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WAD EDITION

ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

MAY 7, 1992

IMMORTALITY *or* RESURRECTION

How
Adventist
faith
brings
hope

“Just What We Needed”

With our March 5 issue the Review began *AnchorPoints*, special treatments of the basics of Adventist faith that show the value of these truths for life today. *AnchorPoints* runs once or twice each month. Reader response has been enthusiastic, as shown by the following sampling of our mail.

Blessing for Days

Heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the first in the *AnchorPoints* series, “Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes” (Mar. 5).

If there is any subject in Holy Scripture that we should approach with reverence and humility, it is the nature and mission of Jesus Christ. This spirit pervades every line of the study. I read it in the very early Sabbath morning hours, and its blessing went with me through the day—and through several days following.

E. L. Becker

Loma Linda, California

Uplifts Saviour

“Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes” was one of the finest pieces I have ever read in the *Review* in more than 30 years of subscription. Thank you for uplifting my Saviour so beautifully, so clearly, and so passionately.

Douglas Cooper
Angwin, California

Suggests Book

The first in the series augurs well for those to follow, and I look forward to them keenly. Presumably a book combining all these statements of faith will follow in due course. The church needs it, and so do our friends who so often are ill-informed about what we really believe.

John M. Staples
Angwin, California

Theme for Chapel Series

Kudos on your March 5 issue, in which you introduce *AnchorPoints* with “Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes.” I was inspired by it to use the theme “*AnchorPoints—Fundamentals of Faith That Transform Contemporary Life*” for our chapel series at Atlantic Union College next fall. I’d also like to use your artwork in our chapel bulletin.

Lawrence T. Geraty
President
Atlantic Union College

No Words

Just read “Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes” this morning! There are no words. Thank you.

Mrs. George R. Gittins
Cashtown, Pennsylvania

Message for All

“Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes” should be stamped (every word) on gold and framed in diamonds. It was so beautifully worded, with a message for everyone.

Dolores Barnhart
Walla Walla, Washington

Deeply Moved

I am deeply moved and excited about the new *AnchorPoints* issue of the *Review*. This is just what we have needed for a long time. I loved the article “Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes.” What a perfect place to anchor.

Sheila Marchal
Sandpoint, Idaho

Excitement

Regarding your *AnchorPoints* article “Jesus: Center of All Our Hopes,” thank you! It made my day. It was uplifting, and your excitement over Jesus came through loud and clear. I couldn’t agree more.

G. G. Lee
Ridgecrest, California

Good for Others

The *AnchorPoints* article on Jesus was wonderful. I hadn’t planned on reading it until I had finished flipping through the pages of the *Review*. But a few sentences got me started, and I couldn’t stop. This is the basis of our belief, and I am pleased to see it also in our paper.

Will it be reprinted? I know many Christians (not necessarily Adventists) who would be blessed by this article.

Summer Stahl
Colville, Washington

The Judgment

As I read the second *AnchorPoints* on the pre-Advent judgment (Mar. 26), I was pleased with the emphasis upon the positive aspects of the judgment. For God’s people the judgment is good news, giving the promise of the future eradication of all sin. And it points us to the blessed truth of becoming like God in character.

This last fact is what I felt was missing in the article. Judgment is not just a looking at records with the blood of forgiveness upon them. It is the blood of cleansing as well (1 John 1:7). The blood purges our consciences from dead works that we might serve the living God (Heb. 9:14). Character transformation is real and must be a part of this judgment. It is a judgment not only of our faith but also of our works, which are to be the fruit of true faith.

Kevin R. James, pastor
Moab, Utah

A Note From the Author

Let me clarify several things about my article on the judgment. First, the article was condensed from a chapter in my new book *More Adventist Hot Potatoes*. Second, I think the edited version needed another paragraph on the importance of obedience. It would have helped if the following, which was part of the chapter I submitted, had been carried over into the article:

“‘So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty’ (James 2:12, NKJV). The work of Christ, we contend, does not release us from accountability. We are told to give an account of our stewardship (Luke 16:2). Wherever there is accountability, there is judgment.”

One last point. I should have mentioned that doubts about the 1844 judgment are a problem among a segment of Anglo Adventists more than with the world field as a whole. Martin Weber
Silver Spring, Maryland

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Vol. 169, No. 19



Accept No Substitutes

In recent years Seventh-day Adventist leaders have repeatedly called upon the church to seek and receive the Holy Spirit. This heavenly outpouring is seen as necessary to prepare our own hearts for Christ's coming and to empower us for quickly carrying the gospel to all the world.

These calls have brought sporadic attempts to generate a revival, but overall, nothing much seems to happen in regard to a churchwide awakening. I would like to suggest that if we expect the whole church suddenly to experience a great reconversion, we are barking up the wrong tree. Reception of the Holy Spirit is an individual rather than a corporate experience.

When a whole church seeks to become revived, what happens all too often is a pseudorevival that works outwardly rather than inwardly. "Popular revivals are too often carried by appeals to the imagination, by exciting the emotions, by gratifying the love for what is new and startling. Converts thus gained have little desire to listen to Bible truth, little interest in the testimony of prophets and apostles. Unless a religious service has something of a sensational character, it has no attractions for them. A message which appeals to unimpassioned reason awakens no response. The plain warnings of God's Word, relating directly to their eternal interests, are unheeded" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 463).

Unimpassioned Reason

One of the strengths of Seventh-day Adventism has been its insistence upon "unimpassioned reason" and its rejection of "exciting the emotions." Emotion has its place; we would become robots without it. But it must be tempered by reason, especially in spiritual matters.

Our churches will be filled with the Holy Spirit only as our members, one by

one, experience this blessing. While we do well to pray for the church as a whole, we will do even better to plead for a personal infilling of the Spirit. Then as each one of us yields to God's Spirit individually, the revival will grow and spread. Not everyone will have this experience, but enough members will become Spirit-filled to do a mighty work in the earth in preparation for Christ's return.

Even when we seek revival individually, "there is danger of those in our ranks making a mistake in regard to receiving the Holy Ghost. Many suppose an emotion or a rapture of feeling to be an evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit" (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 18).

If emotion is no proof of the Spirit's presence, what are the indications? How shall we know that we have the genuine article? What does the third person of the Godhead bring to us when He comes?

The first thing the Spirit brings is a conviction of our sin and guilt before God, of our need for the righteousness of Christ as we face the judgment (John 16:8). Then He invites us to come to Christ and have our spiritual thirst quenched by drinking deeply of "the free gift of the water of life" (Rev. 22:17, NIV). He leads us into a knowledge of God's truth as found in the Bible (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit enables us to be born again to a new life in Christ (John 3:5-8). Of this transformed life we read: "This is the result of the work of the Spirit of God. There is no evidence of genuine repentance unless it works reformation" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 462). He cleanses us, takes away our idols, gives us a new heart, and influences us to obey God's commandments (Eze. 36:25-27).

Then the Spirit fills our lives with "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23, NIV). The joy He brings is not a superficial excitement. "If we work to create an excitement of feeling, we shall have all we want, and more than we can possibly know how to manage. Calmly and clearly 'Preach the Word.' We must not regard it as our work to create an excitement. The Holy Spirit of God alone can create a healthy enthusiasm" (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 16).

A Matter of Righteousness

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life means righteous living (Rom. 14:17), whereby we, as God's children, reflect His character (Rom. 8:16). "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 464).

To counteract this revival, Satan will introduce a counterfeit movement in which "there is an emotional excitement, a mingling of the true with the false, that is well adapted to mislead." But we have a sure way to distinguish the true from the false. "Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from those plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God's blessing is not bestowed" (*ibid.*).

Finally, the Spirit of God bestows upon us precious gifts to share with others (1 Cor. 12:7-10). And with these gifts He gives us power to witness (Acts 1:8).

These, then, are the genuine evidences of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Accept no substitutes!

EUGENE F. DURAND



A Challenging Vision

Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). An organization or a body of people can become so large, so diverse, so encrusted with traditions and institutions, that it loses a clear and uncomplicated sense of what it is about and where it is going. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America is not immune to that danger.

Once we were a small people, scattered, but very much the same in our White, Anglo-Saxon, small-town American culture. God has blessed us with great evangelistic success around the world, and even in North America we are approaching 800,000 members and have congregations among more than three dozen significant ethnic and subcultural groups.

Seventh-day Adventists are a vigorous people, responsive to God's many calls to diverse kinds of ministry. We have built scores of colleges, universities, publishing houses, academies, and other major ministries in North America.

But somewhere among the concerns of all those institutions, a simple idea got lost. That idea is inviting our friends, relatives, work associates, and neighbors to church so that they can find a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

On any given Sabbath the total attendance in all 4,600 Adventist churches across our division will be a number equal to about half our membership. In most local churches the unbaptized adults sitting in worship will number only a handful, and in many congregations they are almost never present.

I Have a Dream

Some people look at what *is* and ask "Why?" Others look at what *could be* and ask "Why not?"* I have a clear vision of what could happen every Sabbath in our churches across North America: a fellowship so vibrant and warm, a message so Christ-centered and compelling, an expe-

rience so challenging and compassionate, that men and women, boys and girls, are attracted in growing numbers.

A rich array of research demonstrates that most of North America's unchurched majority want to find answers to their deep spiritual void.

Especially at times of great stress such as the death of a loved one, moving to a new community, marriage or divorce, unemployment, or having a baby, people who have never been interested in religion are often willing to visit a church. This is most likely to happen when a sensitive, friendly Christian acquaintance invites them.

Powerful Evangelistic Moments

Sabbath morning can be one of our most powerful evangelistic moments! If we plan to have guests every week and watch for regular opportunities to invite our friends, our pews can be crowded again. And focusing on filling the church with the unchurched helps us to avoid the danger of talking only to ourselves, "preaching to the choir," focusing exclusively on our own needs until we become mired in a self-centered religious experience.

I know that it can happen. Our Sabbath morning experience can become a powerful evangelistic tool! With the power of the Holy Spirit, with strong leaders willing to focus on one goal, and with the help of our great family of Advent believers, we could see an average attendance of 1 million persons by 1995.

A hardheaded business friend of mine says that one should always ask of a new plan "So what?" What difference would it make if 1 million people were crowding into Sabbath worships and Sabbath schools across North America instead of only 400,000 or 450,000?

Manuel Valcarcel can tell you what difference it made for him. "I was a lost man. I was deep into alcohol, drugs, and you

name it. My life was going the wrong way." A man who worked with him in an auto body shop, Juan Conde, shared with Manuel the hope there is in Jesus Christ and invited him to church. Today Manuel is a baptized member of the Adventist Church, with new hope and a new life.

What a Difference

The Fort Payne, Alabama, congregation can tell you what difference it has made for them. A year ago their Sabbath attendance was usually about 15. They started a second Sabbath school class—a "friendship class" designed to reach out to inactive Adventists and nonmembers. Attendance has climbed to 30 or more each Sabbath, and there is a new sense of joy and Holy Spirit power in their midst. As a result of this Sabbath morning outreach they have seen two baptisms, a half dozen prospective members are involved in Bible studies, and a number of nonattending members have been reactivated.

