines, which reads as follows:

a. The leaders of private ministries shall be members in good and regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

b. The theological positions of the private ministries shall be in harmony with the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In supporting these beliefs, the context of both the biblical text and writings of Ellen G. White will be faithfully used.

c. The leaders of private ministries shall support and

cooperate with the goals and purposes of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by words, actions, and publications. Their work shall positively supplement that of the church in carrying out the gospel commission.

d. Private ministries leaders, ordained or unordained, shall not represent their private ministries as an official church project.

e. Private ministries shall not accept tithe and shall encourage their supporters to be faithful in returning tithe and appropriate offerings through the authorized channels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

f. Private ministries shall make available a formal statement of mission, including plans and objectives.

g. Private ministries that accept contributions shall be registered with the appropriate tax bodies as nonprofit organizations and shall provide copies of their annual audited financial statements upon the request of the North American Division.

h. Requests for official church business travel for private ministries personnel holding denominational licenses or credentials shall be processed in harmony with the provisions of NAD *Working Policy C 10 30-3*, and *C 15 10-1*. Failure to comply with this policy may jeopardize the continuation of the status of such denominational employees.

i. All interdivision travel by laypersons from the North American Division on official church business shall be processed in harmony with the provisions of NAD *Working Policy C 15 10* (see also *C 10 30-3* for travel within the division).

2. To request the North American Division officers to decide on a more suitable title for these guidelines and to adjust the wording in the document accordingly.

PROPOSALS

THE ADVENTIST EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION—PROPOSAL

The following proposal for an Adventist Evangelistic Association at the Adventist Media Center was presented with the expectation that it could be operative by January 1, 1992:

1. To hire seven full-time evangelists to be employed by the association but to assign them to ministries within the Adventist Media Center (AMC). These evangelists will not reside near the AMC but will live in the field. The budget for these evangelists will be provided by the local conferences where they hold meetings. Advantage will be taken of airtime already paid for in the respective areas. These evangelists will be associates on the broadcasts and will be featured in the local areas where they will be conducting meetings. It is anticipated that it will be possible to hold 30 to 35 campaigns each year, with 3,500 baptisms projected for the first year.

2. To establish a School of Evangelism at the Adventist Media Center. This school will conduct classes twice a year for 25 pastoral couples each time. These will be tuition-free hands-on workshops. Scholarship money will be raised from individual donors to cover tuition costs. Local conferences will be responsible for air fares and lodging. In five years 250 couples could be trained.

Evangelistic Follow-up Materials

Follow-up materials for each individual ministry will be continually monitored, refined, evaluated, and made available to the field. Adventist Media Center representatives will hold regional rallies, instructing in the art of successful follow-up of the media broadcasts.

Evangelistic Resource Center

A "think tank" is needed that will work closely and interface with the North American Division to create evangelism materials and aids for success.

Evangelism Newsletter

The quarterly evangelism newsletter will share thrilling soul-winning and evangelistic stories as well as up-to-date soul-winning methods.

VOTED. To endorse the proposal to establish the Adventist Evangelistic Association at the Adventist Media Center.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING PROPOSALS

VOTED. To adopt the recommendations of the ministerial training advisory committee (MTAC) as follows and to request the North American Division officers to develop plans for implementation of the recommendations:

1. Develop an integrated 10-year ministerial training curriculum covering the full educational process of the minister, providing for efficiency and thoroughness in a sequenced training program that involves the college, seminary, and field learning experiences. This approach would seek to eliminate gaps, overlap, and competition at the various levels of training. The primary emphasis at these levels would be:

a. College—liberal arts, introductory courses, and practical ministry.

b. Pastoral Assistant Year—broad exposure to ministry through observation and participation.

c. Seminary—professional learning and experience.

d. Internship/Mentorship—integration of learning in practical application.

There is to be hands-on experience at all levels.

2. Establish specific and clearly defined seminary entrance requirements for the Master of Divinity program.

3. Establish an annual meeting of seminary administrators, seminary department chairpersons, and college theology department chairpersons and a quinquennial meeting of all seminary and college theology department teaching and administrative staff that will provide for ongoing dialogue on and development of the ministerial training curriculum.

4. Develop a remuneration scale that provides gradual increase through the pastoral assistant and seminary years. Employees who enter ministerial work directly from college would remain at the same pay schedule as those in the Master of Divinity program unless they have completed its equivalent in work experience or education.

5. Provide some financial assistance to unsponsored individuals who complete the Master of Divinity program and who later are employed by conferences in ministerial assignments.