It can make a difference for your local church. It can make a difference for someone you know. A difference for today and a difference for eternity! It can become the focus for all of our public evangelism, media ministry, awareness-building, and community service outreach.

Is my dream contagious? Does it strike a chord in your heart? If it does, please join me in praying for the goal of 1 million persons in attendance. Pray that God will show our local churches how to double their attendance. Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us to someone we can invite to join us in church this Sabbath. And ask your pastor, your church board, your Sabbath school class, to join us both—you and me—in this prayer.

* Alluding to George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, Part I, Act. I.

A. C. MC CLURE

President

North American Division

R&H Reports an Upturn in Finances

In what even the bankers are calling "a dramatic turn around," the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Maryland, has stopped the recent flow of red ink, reduced its indebtedness, and has begun to show a profit.

The turnaround comes as the result of an assertive 11-month effort by both R&H leaders and board members to analyze the publishing house's mission and operations and to make the necessary changes to return the institution to profitability.



Robert Kinney



Hepsi Singh

And R&H financial statements indicate the effort is working. At the end of the first quarter of 1992, the publishing house showed a 3 percent operating profit of \$140,867 versus a

6.9 percent loss of \$314,300 for the same quarter in 1991. R&H president Robert Kinney expects the profits to continue through the end of the year.

If the president's expectations come true, the R&H would experience its first profitable year since 1988. The last three years have accumulated losses of \$4 million.

Setting the Stage

Upon election as R&H president in May 1991, Robert Kinney began working with the vice presidents and the board in analyzing the publishing house's operations and instituting cost-cutting measures. The cuts saved \$344,000 in 1991 and are expected to save more than a million this year.

The R&H's cost-cutting actions:

- Postponed the second step of its direct mail marketing of a children's storybook set.
- Closed its new Autumn House Publishing venture, a subsidiary of the R&H that had hoped to make a significant break into the non-Adventist Christian market with R&H products.
- Closed its in-house research department. It now contracts out any research needed.
- Reduced its administrative staff, including the reduction of three vice presidential positions (from eight to five).
- Reduced the overall number of employees by 42, from 285 to 243 (233 full time), resulting in major savings in wages and benefits. Further personnel reductions are planned as employees retire or move.
- Deferred the 1991 wage increase; cut back on the use of

office supplies; eliminated several social functions, and reduced employee travel.

Financial vice president Hepsi Singh says these reductions, along with large reductions in inventories and receivables, enabled the R&H to pay off its entire \$3.8 million short-term debt and put \$164,000 back into its operating cash fund by December 31, 1991. The cash fund has continued to grow during 1992.

This turnaround by the R&H has evoked positive commendations from church leaders and even from the banking industry.

While the R&H's short-term debt currently stands at zero, Kinney says it still holds \$7.6 million in long-term debt, of which \$4.2 million is for the new web press installed in March 1990.

What of the Future?

In today's competitive marketplace, Kinney knows the R&H must not only contain its expenses but increase its sales to remain viable. He also knows it may be an uphill battle, since the R&H's sales have not grown significantly in the past five years. Sales have held steady between \$20 million and to \$21 million, with 1991's reaching \$21.3 million. Kinney says the continuing slump in literature evangelist (LE) sales of R&H products is of much concern to the publishing house. Sales to LEs have declined approximately

Former GC Vice President Dies

Enoch Oliveira, 68, who served as a General Conference vice president from 1980 to 1990, died in Curitiba, Parana, on April 10 after a long bout with cancer.

Oliveira's ministry spanned more than 40 years. After graduating from Brazil College in 1945, Oliveira started the pastoral ministry in Curitiba, Parana. He later served as ministerial secretary of the South American Division, and as executive secretary from 1970 to 1975.



Enoch Oliveira

In 1975 Oliveira became the first South American native to serve as president of that division. A prolific author and speaker, Oliveira penned three books, *God Is at the Helm*, *Year 2000—Anguish or Hope*, and *Good Morning, Lord*.

By Myron Widmer, associate editor, Adventist Review.

\$500,000 annually for the past five years.

Nevertheless, R&H officials and its board have been actively formulating plans to increase sales, including:

- Moving ahead to develop a new Family Bible Story set.
- Joint venturing with the Pacific Press Publishing Association in the development of several major projects.
- Publishing a new volume on Adventist beliefs for the *SDA Bible Commentary* set and revising the *SDA Encyclopedia* in the same set.
- Setting up a design/graphics office at the General Conference to better assist the church's printing needs.
- Printing more Bibles, including a family Bible requested by North America's Black conferences.
- Recruiting more Black Adventist authors.
- Developing new subscription products in conjunction with the North American Division.

While Kinney says nothing in the publishing business can be taken for granted, he believes these plans will increase the R&H's overall sales and sustain its viability. But of greater concern to him is that the R&H fulfill its distinct role and mission within Adventism—that of “developing books and periodicals that explain the significance of the world's events in light of Bible truth, and point people to Jesus Christ as Saviour and soon-coming King.”

Spring Meeting Wraps Up

Members of the General Conference Executive Committee met for their annual Spring Meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland, April 8, 9.

During the session, the committee voted sweeping new guidelines for the church's annual Ingathering fund raising drive, and heard praise, from the independent auditor, for the church's improved financial position, including a \$2.6 million gain in operations. This is the first gain since 1982. A complete report of these items appeared in the April 30 *Adventist Review*.

In other business, the GC Executive Committee:

- Elected Henry M. Wright, Columbia Union Conference secretary, as secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association. Wright replaces W. Floyd Bresee, who will retire August 31.
- Voted to assist the Eastern Africa Division in disbanding the Zambesi Conference and incorporating those churches into the fields within the Zambesi Union.

Folkenberg explained to committee members that the Zambesi Conference, formed many years ago in what was then Rhodesia, was created primarily for Whites. Later Coloreds joined. Between 1972 and 1980, many Whites left the country, and the conference, whose territory spans the entire Zambesi Union, has been led mainly by Coloreds.



Adventist Review Editors Conduct Bible Conference

Nearly 100 persons took part in the *Adventist Review* Bible Conference at the Cohutta Springs Adventist Center in Crandall, Georgia, March 25-29.

Organized in conjunction with the Cohutta Springs staff, the conference featured six Bible-study seminars conducted by *Review* editor William G. Johnsson (above) and other editors, prayer and praise services, testimony periods, prayer sessions, an agape feast, and a question-and-answer forum. The conference concluded with a Communion ceremony.

FOR YOUR INTEREST

AR Rally Set for Hinsdale, May 15, 16. The *Review* editors will lead a joyful Sabbath rally at the Hinsdale Adventist Church in Hinsdale, Illinois, May 15, 16.

The program includes a Friday evening vesper service at 7:30 (CDT). In addition to the morning Sabbath school and worship service, an afternoon musical festival featuring local artists will be presented. The rally will conclude with a question-and-answer forum with the editors, and vespers.

Beware of Unauthorized Solicitation of Funds. The General Conference has received many inquiries regarding individuals, private ministries, and professional fund raisers that are seeking contributions for public evangelism in Russia.

The only fund raising authorized by the General Conference is that which is done by, or done in conjunction with, the GC Euro-Asia Affairs Department (formerly Office of Soviet Affairs), says J. R. Spangler, GC consultant for evangelism and who is also in charge of the church's authorized fund raising for Russian evangelism.

In 1991 these donations sponsored 15 evangelistic campaigns. This year, donations will sponsor more than 55 efforts in the Euro-Asia Division's five unions.

For further information about evangelistic campaigns or sponsoring them, contact J. R. Spangler, General Conference, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600.

CHURCH CALENDAR

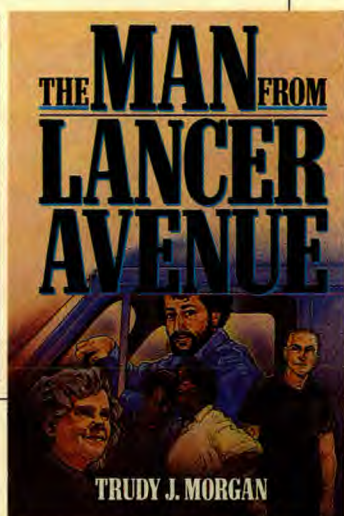
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| May 7 | National Day of Prayer in the United States |
| May 9 | Disaster and Famine Relief Offering |
| May 30 | Annual Global Baptism Day |
| May 30 | Youth Sabbath |
| June 6 | Church Growth and Evangelism Month begins |

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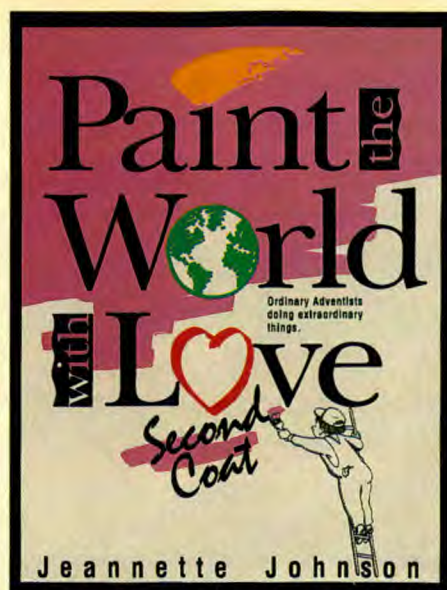
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AMAZING STORIES OF ADVENTISTS

The editor of *Guide* magazine, Jeannette Johnson (photo), returns with another *Paint the World With Love* book. This time it's the "second coat," and it's filled with stories of little-known Adventists who have done great things. You'll find intriguing stories of courage, compassion, conversions—and even one story about a canine. Paperback, 158 pages. US\$8.95, Cdn\$10.75.



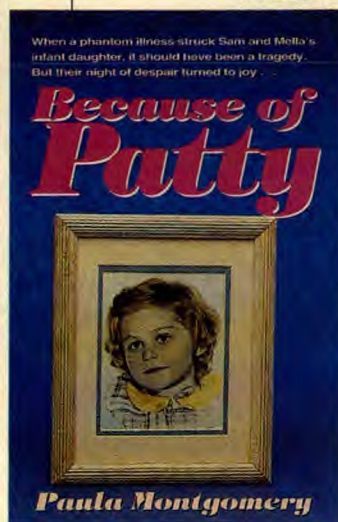
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Immortality or Resurrection?

How Adventist Faith Brings Hope

BY RONALD ALAN KNOTT



Every air-traveling Adventist has at least one story about witnessing on the wing. Here's mine.

It was December 30, the next to the last day of the year. I was returning home to Andrews University after spending the Christmas holiday with friends. I found a window seat and settled in.

A moment later another passenger came to my row and took her place on the aisle, leaving an empty seat between us. She was in her mid-30s, sharply dressed in casual clothes, thin, with precisely styled, short-cropped red hair. I was in high

mood, and ready to chitchat with anybody.

"And where are you headed?"

She was friendly and willing to talk. Her soft voice flowed gently with the easy grace of an apparently affluent Southern heritage. This was later confirmed by her unpretentious revelation that her grandfather had been a governor of Texas. Somewhere among the details I got the impression that she had some typical Southern Protestant background—perhaps Southern Baptist or Methodist. But the fact that she worked in Washington, D.C., as a lobbyist for an educational association prompted me to the perhaps prejudicial thought that conventional religion might no longer play a large part in her life.

Today she was flying back to Washington, cutting her Christmas holiday short to attend the funeral of a close friend. The services would be the next day, December 31.

"In a strange sort of way I'm looking forward to that funeral," she said wistfully. "It seems sort of fitting that it will be on the last day of the year."

"Why is that?"

"I guess I'm hoping it will help me put a final end to this terrible year and leave it all behind me."

In the next few minutes I heard the wrenching story of how five of this gentle woman's close relatives, friends, and work associates had died during

that calendar year, all from some form of cancer. And one of the five was her father.

It began to dawn on me that I might have something to offer to this hurting person. The moral of every inspiring witnessing story I had ever heard seemed to thunder in my head: that God had put me on this flight to speak for Him now. In short, I felt commanded to share my faith.

How to Help?

But how? I knew nothing about the techniques of comforting the grieving. In fact, funerals and their related traumas and customs have always been doubly difficult occasions for me. First, I must face my own sadness and loss. But then I am caught in the sometimes immense social awkwardness of wanting to comfort the most grieving ones and yet fearing I will say something stupid. Expressing sympathy and deep feelings never has been my strong point.

She paused in her story. I could think of nothing better than "I'm sorry." Was that all I was going to be able to offer?

She sighed and then said softly, "I just can't believe that God is going to make them all burn in hell forever. That just doesn't seem fair. How can that be love?"

In those few words she had solved my witnessing dilemma, or so I thought. She had rescued me from the murky world of





"feeling" and turned the conversation to Christian doctrine—something specific and objective. I could deal with that.

I answered quickly, confident for the moment that I could handle this. "I don't believe that they are burning in hell now, or that they will burn forever," I said smoothly. "That's because I believe the Bible doesn't teach that our souls live on forever, or that we go to heaven or hell when we die, or that God will make people suffer conscious torment forever."

I caught my breath, eager to forge ahead. But in a horrible second it dawned on me that I had very little more to say.

She waited, her gaze obviously expecting some evidence for my bold and hopeful claim. And in that terrible moment I realized I had no evidence to give—not because I doubted in the least that my claim was true or that the evidence was there,

but simply because, despite 26 years of Adventism, I had never bothered to learn it for sharing with someone else.

My mind whirled. Perhaps this woman knew her Bible. Perhaps she knew it better than I did. If so, any evidence I offered must come clearly and directly *from the Bible*. That meant texts. But what were all those texts I should use? I panicked. Something in Ecclesiastes came to mind, but then everything went blank.

End of Conversation

I thought about the small Bible I carried in the camera bag stowed correctly under the seat in front of me. My better judgment shouted not to touch it. It seemed wiser in this horrible mess to make some flat, textless assertions and leave her guessing me an absolute simpleton than to engage in a fruitless forage through Scripture and remove all possible doubt. Numbed by my stunning failure to do what I felt called to do, I reached for the flight magazine and ended the conversation.

That experience has haunted me ever since. Did I fail, or had I done my appointed work? Either through grace or rationalization, I have come to believe that I may have accomplished God's purpose after all. Perhaps my simple—or simplistic—assertions had planted the seed of hope in that woman's heart that God would cultivate in His own good way. At the same time, that incident also judged me for the evidence of my faith, at least on one point, and found me very wanting.

That sad woman I met on the plane represents millions in our society—Christians and non-Christians—who long for concrete answers about what happens when we die. For some, like this woman, it is a longing born of immediate and almost unbearable grief. For others it is

just the curiosity to know the unknowable.

The entertainment industry and the popular press pander to the public fascination. Hollywood makes millions on movies like *Ghost*, assuming an immediate afterlife. The March 1992 issue of *Life* magazine devoted its lengthy cover story to the questions raised by "near-death experiences" (NDE)—reports of warm and fuzzy out-of-body experiences by people who were resuscitated after showing few signs of life. According to the article, interest has boomed in NDEs since the 1975 publication of *Life After Life*, by Raymond Moody. A compilation of NDE anecdotes, the book has sold 7 million copies and sparked, even in the scientific community, an "open discussion of these visions [that] has begun to change the climate of dying in America."¹

Popular View

If the climate of dying has changed, the beliefs surrounding it have not; for the article further notes that the "popular view of near-death experiences is based largely on a view of existence that has scarcely changed in millennia: the belief that the body is inhabited by a soul or spirit or mind that informs our consciousness and leaves the body at death."²

Virtually alone among organized Christian denominations, world religions, or modern mysticisms and spiritualisms (like the New Age), Seventh-day Adventists stand firmly and surprisingly united against this view. This puts us at odds and risks our popularity with virtually everybody except hard-core atheists. Some among us, sadly, may argue over the nature of Jesus, the meaning of His death, or the validity of a pre-Advent judgment. But I have yet to meet an Adventist who is even remotely squishy on the nonimmortality of the soul.

Last-Day Deceptions

by Ellen G. White

Many will be confronted by the spirits of devils personating beloved relatives or friends and declaring the most dangerous heresies. These visitants will appeal to our tenderest sympathies and will work miracles to sustain their pretensions. We must be prepared to withstand them with the Bible truth that the dead know not anything and that they who thus appear are the spirits of devils.

Just before us is the "hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). All whose faith is not firmly established upon the Word of God will be deceived and overcome. Satan "works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness" to gain control of the children of men, and his deceptions will continually increase. But he can gain his object only as men voluntarily yield to his temptations. Those who are earnestly seeking a knowledge of the truth and are striving to purify their souls through obedience, thus doing what they can to prepare for the conflict, will find, in the God of truth, a sure defense. . . . He would sooner send every angel out of heaven to protect His people than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan. — *The Great Controversy*, p. 560.

Why is this? It is not that those other doctrines are any less “provable” from Scripture. They may be even more so. It is more likely that our understanding of the state of the dead makes such perfect sense, that it is so foundational to everything else we know about the character of God, the nature of sin, and the great controversy between our Saviour Jesus Christ and Satan—that great deceiver, the one who, “when he lies, . . . speaks his native language” (John 8:44, NIV).

In Eden our Creator said plainly to Adam and Eve that if they disobeyed Him (sinned) by eating of the tree in the middle of the garden, they would “surely die.” That simple declaration ought to be biblical evidence enough that God did not give us immortal souls capable of relating to Him outside of physical life. Yet in case we missed the point, text after text throughout Scripture affirms this.

Psalm 6:5 says: “No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from the grave?” (NIV). Psalm 115:17 says: “It is not the dead who praise the Lord, those who go down to silence” (NIV). And of course, there is the classic statement in Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6: “For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; . . . Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun” (NIV).³

Our understanding of the non-immortality of the soul addresses and dispenses with the first and most fundamental lie of Satan in Eden, when he told Eve, “You will not surely die.” To Adolf Hitler has been attributed the claim that it is easier to make people believe a big lie than a little one. Sadly, on this vital matter of what happens when we die, virtually the entire world, in-

cluding Christendom, has confirmed the validity of Hitler’s horrible proverb.

Once having believed that first big lie, humanity has inevitably committed itself to accepting a broad selection of other lies that come with it. Some of them are mutually exclusive but equally enticing to the mind of any age, particularly to ours. In all the recent interest in near-death experiences, has anyone yet received a hint of hell or punishment of evil? No. It’s nothing but sweetness and light. The obvious message the deceiver would have us believe is that everyone, regardless of life or faith, will, upon death, ascend to some nebulous but glorious reward. Thus, if there is no punishment for sin, there must, in effect, be no such thing as sin.

Making God a Sadist

Apparently contradicting this lie, but equally deceptive, is the doctrine of an eternally burning hell. God said that sin means death. That rules out any eternal lake of fire in which sinners are kept alive forever in punishment. But most of Christendom has accepted the idea of eternal torment. This idea also is rooted squarely in Satan’s first lie, “You will not surely die.” If we, unlike NDE adherents, correctly believe that sin will be punished, then a concurrent belief in an immortal soul eventually forces us to conclude that God is nothing more than a cosmic monster. How could a truly just and loving God repay a mere 70 or 80 years of sinful living on earth with endless, eternal ages of unspeakably excruciating conscious torment? God becomes a tyrant we must fear and cannot love. That, of course, was the unspoken conclusion of my friend on the plane.

After these falsehoods comes spiritualism. This has the po-

tential to be the most sinister, and in its varied forms is becoming more popular all the time. Through supposed revelations from those who’ve gone before, the credulous become easy victims of all manner of new deceptions.

Our doctrine of the nonimmortality of the soul, perhaps more than any other, sets us apart from the rest of organized religion in a way that can grab the attention of the masses. It puts all faith in the context of the great controversy. It declares that God is our Creator, that disobedience is the cause of all our woe. It proclaims a God of love who hates sin and yet is merciful and just in His final judgment of it. It meets the uncertainty and fear of a hurting world around us and points them to a loving, soon-returning Saviour who will call His children to a new, resurrected life in Him.

Are We Willing—And Able?

This doctrine will do all those things, but only if we are willing and able to share it. In my conversation with the woman on the plane, I clearly was *willing* to share it. But even more clearly I was *not able* to share it. I knew the destination, but I could not point the way. How many of my under-40 peers in Adventism would be different? Not many, I’m afraid.

In my elementary school days, just before the age of calculators, my arithmetic teachers labored with me over long division. They were interested

Death and Resurrection

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later (Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 11:11-14; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:1-10).—Fundamental Beliefs, No. 25.

not only in the correct answer, but in the process by which I got it. And a few years later, in chemistry and physics, my teachers were actually *more* interested in the process of my calculations than the product.

Of course, I realize my salvation has more to do with responding to a simple understanding of God's character as revealed through His Son than with knowing the nuts and bolts of how I arrived at that view. It's more important for me to know, deep in my being, that God is love than it is to know, deep in my brain, that a certain text says so. But that doesn't help anyone but me. How can my convictions help anyone else if I can't give him or her specific, credible evidences

from some authority outside myself?

Perhaps more than any doctrine, Adventist understanding of the nonimmortality of the soul will find practical use meeting with the man and woman on the street and sharing our faith. But we've got to have something to say. For me, this means some serious Bible study, and yes, even some good old-fashioned memorization.