6. Provide supervisors and mentors for both the pastoral assistant year and the internship/mentorship with a specific program blending practical skills with theoretical learning.

7. Encourage continuing education certification for all ministers.

COMMISSIONS

NAD GOVERNANCE COMMISSION— APPOINTMENT

The chairman asked Robert J. Kloosterhuis to report on the work of the General Conference Commission on Governance, which presented its report to the 1991 Annual Council. He outlined the procedures that had been fol-

lowed and read the eight recommendations that were adopted by the council with a few amendments.

The chairman stated that NAD administration felt it was also appropriate for the division to establish its own commission. It was, therefore,

VOTED, 1. To appoint the North American Division governance commission, with terms of reference as listed below:

2. To refer the membership of the NAD governance commission membership to NADCOM for the inclusion of additional representatives.

<i>Terms of Reference</i>	<i>Authority and Responsibility</i>
1. Develop a simplified organizational flow within NAD.	1. Recommend to NAD officers (NADO).
2. Develop methods of reducing the cost of doing business within the NAD organization.	2. Recommend to NADO.
3. Develop a comprehensive organizational flow chart for NAD.	3. Power to act.
4. Develop clear contact points for NAD and the GC that will allow for better flow but retain the "special relationship."	4. Recommend to NADO.
5. Develop policies that will favor greater organizational unity within NAD.	5. Recommend to NADO.
6. Review all committees with regard to their terms of reference and membership.	6. Power to act.
7. Develop cost analysis for the operation of each standing committee.	7. Power to act.
8. Recommend a clear simplified organizational restructuring of NAD.	8. Recommend to NADO.

Members

Dale, R. L., chairman
 Patterson, Gary B., vice chairman
 Baptiste, H. W., secretary
 Bietz, Gordon, pastor, Collegedale
 Crumley, G. H., treasurer, NAD
 Follett, Philip, president, Atlantic Union Conference
 McClure, A. C., president, NAD
 Mostert, T. J., Jr., president, Pacific Union Conference
 Parchment, Orville, secretary, SDA Church in Canada
 Plata, Ernest J., layperson, North Pacific Union Conference
 Sahlin, Monte, associate director, NAD Church Ministries Department
 Sickler, Susan, layperson, Columbia Union Conference
 Sterndale, Elizabeth A., general field secretary, NAD
 Vasquez, Manuel, vice president, NAD
 Wright, Henry, secretary, Columbia Union Conference

PUBLISHING COMMISSION—REPORT

Alfred C. McClure, president of the North American Division, reviewed the statistics regarding the publishing work. Many different factors have had a negative impact on the success of the publishing work in recent years. We are now living in the video age. It is more difficult to get people to read. Even though the publishing houses have tried to keep up with technological advances, the overall trend in sales is still down.

In the past few years budgets have become tighter. Conference committees are questioning the wisdom of putting additional money in the publishing area while the budgets for evangelism, stewardship, and education are being decreased. The church is facing a situation that has become acute because of declining sales and declining distribution of our literature.

A number of graphs were shown that clearly indicate the seriousness of the situation. Several issues became obvious:

1. There is an immediate need to find a way to distribute our literature and books on a much larger scale. New marketing methods must be discovered and implemented.

2. Those who have chosen to spend their lives in full-time literature evangelism need to be able to support themselves and their families without additional assistance.

3. Costs to the organization must be reduced. Unions and conferences cannot continue the present level of subsidies.

4. Overhead costs must be reduced.

5. The possibility of paying publishing leaders on a commission basis similar to that of literature evangelists must be considered.

6. A reduction in the cost of literature to the public is essential.

In April 1991 a publishing commission was appointed. It has met several times and prepared a report. In order to facilitate the consideration of these recommendations, the 1991 Annual Council took the following action:

"VOTED, To grant authority to the 1991 North American Division year-end committee to act on behalf of the General Conference and to exercise its authority in respect of the two publishing houses operated by the General Conference in North America, thereby exercising full authority over the entire publishing program (manufacturing, distribution, and sales) in the North American Division."

The 1991 General Conference, North American Division, and union officers discussed the publishing commission and appointed a committee of eight to draw up procedures to implement the recommendations from the publishing commission and discussed in this committee, and to present these proposals to the 1991 year-end meeting.

The members of the committee are as follows:

McClure, A. C.
 Appenzeller, R. E.
 Bietz, Sylvester
 Carter, R. H.
 Follett, Philip
 Kyte, Robert
 Miller, Cyril
 Smith, R. S.