Six years after my encounter with that woman on the plane, I was making another cross-country trip. The long flight gave me a good chance to do some background reading in preparation for writing this article. Somewhere over Ohio, while browsing through the relevant sections of *Questions on*

Doctrine, I glanced at the man in the seat across the aisle. He was reading a book. The title was *Death and the After-Life*.

"And where are you headed?"



¹ Verlyn Klinkenborg, "At the Edge of Eternity," *Life*, Mar. 1992, p. 66.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³ See also Ps. 30:9; 88:10; 146:4; Isa. 38:18; and 1 Cor. 15:17, 18.



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VOICES OF ADVENTIST FAITH

With each AnchorPoints we include a cross section of Adventist voices responding to the topic presented or one related to it. Here, respondents share their reflections on death.

Question: What does the Adventist understanding of death mean to me?



Idamae Melendy, 86
Retired
Silver Spring, Maryland



Mardelle Dufort, 64
Self-employed
Roseville, California



Arnold V. Wallenkampf, 79
Retired Minister
Luray, Virginia



Helen Gondera, 64
Retired
Deltona, Florida



Margaret Lazarus, 31
Teacher
Ontario, Canada

I find the popular belief that our loved ones are in heaven watching all that's happening in the world most disturbing. The Adventist understanding of death, on the other hand, means a great deal to me. That the next minute after a Christian dies (or so it will seem) he or she beholds Christ coming in glory is a comforting, precious thought.

The sight of anything dying distresses me—whether it be the gasping of a baby bird thrown from its nest or the futile struggle for life by a loved one. I'm thankful that Jesus conquered death for those who accept Him. And even to those who do not claim Him He gives His word that they will not suffer endlessly. I find this comforting.

Lingering in bed has never appealed to me. On waking, I always get right up. But weary after a day of work, there's nothing sweeter than going to sleep. That's my concept of death. On the resurrection morning Jesus will awaken us to enjoy the vigor of youth and the freshness of morning forever.

I was raised a Catholic and taught that everyone had to suffer in purgatory before going to heaven. When I was 11 I couldn't believe that God would do this. At 20 I married an Adventist and began reading the Bible. I was overjoyed when I learned about the state of the dead. My God is truly a loving God.

The thought of death generally evokes despair. But for me it inspires hope. Death is but a sleep and thus implies an awakening. This means that one day the righteous dead will awake to the best alarm clock of all time: the voice of the King of kings welcoming the saints into His heavenly kingdom.

Assurance in Christ



Robert Folkenberg

What will it take to revitalize the church spiritually and move it into action? The gospel will not go to all the world as a result of taking the "right" Annual Council action or devising a new "program." The power of God attends only the repentant, broken heart that learns to accept the joy of peace in Christ.

It is not God's will that we walk a tightrope, balancing our way to heaven, unsure of whether or not He will open the door when we arrive.

• "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence" (Heb. 4:16, NIV). Does God invite us to come with confidence before His throne of grace and then leave us to worry about whether He accepts us?

• "Him who comes to me I will not cast out" (John 6:37, RSV). Does Jesus say that and then, when we come, leave us in a state of uncertainty about whether we will be cast out?

• "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13, NIV). Does the Lord offer us the assurance of eternal life and then leave us to live in fear that we won't make it on judgment day?

• "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6, NIV). Does Jesus tell us to have assurance in Him and then abandon us to our own strength?

Happiness Attracts

I believe that if we experienced more of the security we can have in Jesus, our churches would be happier, people would be eager to share their joy, our institutions would better achieve their mission, our lives would be more joyous, and people would be coming to us for "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding" (Phil. 4:7, NIV).

The message of righteousness by

faith, which provides the believer with both the *full assurance* of salvation in Christ and the *evidence* of that salvation in victorious Christian living, should be a theme that pervades our ministry to members as well as to those who have not heard the good news of salvation.

Too many of us live at one extreme or the other of the faith-versus-works struggle. Some suffer, continually doubting their salvation and acceptance in Christ, feeling their sins are either too heinous to be forgiven or are as yet unconquered.

The assurance Ellen White spoke of is for such: "The provision made is complete, and the eternal righteousness of Christ is placed to the account of every believing soul. The costly, spotless robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has been provided for the repenting, believing sinner, and he may say: 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness' (Isa. 61:10)" (*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 181; italics supplied).

Tragically, others go to the opposite, libertarian, equally mistaken, works-oriented extreme, attempting to prove by their disregard of God's explicit commands the mistaken assumption that victory over sin has no role in the salvation experience.

Their danger is made clear: "This goody-goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin" (Ellen G. White, letter 53, 1887).

The first group confuses the *evidence* with the *means* of salvation, while the second group undermines the life-changing power God promises to provide for victory over sin and considers a vic-

torious life to be proof of legalism.

Notice how Paul presents the true balance. "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery," he tells the Galatians (Gal. 5:1, NIV). But then he adds: "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love" (verse 13, NIV).

The game of life is not to be like musical chairs, as if what is most important is to be close to a chair when the music stops, to have your last sin confessed before you die. Such a concept seems to view Christ as an adversary instead of a partner in the business of salvation.

If sin were just a behavior, we could try to fix it one behavior at a time. But since sin is a disease, we must attack the infection. Fixing our eyes on Jesus is the cure for the disease. Our insecurity about our salvation is evidence of an inadequate focus on Jesus. Let us make sure the disease is cured, and bring Jesus into focus in our lives.

Ellen White's last words of counsel, penned on June 14, 1914, breathe assurance in Christ: "God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive the gift" (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 519).

Let us make this beautiful message, which is the heart of the gospel, the core of our experience and preaching. My prayer is that every Seventh-day Adventist, whatever his or her age, will enjoy the assurance of salvation that follows complete acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

HAWAII

Ministry in Paradise

Amid natural beauty and erupting volcanoes, the Adventist Church forges ahead, providing a model for multicultural ministry.

BY MYRON WIDMER



Lush and beautiful, the Hawaiian islands sit like jewels in the Pacific Ocean.

HONOLULU, HAWAII. Just mention the name of these islands, and visions of tropical breezes, spectacular volcanic eruptions, Pearl Harbor, and even the graceful hula come floating through one's mind.

Then there are macadamia nuts, iridescent honeycreeper birds, snorkeling in crystal-clear waters, and . . . If you've been here, you know what I mean. Maybe it's not paradise, but if it isn't, it's next in line for the honors.

Hawaii's natural splendor is the lifeblood of these islands, enticing flocks of tourists each year. But its beauty is also at least one culprit in making Christian ministry difficult here—for all denominations.

Why? Because with such beauty beckoning people outdoors all year long, many don't like being cooped up in a church. Add to this the largely non-Christian heritage (Shinto, Buddhist) of much of Hawaii's population, and it's no wonder that Hawaii has the lowest percentage of churchgoers in the United States among its population.

In such a milieu, we must ask if there

is much hope for the acceptance of the Adventist message.

After spending nearly two weeks here attending meetings, visiting churches and schools, and talking with conference leaders—and with a few vacation days tacked on to visit friends, view the volcanoes, and boogie-board in the surf (yes, even at my age!)—I'd say the answer is yes, there *is* hope for the growth of the Adventist message. The church already is alive and growing, though not without its challenges. Let's take a closer look.

The first Adventist to set foot here was 60-year-old Abram La Rue, a onetime entrepreneur, seaman, and gold miner who converted late in life to Adventism and wanted to become a missionary to Hong Kong. Undeterred by the mission board's refusal to send him because he was "too old, not well educated, and didn't know Chinese," La Rue set sail for Hawaii in 1884 with trunks crammed full of colporteur books.

For the next four years La Rue sold Adventist literature and effectively stirred up interest in Adventism. He finally sailed on to Hong Kong and began fulfilling his dream of reaching the Far East for Christ. Before his death 15 years later, La Rue also had pioneered work in Japan, Sarawak, Java, Ceylon, and China. (Not bad for an "old" man, huh?)

From that humble beginning in Hawaii, the Adventist membership now tops the 4,800-member mark, with most members living on Oahu (the island where Honolulu lies). Members worship in 23 churches, operate 10 schools (including a boarding academy), own a conference headquarters building and a sum-



Students at the church's 10 mission schools reflect the islands' multicultural nature.

mer camp, and have an Adventist hospital in their midst.

Hawaii has at least two other noteworthy distinctions of interest to Adventists: Hawaii is the only state in America whose first lady is an active Adventist and whose governor graduated from Adventist schools—Hawaiian Mission Academy, and Andrews University—The Honorable John Waihee.

And Hawaii seems to have gained the reputation for being among the most-sought-after places by pastors. Conference president Charles Sandefur says he gets two or three letters every week from mainland pastors "volunteering" for a pastoral assignment in Hawaii! I can see why!

A Look at the Church

Like the environment in which it ministers, the Adventist Church here is deeply rooted in the Polynesian culture, which nourishes a warm, nurturing, accepting climate, almost as if in tune with the temperate physical climate of the islands.

President Sandefur says Hawaii, and thus the church, is "not a melting pot,"

but rather a "rainbow culture" of many people groups, from the Hawaiians and "locals"—those born in Hawaii—to Anglos, Samoans, Tahitians, Tongans, Fijians, Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, Blacks, Filipinos, and Portuguese.

The individual Adventist congregations reflect the same "rainbow culture." Of the 23 congregations, only two are of a single ethnic group—Korean and Samoa-Tokelau, and none of the remaining 19 has a majority of one ethnic heritage, making them "very cosmopolitan," remarks Sandefur.



Even 20 years after the massive eruption that sent a molten lava fountain 2,000 feet into the air—500 feet taller than the Empire State Building—Kilauea Iki's crater still barely gives life to anything green.

In the midst of such diversity, Sandefur says it is "an illusion to say no attention is paid to race or culture, or that problems don't arise. There is great self-consciousness about their cultures, but there is also a willing and active spirit of tolerance embedded in the collective spirit of Hawaii—and the church takes and enhances that spirit."

A Sabbath morning visit to any of the churches quickly reveals the cultural distinctions and shows how smoothly the cultures interact—and how some accommodations surface.



Charles Sandefur

For instance, in the Aiea church in the Greater Honolulu area, the weekly potluck features two separate food lines—one for Haole food (pronounced HOW-lee, the Hawaiians' traditional name for White people) and one for ethnic food. On the prompting of our host and longtime college friends, Pastor



Like the Aiea church, nearly all the island's Adventist congregations are multicultural.

and Mrs. Darrell and Karen Rott, my wife and I tried the ethnic food line. We were delighted with the flavors, though chopsticks sometimes tempted me to think I was never going to fill my hunger!

And in another instance, because of the sheer numbers of ethnic members in the large Honolulu Central church, the church has essentially chosen to become four organized congregations or divisions under one roof. They study in seven languages or dialects for Sabbath school, and all worship in English for the worship service. Sabbath afternoons three of the divisions meet—Chinese, Filipino, and Samoan.

In addition to all the cultural potpourri, Sandefur suggests that the very location of churches, scattered on the seven inhabited Hawaiian islands, adds further diversity to the church's character. Many are rural or in small towns, while others are downtown, with lots of professional members.

"All of which," says Sandefur, "leads to interesting phenomena unparalleled anywhere else in the Adventist Church." I certainly would agree, for at least on the surface the churches appear to be role models for multicultural ministry.

Education—A Strong Supporter

While not a large denomination in the Hawaiian Islands, the Adventist Church has an identity far greater than its size would suggest. Why? Sandefur attributes it to the church's strong mission school system.

As Dick Duerksen and I took a break from our meetings and visited the Kohala Mission School in Hawi on the northern tip of the big island of Hawaii, I had my first taste of what Sandefur was talking about. Of the 54 students attending the K-8 school, only about 10 students were Adventists!

David Escobar, superintendent of the Adventist schools, says that Kohala's non-Adventist-to-Adventist ratio is

higher than most, but comments that roughly half of the 850 students attending Adventist schools here in Hawaii are non-Adventists.

Escobar credits the level of non-Adventist attendance to the quality of Adventist education and to the fact that "lots of kids here are in private schools." He says the philosophy reigns that "if you're anybody at all, you'll send your children to private schools." Thirty-five percent of all Hawaiian high school students attend private schools.

Of the 10 Adventist schools here,



Frances Oshita, center, makes fragrant leis for all guests who come to the Aiea church on Sabbath morning—including Myron and Karen Widmer.

eight are elementary schools, one extends to tenth grade, and one is Hawaiian Mission Academy, a boarding school in Honolulu—with nearly half of its 200-plus students non-Adventists.

I asked if the heavy non-Adventist presence is difficult to work with, but Sandefur answered that it is not a major problem. He says the dollars invested are equal to the compensation received: the schools provide incredible opportunities to witness to the students and families, and the Adventist Church receives kudos for providing a needed service for the community.

Through the decades that the church has run schools here, an untold number of conversions have occurred. Yet Escobar believes that much more must be done to cultivate the interests created.

While many of the schoolteachers are locals (born in Hawaii), many aren't. When I heard this I became curious as to whether it is hard to get teachers from the mainland. Upon asking Escobar, he replied, "Yes"—which is just the opposite of what I expected. Isn't this Hawaii, the beautiful "Aloha State"?

Escobar says "to most teachers the thought of moving to Hawaii is at first exciting. Then reality hits! They find they most likely will have to live in an apartment, away from their extended families, learn a new culture, and feel like a foreigner." He says these things keep most people from coming—except the hardy or the missionary-minded. And I'd say missionary-minded people are what they need here, for they truly are operating a mission school system.



Volunteer teachers, such as Mrs. Aletha Lawson and her husband at Kohala, are a vital asset to the financial stability of the church's 10 mission schools.

defur says the church wrestles to grow through conversion. Why? Because of tight family structures, the close-knit structure and small-town setting of most of Hawaii, and cultural groups that are not "change-oriented."

Encouraging locals to become pastors is another challenge. Currently only three out of the 26 pastors and administrators were born in the Hawaiian islands. The rest come mostly from the U.S. mainland. Sandefur attributes part of this to the various cultures and to the few work opportunities for young Hawaiians. They often leave the islands in search of work elsewhere and choose not to come back.

The pastorates most often get filled with experienced mainland pastors. Yet Sandefur asserts that it often takes a long time for pastors to be fully accepted by the congregations, which know that the pastors aren't here for the long haul.

Sandefur is thus careful in his screening process. He looks for pastors who are

not just comfortable with cultural diversity, but who celebrate it; pastors with a sense of direction, careful listeners—"for the local culture needs to be deeply listened to and not run over by well-meaning mainland pastors who think they're missionaries and are coming here to 'teach the natives.'"

The Future

What does the future hold? President Sandefur doesn't see any fast growth occurring soon. But he does see potential



Hawaii's youth director, Don Watson, gets some Kohala Mission School students involved in games during recess.

The Challenges


Every field faces challenges, and Hawaii is no different. Beyond working with the church's cultural diversity, San-



Almost every Adventist church on the islands holds a weekly potluck, often offering both Anglo and ethnic food lines.

growth coming through public evangelistic meetings. He says that with so few residents committed to any denomination, the barriers that usually hinder an acceptance of the Adventist message might be fewer.

He also looks forward to more follow-up with non-Adventist students, for the training of more local pastors and teachers, and to the beginning of more churches in the outlying areas.

Amid such a natural paradise on earth, the Adventist Church in Hawaii has made great inroads for the gospel message. But it also appears to have its work cut out for it, under the workings and blessings of the Holy Spirit. 

For more information on Hawaii, contact President Charles Sandefur, Hawaii SDA Conference, 2728 Pali Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817; (808) 595-7591.



Myron Widmer is an associate editor of the Adventist Review.



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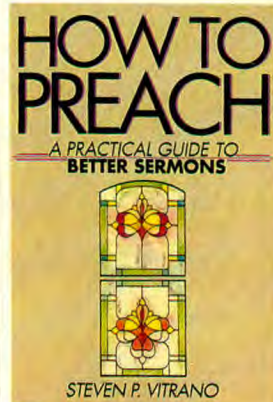
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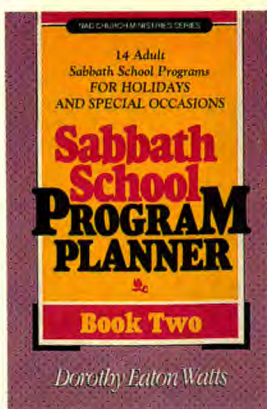
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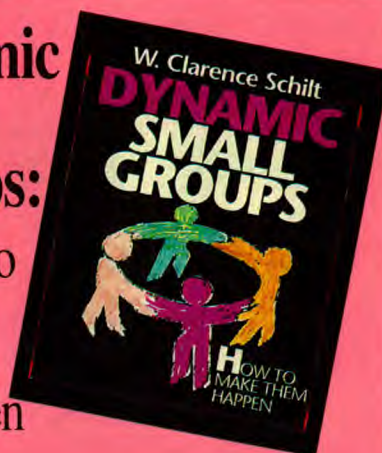


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Should You Look for Your Biological Parents?

An adopted child evaluates the pros and cons.

BY CHERYL R. MERRITT

Anxiety instantly flooded over me as I realized whom the letter was from. I wanted to open it, but felt almost paralyzed with fear of what I might find inside. *Will it hurt to read it?* I thought. I stood by my mailbox behind my apartment in shock.

As I made my way inside, curiosity finally got the best of me. I opened the letter very slowly, as if I were expecting something to jump out at me. As I began to read how she also had been shocked when she received my letter, the tears began to flow. She said she had thought about me "a great deal over the years."

Somehow, hearing from my birth mother filled an emptiness that I had felt for as long as I can remember. It's hard to explain to someone who's not adopted. By emptiness, I don't mean that I was in any way unhappy with my family or life. There just was a part of me that wasn't quite complete.

I have the greatest parents. They made no secret of my adoption; I grew up knowing about it. In fact, they made me feel special because I was chosen by them. I also feel lucky in the sense that the picture my parents helped me paint of my natural birth mother was one of great sacrifice and love. She loved me enough to provide me with the

best life she could, even though it meant giving me up to someone else.

Many adopted people ponder the thought of finding their biological parents. For some, it's only a thought. For others, it's discovering who they are, where they came from.

As I grew up through the years I became more curious about this woman who gave me life. I began wondering, "Do we look alike? What does she do?



Do I have any brothers or sisters? Is she happy?"

But it wasn't until two years ago that I seriously began to consider looking for my birth mother. As I asked friends for their opinions on whether or not I should search for her, I received assorted responses.

"You're being selfish! Just think how your parents would feel, or even how your birth mother would feel." "I think everyone should know where he or she came from." "Any mother would want to know what happened to her baby." "It isn't right to invade someone else's life! God has given you this life; be happy with it and leave them alone."

Should I proceed or back off? It became obvious at this point that it wasn't going to be an easy decision. There are so many considerations. Here are four I'd like to suggest, based on my experience and the experiences of some of my friends.

1. Consider the Feelings of Your Adoptive Parents

Adoptive parents often invest much love, time, and money in you. If possible, include them in the thought process as you consider looking for your biological parents.

I asked my parents how they would feel if I was to search for my birth mother. I didn't want them to think I didn't appreciate them or love them anymore. To my surprise, both my parents were very supportive of the idea, so much so that my dad was ready to do the searching himself.

John, a friend of mine, met his biological parents after his adoptive mother searched for his birth mother and siblings without his initiative. "It was so cool to see how much I look like my half sister," John said.

John's adoptive mother was excited about him finally meeting his birth mother. But she was afraid at the same time. She wondered if he would forget about her and focus on his relationship with his birth mother.

"It felt weird meeting this stranger who is my mother," John said. "I really didn't know how to be." Although John thinks very highly of his birth mother and family, he admits,

"No one could replace my mom and dad [adoptive parents]. They have been my life and everything I know."

Not all parents may be as excited about this prospect, though. Some adoptive parents may feel threatened at the idea. Let them know how much you appreciate them for all they do for you. After all, they are the ones who bandaged your knee when you fell off your bike, listened to you talk about your future plans, and accepted all those collect phone calls. Reassure them you're not trying to replace them by searching for your biological parents.

2. Consider the Feelings of Your Biological Parents and Their Families

Every situation is different. In some cases the birth mother is the only one who knows anything about the adoption. It is possible that no one else in her family may know about you. What a shock to everyone if you just showed up one day.

When I began to imagine what it would be like to meet my birth mother, I first pictured a happy reunion where we were both eager to meet and catch up on all the lost years. But then other possibilities began to dawn on me, and before I knew it I was getting scared about the whole idea. What if she really didn't care what had happened to me or had no interest in meeting me? The realization of possible rejection haunted me.

As I thought about it, more questions began emerging. How would she feel about seeing me? Would it bring up the past and cause an emotional trauma for her? I didn't want to hurt her or upset the life she had made for herself.

Lauri told me she spent years searching for her biological mother and was met only with disappointment. Her birth mother didn't want to have anything to do with her, didn't even want to meet her.

The woman whom Lauri hired to search for her birth mother told Lauri that her birth mother had experienced so much pain when she gave Lauri up for adoption that she didn't want to bring it up again. Her birth mother just couldn't deal with talking about it, much less meeting Lauri.

Although this helped Lauri understand the situation, she still had a feeling of rejection.

It is easy for an adopted young person to envision a wonderful reunion, to

dream of how great it will be to meet his or her natural parents, to think that meeting these people will be a solution to some problem. It is hard to be realistic. There are some exceptions, but on the whole, a reunion is a very traumatic event, even when it ends well.