This committee met and presented its report to the 1991 year-end steering committee. The steering committee's recommendations were then presented to the 1991 North American Division year-end meeting. Following a lengthy discussion, it was

VOTED, To adopt the following recommendations for publishing organizations:

1. To encourage all publishing organizations to develop innovative ways to expand the sale of Seventh-day Adventist literature in their respective areas of distribution, while exercising care in the development of new distribution channels and methods, in order to safeguard and protect the integrity and best interests of the church. Publishing houses shall exercise care in the selection of products they publish or produce so that their products conform to the spiritual standards of the church. Working in a spirit of harmony, publishing departments, Adventist Book Centers, and Family/Home Health Education Services shall use the publishing houses as their primary sources for publications in order that their products may reflect the spiritual standards of the church.

To facilitate and encourage wider sales and distribution of Seventh-day Adventist literature throughout North America, it is recommended that the following policies be delegated for review, amendment, suspension, or implementation by union conferences for publishing departments, Family/Home Health Education Services, Adventist Book Centers, and the boards of the publishing houses.

I 25 10	Authorized Stock and Promotion
I 30 20	New Subscription Books
I 30 25	Health Journals Sponsorship
I 30 69	Revised Edition
I 40	Prices and Discounts to Adventist Book Centers and HHES/FHES

I 45	Shipping Expenses
I 55	Denominational Literature Distributing Agencies
I 60	Home/Family Health Education Service
I 65	The Publishing Department
I 75	Literature Evangelist
I 80	Benefit Fund Policy
I 85	Scholarship Plans
I 90	Literature Evangelist Plans

2. To refer all other publishing policies for review to the North American Division publishing board, with the exception of I 95, literature ministry coordinating board for the North American Division.

3. To delete NAD I 95, literature ministry coordinating board for the North American Division.

4. To record that the NAD publishing board will be comprised of not more than 15 members, to be named by the North American Division committee for administration.

5. To establish a North American Division publishing board with terms of reference, to read as follows:

Terms of Reference

a. Review existing NAD publishing policies and recommend adoption, modification, reinstatement, deletion, suspension, amendment, or enforcement of existing policy, as well as recommend the implementation of new publishing policies. Recommend to appropriate governing organizations within the North American Division.

b. Coordinate the production of publishing house publications.

c. Coordinate all aspects of sales and distribution of publishing in the North American Division.

d. Coordinate all marketing including advertising, training, and promotion for publishing on a division-wide basis.

e. Coordinate all product development for publishing in the North American Division.

Members

NAD president, chairman
 NAD publishing director, secretary
 PPPA president
 R&HPA president
 CRS president
 two union presidents
 one union treasurer
 four laypersons
 one ABC manager
 one FHES union-level representative
 one union publishing director

Advisors

GC publishing advisor
 GC publishing director
 NAD vice president for multilingual ministries

Note: Proper ethnic and gender representation shall be included on this board.

ANNUAL SACRIFICE OFFERING 1992—SPECIAL PROVISION TO ASSIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

The 1991 Annual Council took an action to assist the church in South Africa with part of the Annual Sacrifice Offering. The North American Division 1991 year-end committee also wishes to assist the church in South Africa with part of their Annual Sacrifice Offering. Therefore, it was

VOTED, To recognize the sincere desire of the 1991 year-end meeting attendees to endorse and support the successful completion of the process of unification of the church in South Africa. As a tangible expression of the support of the North American Division for this process, it is agreed that for the year 1992, the Annual Sacrifice

Offering will be capped at \$2.4 million. All funds received in excess of that amount will be used to help with the major financial needs of a unified church structure in South Africa, and an appeal will be made to the North American Division church membership to participate. The membership in South Africa is assured of the continuing support of the North American Division.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH, MISSION INVESTMENT, AND MISSION EXTENSION OFFERINGS—GUIDELINES

VOTED. To approve the Thirteenth Sabbath, Mission Investment, and Mission Extension Offerings—Guidelines, which reads as follows:

THIRTEENTH SABBATH, MISSION INVESTMENT, AND MISSION EXTENSION OFFERINGS—GUIDELINES

Each year two unions within the North American Division benefit from the Mission Investment Fund. Every five years the North American Division benefits from Thirteenth Sabbath and Mission Extension funds. The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines that define criteria and procedures for use by local conferences and unions in making application for these funds. Included also is a description of the project selection process used by the North American Division projects review committee.