I have found people who had stories to back up any argument for or against searching for one's biological parents/family.

3. Evaluate Your Own Reasons for Searching

Think through your reasons for searching for your biological parents/family. The need to discover who you are and where you came from is valid, whether it stems from curiosity, medical reasons, or a desire to find out your true nationality.

Adopted persons have a natural curiosity about their biological parents/family. Quite often they wonder, "Whom do I look like?" "Do I have any siblings?" Some adopted persons need to find their biological mother for medical reasons, perhaps a unique situation that calls for a certain blood type.

Not all reasons for searching are positive. Sometimes adopted young people search for their biological family because things are not going well in the family that adopted them. For some reason they want to get back at their adoptive parents. A search that is triggered by those revenge-like reasons isn't good. You'll end up hurting everyone—including yourself.

Kim left her adoptive parents and moved in with her biological parents because she thought they would spoil her more and let her do what she wanted. But she discovered she had exchanged one set of problems for another and that her life changed only in some ways, which wasn't what she had expected. Though Kim moved back in with her adoptive parents, she ended up hurting both families and herself in the process.

As much as possible, try to really understand why you want to find them. Are the reasons important enough to upset either or all sides involved? Be honest with yourself.

4. Seek God's Guidance

Take the whole matter to God. As you

Resources for Adoptees

American Adoption Congress

1000 Connecticut Ave., NW.

Washington, D.C. 20036

1-800-274-OPEN

Referral service, searches, and information.

National Adoption Information

Clearing House

(202) 842-1919

Referrals and general information.

International Soundex Reunion

Registry (ISRR)

P.O. Box 2312

Carson City, NV 89702

(702) 882-7755

Free worldwide registry.

Adoptees in Search (AIS)

P.O. Box 41016

Bethesda, MD 20924

(301) 656-8555

Provides help in searching, consulting, and offers the

Mid-Atlantic State Search Registry.

Adoptees Liberty Movement

Association (ALMA)

P.O. Box 154

Washington Bridge Station

New York, NY 10033

(212) 581-1568

Offers search, support, and a large search registry.

Operation Identity

(505) 293-3144

Searches in the state of New

Mexico, consulting, and referrals.

Parent Finders National

Capital Region

P.O. Box 5211

Station F

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2C 3H5

Parent Finders of Canada

3960 Westridge Ave.

West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 3H7

seek His guidance and consider how everyone involved may feel, He will lead you.

I believe God cares what happens in our lives. And if during your search you are faced with a dead end, remember to be sensitive to the leading that Heaven will provide. Maybe there is a reason the Lord wants you to wait, why the timing may not be right at that moment.

I let the whole issue sit for some time while I prayed and thought about the pros and cons, reasons and feelings. I didn't want to hurt either set of parents or other family members.

After a few months went by I decided to make a move. I pursued very cautiously. I had heard that it sometimes takes years before you can track somebody down. In my case it all fell together very easily.

Within two months I had learned the

phone number and address of my birth mother's mother (my birth grandmother). Two months later I finally got the nerve to write her a letter explaining my interest in my medical history and nationality.

A month and a half later I heard from my birth mother. She shared with me how she had been carrying my letter around for more than a month trying to decide how and what to write but not finding an answer. "You deserve answers to any questions you may have, and I am willing to try to answer them," she said.

She was just as kind and loving as I had imagined. I feel fortunate because not only was I able to make contact, but I received a positive response from my birth mother.

Searching for biological parents isn't the best thing for everyone. It's an indi-

vidual situation. But I found that the above steps helped me think through the process and come to my decision.

I don't regret taking the time to think everything through before going into it. I felt much better prepared for anything (or as prepared as one can be).

It's been more than a year since I heard from her that first time. I don't know whether or not that was the end of the story—only time will tell. And although I don't have all the answers to my questions, at least I made that connection—I found that missing link.



Cheryl R. Merritt is a senior communication major at Walla Walla College in College Place, Washington.



A Special Day

BY PHILLIP WHIDDEN

Not long ago a teacher in my school asked her homeroom students to play an interesting game. She had them get pens and paper ready and told them she was going to say a single word. All they had to do was write down the very first thought or thing that came into their heads when they heard this word.

When you read the list of what the students wrote, you'll guess the word: "Makes my bed," "Tidies up my room," "Makes my meals," "Nosy," "Takes care of me when I'm sick," "Bossy," "Washes my clothes," "I love her."

Once a year we celebrate Mother's Day to pay special attention to what mothers mean to us. You know what you're supposed to do on that day. The greeting card manufacturers tell you you are supposed to buy a card for your

mother. The florists say you should purchase her some flowers. The chocolate companies tempt you to get her something sweet and delicious.

Why not do something that your mother would appreciate even more? Make your own bed. Make your own breakfast. Wash the dishes. Pick up your clothes and tidy your room.

Or do something even more special. Make your mother breakfast. (Don't forget to clean up the mess you make in the kitchen!) You could even become a little bit bossy. Tell your mother to stay in bed and have a good rest for a change; you are going to do the chores this day. You could try being slightly nosy. Ask your mother if there is any other task you can do to make her day nicer. You could even go one better. You could use this Mother's

Day to promise to start doing more of her chores every day.

Have you ever thought what it would be like if Mother's Day meant the opposite of what it means usually? What if your mother made your meals only one day a year—on Mother's Day? What if she cleaned your clothes only once every 365 days? What if she cared enough about you to be nosy and bossy only one day out of every 12 months? What if she loved you only on Mother's Day? What if she was your mother only that one 24-hour period every year?

Your mother is special because she loves you every day and does so much for you day and night, year in and year out. She will love you and be your mother even if you do nothing for her this Mother's Day.

Global Mission

Our Piece of the Pie

BY GARY B. PATTERSON

Among paid and lay leadership the conclusion has been reached during the past decade that the work of spreading the gospel must be accomplished by the local congregation and the individual member. That means the congregation does not exist to serve the structure, but rather, the structure exists to serve the congregation—where the work of the church is accomplished.

The question that must be asked of every structure is How does it serve the congregation?

The strategic planning document for ministry in North American Division churches calls for a relational ministry model that is targeted at the family group from age 25 to 45. This ministry of the church is manifested in a continuous cycle of reaching the community, winning converts, nurturing members, training for service, and then repeating the cycle again and again, as illustrated in the service systems circle below.



The Church as a Body

The church was instituted not by men, but by God. First came the congregation, then the supporting structure. As congregations formed, structure was pro-

vided to enable them to fulfill their outreach to the world and give nurture to the fellowship.

The body is a fit example of the church. It possesses diversity of function, specialized parts, symmetry, inter-related support systems, active and re-active capability, and unity of intent and purpose.

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body" (1 Cor. 12:12, NIV). The methodology by which the church performs its ministry, both for nurture and outreach, centers in relationships. The functions of the church grow out of the relational model, especially outreach ministries.

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me' " (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

In order to position itself in the perceptions of the public, the church must choose how it will be known. A major focus of perception must be established and maintained as an intentional positioning. The choice must be to position the church for its best outreach advantage, rather than for the comfort of existing membership or special interest groups.

The tendency is for a given age, power, or social group to capture the church and carry it along to its own interests rather than maintaining the broader focus of an intentional positioning. The ideal group to target is the young to mid-age family group, approximately from age 25 to 45. Other age groups, both below and above this target, as well as singles, will be reached by including them and drawing them into the church as family.

Getting Things Done

Addressing these responsibilities of nurture and outreach, the North American Division leadership has outlined five foci of activity on which both congregational and administrative levels of the church must concentrate. These are:

1. *Reaching* the growing populations of the division, with special focus on the large urban centers.
2. *Linking* local congregations and conferences with specific world mission projects.
3. *Creating* vital and dynamic worship, fellowship, and service in Christ-centered congregations.
4. *Reclaiming* inactive and former church members.
5. *Multiplying* points of people contact by a planned process.

A comparison of the growth of the church in North America with that of the world field reveals interesting trends. There is a dramatically increasing growth pattern in both, but especially notable is the nearly 100 percent increase in the past decade for world church membership, while the North American membership increased by only 25 percent.

North American Division Church Growth

North America participates in world growth by providing the bulk of funding for General Conference operations, but we would like also to keep pace with the dramatic increases in world church growth. We can if we give attention to the points emphasized above.

Our membership, however, is not centered in the major population areas of North America. We have traditionally worked more effectively in small towns and rural areas.

Half the Adventists in North America live in small towns and rural locations, in marked contrast to the general urbanization of U.S. and Canadian society. A significant gap exists in Adventist penetration of the large cities, especially their suburbs (where nearly half the general population lives). Less than a third of the Adventist community resides there. This may be a contributing factor

to the large number of White Adventist churches experiencing little or no growth in membership.

A look at the ratio of Adventists to the population indicates that we have not worked as effectively as we should in the mega-population areas. (See map.)

Amid all the statistics it is easy to forget about our mission as individuals. We must constantly remind ourselves that it is not *institutions* that give the gospel; it is *people*. Institutions assist us by providing settings and materials that make it possible for people to witness. But the gospel goes to the whole world one person at a time.

We are not as good at that as we should be. Our protective structures, and often closed societies, tend to isolate us from those to whom we should witness.

How We Got Where We Are

Perhaps a little review of how we got to where we are as a people would assist us in an understanding of why we behave as we do.

During the era of our development as a church in the later years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, our society was strongly influenced by the ideas and culture of Europe. The Protestant churches quite naturally drew their models and modes of thinking from the Germanic background of the Reformation. For our early church leaders, issues of authority, structure, and procedure tended to flow from these models. As a matter of fact, our church leadership roster often read like the names in a Berlin phone book. Science, art, music, education, architecture,

and religion all looked to the motherland for direction.

But with the onset of World War II the United States began to come of age, as it found that what it did worked. We were no longer protecting privilege or accepting entrenched systems. The goal was not the preservation of institutions, but production.

As a result, our arts, music, education, culture, and religion gained credence. A by-product of this newfound credibility was national pride and dominance among the nations of the world.

The young veterans returning from the war were schooled in military systems that were top-down, line-authority oriented, pyramidal in structure. Those who attended summer camp during that era will recall that they were little military camps. We marched everywhere we went. There were line calls every hour, with all the attendant saluting and shouting of orders and responses. There were lists of restrictions and instructions on just how everything was to be done and how order was to be kept. (Much of that process yet remains in the Pathfinder organization, though later generations of leaders tend to downplay it somewhat.) The former military men were using the techniques that worked, that got things done.

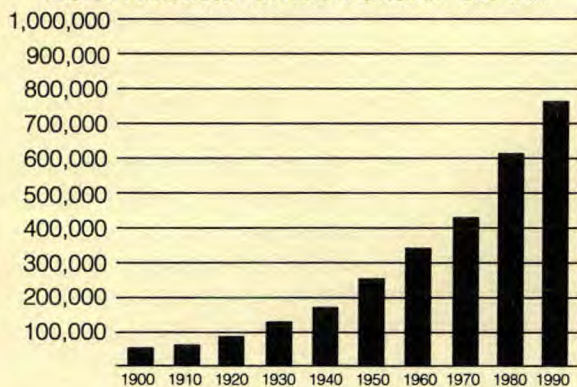
Times Change

But times change. It doesn't seem to work anymore. Massive systems seem bloated and unable to move with the quick pace required by the electronic age. Now we see the growth of small groups with personal responsibility and emphasis on groups that can adjust to changing circumstances.

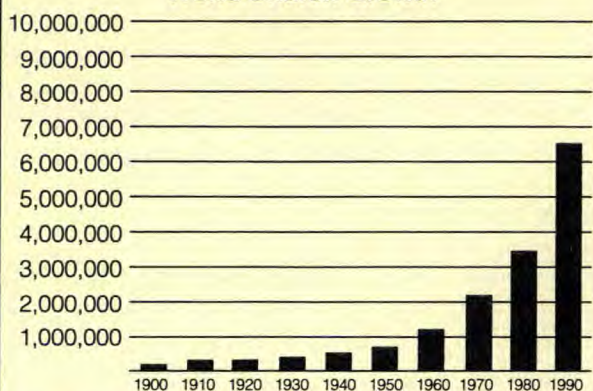
Unfortunately, it is easy for the church to become captured by age groups that seek to impose on following generations their own interests and procedures. But the church must not allow itself to be captured. It must remain focused on its target population: the growing edge of the family cycle. It is the strategic plan of the North American Division to focus on this group: those 25 to 45 years of age.

When the church shifts from its target

North American Division Church Growth



World Church Growth



population, its growing edge withers away. The structures and interests imposed by prior generations do not seem to fit current situations. We face today the problem of dealing with lifestyle, dress, dietary practices, and musical tastes, to name a few issues. While we do not want to abandon what is good and helpful in our heritage, we also do not want to maintain that which will needlessly cut off the fresh growing edge of the church.

Our principles of Christian lifestyle are solid, but too often we make the particulars of behavior into a new ceremonial law that, rather than introducing people to a new life in Christ, ends up barring them from fellowship in the church. We must recognize that we cannot speak to people whose language we do not understand or whose language we refuse to speak.

To reject the language, music, or thought patterns of others in order to maintain the idea that we are somehow superior is an expression of racism. The apostle Paul sought to be all things to all people, a concept that often appears to the church as heretical.

As church growth specialist Win Arn says, the church is "struggling between old and new paradigms. The struggle is a pivotal one because the outcome will determine whether the church has an influence in Americans' lives in the twenty-first century or becomes a relic of days gone by. The empty cathedrals of Europe, and the vast unchurchedness of that population, give stark testimony to the consequences of the church holding on to old paradigms as the world around it changes."

Dr. Arn is right on. If we allow the church to be captured by the methods and procedures of the past authoritarian pyramid that seeks to preserve its privileges, entitlements, procedures, positions, and bureaucracies, then the church will grow old. In its dotage it will only be able to sit and watch the world go by as it reminisces, often bitterly, of the "good old days."

But we do not have to force age on the church, for it may be renewed by each

generation as it finds new forms of expression. If it finds new avenues on which it may move into society, if it truly addresses the needs of society and, in the name of Christ, earns through service the right to give the invitation "Follow Me,"

then it will be true to its mission.

French philosopher Paul Ricoeur puts it in these words: "Our heritage is not a sealed package we pass from hand to hand, without ever opening, but rather a treasure from which we draw by the handful and which by this very act is replenished. Every tradition lives by the grace of interpretation, and it is at this price that it continues."

The Boy in the Bubble

One of the most touching and tragic stories to come from medical science is the story of "the boy in the bubble." Because of his lack of an immune system, he lived out his isolated and lonely existence behind the protective shield of a plastic bubble—breathing only filtered air, eating only sterilized food, and never enjoying the loving, comforting, and sharing touch of the outside world.

I fear that we are in danger of becoming "the church in the bubble," terrified that if we actually get out into the world to love and share the good news of salvation, we will become contaminated and fail to maintain our ceremonial purity. But a church that lives only in its self-righteous bubble will be unable to fulfill its mission. Salvation is found, not in isolation from evil surroundings, but in receiving overcoming power from the Lord; power that overcomes not only our own sinful infection but also the evil in the world through our loving service.

When does the church become a



bureaucracy, rather than a witnessing community? When our mission becomes preservation of the institution rather than giving the good news of salvation. This tendency toward bureaucracy causes the church to look back over its shoulder in order to ascertain whether its altruism is really paying off.

We form a closed society when we become too stressed to allow nonconforming people in our midst, when we insist on total conformity or nothing. We have closed our minds to present truths when we refuse to address issues that make us uncomfortable and when those who do are destroyed by church terrorists.

We are speaking to ourselves—and it will be to a dwindling number at that—when we close off programs and events that appeal to the public but offend our narrow sensibilities.

We must do better. We must bridge the gap between cultures, generations, languages, or any other gulf that separates us from reaching those whom our Lord left heaven to redeem. We must adopt the loving and inclusive methodology of our Lord, for His method *alone* will give true success.

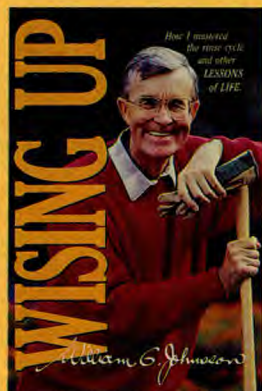


Gary B. Patterson is the administrative assistant to the president of the North American Division.

Editor of the *Review* Wises Up



William Johnsson shares experiences in which God opened his eyes and wised him up. His topics are



as diverse as tomatoes and chain saws, but he always presents sparkling insights on growing in the Christian life. This is the wit, wisdom, and spiritual vibrancy of William Johnsson at his best. *Wising Up*. Paperback, 124 pages. US\$7.95, Cdn\$9.55.

Marriages Divided by Religion

Every Time I Say Grace, We Fight. Here's encouragement for marriage partners who don't share the same religion or see eye-to-eye on their Christian lifestyles. Real-life experiences show how to deal with criticism, lack of communication, in-laws, and raising children. Love and acceptance can transcend all barriers, says Sandra Finley Doran. Paperback, 94 pages. US\$7.95, Cdn\$9.55.



New Kay Rizzo Book

Devastated by a broken engagement, Megan wonders, *Is God leading in my life?* She escapes to a teaching job in down-

town Manhattan. There she meets Mike, a young pastor, who assures her, "God is leading." Perhaps He is even leading Megan and Mike together—until an accident puts a tragic new twist on everything Mike is saying. *Forsake Me Not*. Paperback, 156 pages. US\$7.95, Cdn\$9.55.

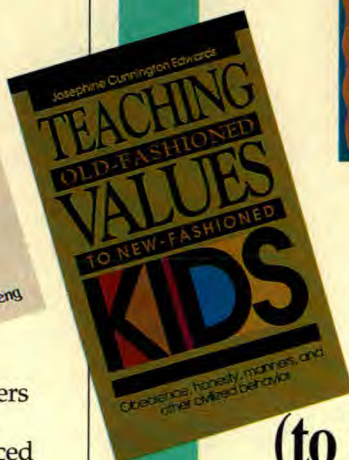
Ideas for Family Fun

Here are hundreds of ideas for creating happy memories with young children. Includes simple worship activities, easy craft projects, holiday celebrations for Christians, and exciting ways to explore nature. Paperback, 80 pages. US\$6.95, Cdn\$8.35.



Love in the Killing Fields

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Is the old-fashioned way the best way to teach children obedience, honesty, responsibility, self-control, and unselfishness? You be the judge as you read this classic advice on child-rearing by Josephine Cunningham Edwards. Paperback, 120 pages. US\$6.95, Cdn\$8.70.



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THE LOMA LINDA REPORT



Health-care personnel at Loma Linda University Medical Center serve over 23,000 inpatients per year in its 627-bed facility. Over half of these patients are surveyed each year to determine their attitudes about the Medical Center.

Patients Do Notice

Each year, Loma Linda University Medical Center provides services for over 23,000 inpatients. Outpatient visits total more than 500,000 each year.

Up to 35 percent of the Medical Center's patients are served in nine intensive care units. These units are designed to provide intensive care to patients with life-threatening medical problems, and are staffed by individuals with specialized training in caring for the critically ill or injured.

Frequently, patients and their families send comments about the care they receive on these or other units at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Following are excerpts from patient-satisfaction surveys and letters received at the Medical Center.

• • •

"The care provided in ICU, the nursing staff, the physical therapy, and the instruction in how to care for myself were the things that I appreciated the most during my visit at LLUMC. Because my experience with the staff was that they were in all ways concerned for me and my well-being—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—I would recommend LLUMC to others."

• • •

"The picture of Jesus Christ hanging in the lobby for all to see was what I liked the most. I would recommend LLUMC because of the experienced staff and be-

cause the way I was treated with the utmost care and respect. Everyone's warm smile had a healing power all its own. I appreciated that the meals—which were good—were always on time."

• • •

"There are no words in my vocabulary to describe how we feel about LLUMC. My daughter is alive and 100 percent herself because of the excellent care given by the staff, from the security guard at emergency, the secretary, student paramedics, and residents to (above all) the physicians and nurses. No one could ask for more competent, caring people whose attitudes reflect dedication above and beyond the call of duty. The dedication and thoughtfulness will remain in our hearts and prayers

Please turn to next page

Information for this section supplied by the Loma Linda University Medical Center office of public affairs.

"FULFILLING THE VISION"

“FULFILLING THE VISION”

throughout our lives. The kindness of the lady in admitting, the unbelievable capability demonstrated, the competence shown, and the caring attitude of the people in the emergency room were so overwhelming. When my daughter was in ICU, a medical student came and talked to me in the middle of the night, and he helped me stop reliving the 911 rescue call and the wait for the ambulance. Everyone gave us strength, hope, and support to face the worst crisis my husband and I have ever dealt with in our lives.”

• • •

“The cleanliness of the Medical Center, the cheerfulness and thoughtfulness of the nurses at the station, and the fact that they took time to answer questions were the best aspects of LLUMC. A nurse by the name of Leintje Weley was fantastic, humorous, thoughtful, and very professional and helpful. We loved her! Also, a male nurse was outstanding. He helped us to understand what was going on and showed me two films on head injuries. He also made a very big effort in obtaining a roll-away cart for me, which was most appreciated.”

• • •

“I appreciated most the concern and love for patients demonstrated by the staff, as well as the fact that they took all the time necessary to help their patients. I would like to give a special thank you to the physical therapy and occupational therapy staffs, and to the speech/language pathology department. They all did an excellent job.”