Criteria

1. All projects must be mission-focused and needs-

based, and must capture the imagination of North American constituents. Eligible projects include work where existing churches are reaching out to unreached people groups, pioneering in new territory, or opening new work in large cities.

2. All proposals must be written according to the standard proposal format and submitted by the prescribed deadline indicated in the selection process defined hereinafter.

3. Projects may include a capital expenditure such as the construction of a building or purchase of equipment. If salaries for specific workers for a specified period are to be included, an adequate plan of sustainability for the project must be attached.

4. Up to 50 percent of the total project cost may be met by the funds received. Project proposals must clearly define the source and amount of the matching funds and how the projects are to be sustained after receiving funds.

5. Funds will be available from North American Division church ministries (NADCM) in the spring of the year following the vote of approval at the year-end meeting. Projects must be started within one year of the receipt of funds.

6. Projects should have a special motivational appeal to prospective donors.

Procedures

1. Proposals must be submitted in writing to NADCM to the attention of the stewardship coordinator. They must include promotional material and informational articles to be used in denominational periodicals.

2. Recipient organizations shall submit quarterly

progress reports on how funds have been used to the attention of the stewardship coordinator.

3. Funds will be released to the approved beneficiary organization by the NAD treasury in two payments of 50 percent each upon clearance by NADCM. A written progress report must be received before the second half of the funds is released.

Selection Process

1. By February of the year prior to that in which unions are scheduled to receive funds, the NADCM will notify the unions that they will benefit from the funds. The NADCM will also send to the union church ministries director, a copy of the Thirteenth Sabbath, Mission Investment, and Mission Extension Offerings Guidelines. It shall be the responsibility of the union church ministries director to communicate with the local conferences and solicit proposals. Requests shall be approved by the union committee by June 1.

2. The union secretary shall be responsible to transmit the union committee's recommendation and action along with the project proposals by July 1 to the NADCM, to the attention of the stewardship coordinator.

3. The projects review committee will meet to consider the project proposals in August. Reviews and approvals will be made according to the Thirteenth Sabbath, Mission Investment, and Mission Extension Offerings Guidelines.

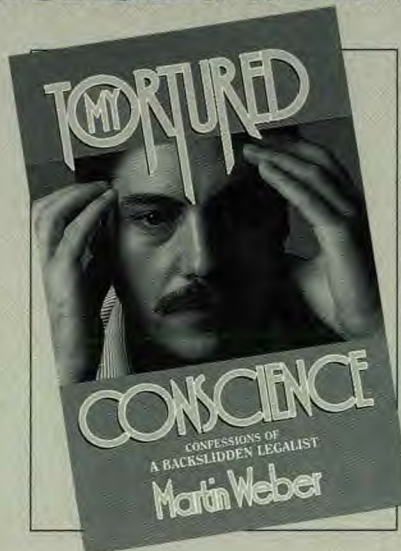
4. Notification of approved projects will be sent in September to the union secretary, union church ministries director, and project director.

5. In the event no projects are submitted by the required date, the North American Division will allocate the funds.

From the author of *Hot Potatoes* comes the confessions of a backslidden legalist.

"I stopped at nothing in my quest for a Christlike character," says Martin Weber in his compelling book *My Tortured Conscience*. "My motive in self-denial was getting rid of anything that would deter me from depending on Jesus. But it was Christ-centered legalism. My hyperactive conscience robbed me of my friends, family, scholarships, dreams, and nearly life itself."

My Tortured Conscience is the personal story of how God saved Martin Weber from obsessive



efforts to silence his conscience and brought him to the Source of peace. Share in the exciting discoveries that brought him joy and assurance in Jesus.

Paper, 127 pages. US\$6.95, Cdn\$8.70. Add 7 percent GST in Canada.



My Tortured Conscience is available at your local Adventist Book Center now. To order, call
1-800-765-6955.

Keep Praying!

When we do not receive the very things we asked for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears and that He will answer our prayers.

We are so erring and shortsighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are.

The Right Blessing Will Come

When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire is presumption.

God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you."

If we take counsel with our doubts and fears, or try to solve everything that we cannot see clearly, before we have faith, perplexities will only increase and deepen. But if we come to God, feeling helpless and dependent, as we really are, and in humble, trusting faith make known our wants to Him whose knowledge is infinite, who sees everything in creation, and who governs everything by His will and word, He can and will attend to our cry, and will let light shine into our hearts.

Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness.

When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, "For-



*"We may not
feel His visible
touch, but His
hand is upon us
in love and
pitying
tenderness."*

give us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and yet indulge an unforgiving spirit? Matthew 6:12. If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven.

Perseverance in prayer has been made a condition of receiving. We must pray always if we would grow in faith and experience. We are to be "instant in prayer," to "continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2).

Peter exhorts believers to be "sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Peter 4:7). Paul directs, "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). "But ye, beloved," says Jude, "praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 20, 21). Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.

Look for the Light

There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven.



Ellen G. White was cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and a prolific writer. Selections are from Steps to Christ, pages 96-98.

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

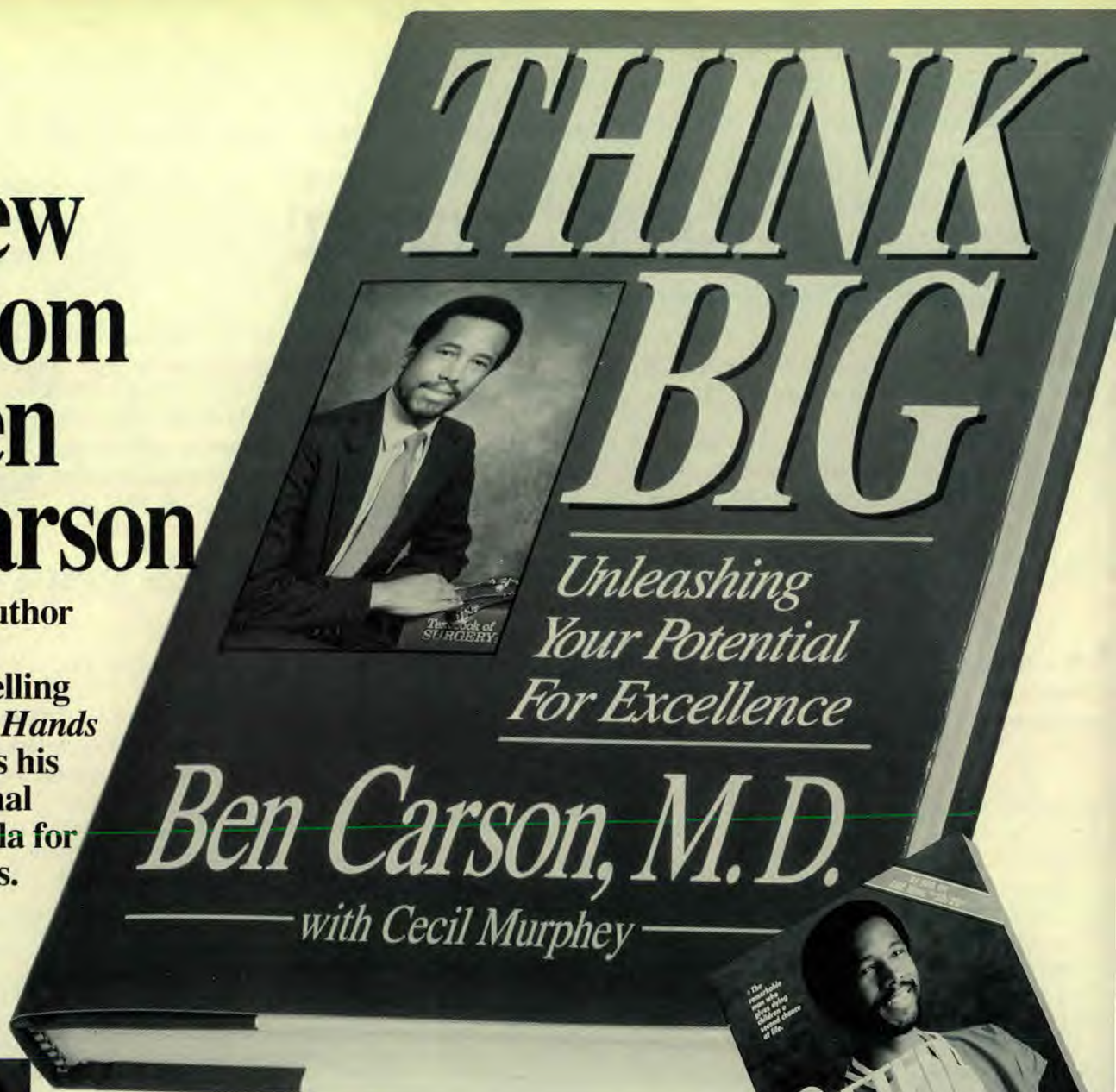
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