• • •

“I appreciated most the doctors and nurses who treated my son, and the secretaries who were so nice. The staff from the first to the last floor were friendly and concerned. Dr. Brian Curtis was outstanding. He was very professional, yet sensitive about our feelings. Our son talks about him often. We always will hold him close to our hearts because he cared for our son as if he were his own.”

• • •

“I appreciated most the concern and care of the staff on the obstetrics unit and in the neonatal intensive care unit. I would recommend LLUMC because the care is excellent and the people are great. I had anticipated professional and quality care from world-renowned LLUMC, but I was

so impressed by the caliber of the caregivers. All of the nursing staff I met while I was in labor were kind, gentle, and so helpful. After my son was born with a collapsed lung, he was put in NICU. The nurses there went beyond simply doing a job; they were very dedicated, caring people. One nurse in particular touched me with her compassion for her small patients. She was such a warm, loving individual. I feel that the extra concern shown is surely felt by those little babies. The NICU physicians also were great. They always were willing to update and explain our son's condition to us. In fact, we had some concerns about his care after we brought him home, and we contacted the unit. Dr. Wu not only promptly returned our call with his advice, but also contacted us the following day to

*“The Lord wants wise
men and women to
comfort and help the
sick and suffering.
Through [these]
ministrations, those
who have heretofor
taken no interest in
religious things will be
led to ask ‘What must
I do to be saved?’ ”*

—Ellen G. White, 1905

check on our son's progress. In short, Loma Linda's caring staff brings a true and deep level of commitment to patient care.”

• • •

“Dr. Theodore Mackett and Dr. Steven Gundry were the two surgeons who treated me. I praise God for these two fine men. They are not only fine gentlemen, but also wonderful doctors in their field of practice. Dr. Mackett was so kind and compassionate to me and my wife and family. He helped ease my family's stress and worry by keeping them informed about my condition. There were so many fine nurses that it is difficult for me to

remember their names. But they were very professional and efficient.”

• • •

“My daughter had respiratory distress. I took her to another hospital, and they immediately called the pediatric intensive care unit at LLUMC. They were very professional, caring, and, above all, helpful. The staff is the best. I want to add that every person involved with my daughter was excellent, as were her nurses in PICU. I noticed one nurse by the name of Brenda going the extra mile for ‘her’ kids. Everyone was very caring and gave me the extra strength that it took to see me through. I hope I never have to relive that experience; however, if the unfortunate should occur, I wouldn't trust anyone but your staff to treat my children. Thanks a billion; my hat is off to you.”

• • •

“What I liked the most was that the nurse stayed with me the whole five hours while I was in recovery. I also liked the way my children could come to see me.”

• • •

“I was treated kindly and competently by all the staff. I felt as though a loving family were caring for me. I felt very safe. I am a former nurse and may possibly have a more critical eye when it comes to medical care. Thank you all for a very positive experience in a scary situation. You have restored my faith in the health-care system.”

• • •

“I cannot begin to express our deepest gratitude for your help. We appreciate the time and individual attention that you gave to our dad. You helped him through the most difficult time of his life—that is, facing his own death. You are a great team!”

• • •

“Everyone was very caring and concerned about our son. We had three excellent nurses. One of the nurses stayed with us almost the whole time while our son's temperature went up to 105 degrees and while we got it down. He continued to check our son's temperature every 20 to 25 minutes throughout the night and morning. We really appreciated all his hard work.”

• • •

“What I liked most was that everyone was very helpful and made me feel very comfortable. They made me feel as though I were the only patient at LLUMC.”

Global Mission PROJECTS

Guinea
105 SDA (in 7 million)



Mauritania
No SDA (in 2 million)



Niger
18 SDA (in 8 million)



The Faces of North Africa

► Contains 6 of the world's
29 unentered countries

► Ratio of SDA to
population = 1:42,000
(world average is 1:758)

► Over 90% Muslim

Projects #901 and #902 will provide Better Living Centers in Mauritania, Guinea and Niger. A nation-wide stop smoking program is planned for Niger.

"Think of the thousands who have not yet heard the message of salvation. Do you not desire to do something to advance the work of God among them? His [Christ] life was one of unselfish service and it is to be our lesson book"
E. G. White, The Southern Missionary 1/1/03

	Received as of March 31	Goal	Still Needed
	%0 20 40 60 80 100		
EASTERN EUROPE: <i>Church buildings</i>			
Czechoslovakia #404			
Bulgaria #405			
Romania #406			
		COMPLETED	
		\$35,000	\$24,135
MAURITANIA/GUINEA #901: <i>Better Living Center</i>			
		\$100,000	\$87,185
NIGER #902: <i>Stop Smoking Plan and Better Living Center</i>			
		\$64,000	\$51,379
KOREA #701: <i>Dental lab</i>			
		\$60,000	\$49,567
CHINA #203: <i>Medical Work</i>			
		\$250,000	\$248,100
INDONESIA #702: <i>Women's Ministries for local churches</i>			
		\$71,000	\$68,682
RUSSIA #104: <i>E.G.W. books printed at Russian Publishing House</i>			
		\$60,000	\$36,000
INDIA #502: <i>New congregations</i>	raised \$140,808		
		\$2,500 per church	

☐ Enclosed is my gift of

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All funds given for a specific project will be used entirely for that purpose until the goal is reached. At that time, monies exceeding the goal will automatically be assigned to another similar project. All monies are tax-deductible, and should be non-tithe monies.

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INDIA

Students Study Service Firsthand

Class works at Mother Teresa's home in Calcutta.

As part of Atlantic Union College's new class, Psychology and Development of Service for the Poor, Dr. Shirani de Alwis' students flew to India and



Students Melissa Frost (left) and Carmie Mitchel (right) observe how an illiterate health-care worker in Jamkhed, India, uses pictures to teach simple medical procedures.

worked in Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity homes for children, the physically and mentally disabled, and the dying in Calcutta, India. Students also served in Bombay, Jamkhed, New Delhi, and Pune.

De Alwis wrote the course requirements, made arrangements for the trip, and accompanied the group to India. The students kept journals of their daily experiences with the poor and worked on reading assignments that would help them make comparisons between poverty in India and the United States.

Empowering the Poor

In Jamkhed, De Alwis sought to show her students how to empower the poor through the example of a medical doctor who trained illiterate people in small villages to perform simple medical procedures on their own. "He took them in, trained them, gave them confidence, and sent them back to their own place," she related.

When it came time for the group to help at Mother Teresa's homes, they re-

ceived no job orientation. Student Jennifer Sprague explained, "You walk in the door and you're expected to find your job. You do whatever needs to be done."

At the Home for the Dying, the group fed people rice, held their hands, washed dishes, and wrung out blankets to dry, while others took to the streets to find people to bring in and care for.

"I would sit on a bed next to some patients and talk to them in English, and they would talk back to me in Hindi," said student Carmie Mitchel of her experience at the home. "I think the best way of bonding with people is eating with them. The whole thing was about giving back their dignity."

Joel Bomane, a student from France, had a different perspective on the trip. As the only male in the group he found himself hailing taxis and making travel arrangements. "It's a patriarchal society. When there's a male, people are more willing to listen," Bomane noted.

Bomane was often mistaken for an Indian. In New Delhi he met a poor salesman on the street who tried to persuade him to buy a miniature chess set. The man, who was speaking in English, couldn't believe Joel was from France.

"When I said I was French, he started talking in French. I said, 'I know Spanish,' and we started talking in Spanish." The two then conversed in German and Italian. "I said, 'I've got to find a language he doesn't know.' It was like a game between us. So I finally spoke in Latin. He didn't speak Latin," Bomane related.

From that point on, Bomane began to see the poor in a much different light. "You think they don't know anything and that we have to teach them. It's not so. His knowledge of languages and his amazing memory were incredible."

Bomane met volunteers from all over the world at Mother Teresa's homes in Calcutta. "Every day they'd come from all over—France, England, Germany, Australia, America, India. They all came for the same purpose—to volunteer. When you ask 'Why did you come?' they answer, 'Because of the happiness and peace I find in working, serving, and sharing.'"

The Beauty of the People

Although this was her fourth service venture to India, De Alwis, who has worked with Mother Teresa before, explained that the beauty and happiness of the people continue to draw her. De Alwis organized similar trips for her students while dean of the Graduate School of Education at Spicer Memorial College in Pune, India. Even though the group went to serve the poor, their teacher also took them to India's wealthy areas. "I wanted them to see the contrast, to see what it's



Marcia Davitt, Joel Bomane, Rosa Gomez, Shirani de Alwis, Melissa Frost, and Stephanie Barter (left to right) stand in front of a Seventh-day Adventist church in Calcutta, India, with the pastor and his family.

By Christa M. Delcamp, Atlantic Union College student.



Joel Bomane visits a home in Pune, India, that brings in destitute mothers and children.

like to be poor and live where a mansion stands next door," she explained.

Both De Alwis and her students said the

trip has reinforced their belief that similar needs exist at home. Sprague, for instance, would like to use her skills as a nursing major to start service programs in the U.S. De Alwis is open to ideas for a class project in the United States.

For Bomane, going to India to learn their way of survival isn't a bad idea for Americans, given the increased poverty and homelessness in North America. "Indians know how to survive. Their life is full of hope in spite of suffering," he noted.

■ WORLD FIELD

World Baptismal Day Set for May 30

Churches invited to use that Sabbath for evangelism.

One of the objectives of Global Mission is to maintain a continual program of evangelism featuring three key words: seek, reap, and keep. This means looking for interests among all people groups—instructing, baptizing, incorporating, and retaining them as faithful and active members.

The plan calls for each church to hold a baptism every month, which will provide an opportunity to call for decisions, obtain the names and addresses of those who respond, and offer them Bible studies.

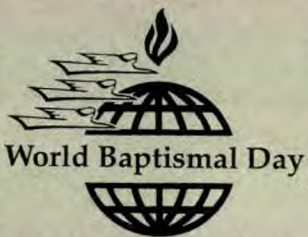
The Annual Council in Perth unanimously voted "to designate the last Sabbath in May as the annual Global Baptismal Day, commencing in 1992, and to recommend that all churches around the world hold an

evangelistic-type baptismal service and extend a call for decisions to friends of the church who are not yet Adventists." The date is Sabbath, May 30, 1992.

While the idea calls for holding a baptism in each church, several churches could join for a mass baptism. These evangelistic-type services will encourage church members to invite their friends, family, and interested people.

Usually the best time for such a baptism is Sabbath morning, when the largest number of people are present, but it can also be held in the afternoon or at night.

Churches may announce in advance that the baptism represents a worldwide event. Groups might be baptized together, such as children, youth, couples, and friends. The worldwide goal for May 30 is a 150,000-strong harvest from all corners of the earth.



By Carlos E. Aeschlimann, associate secretary, General Conference Ministerial Association.

■ ROMANIA

Revelation Seminars Stir Members, Populace

Lay workers hold thousands of meetings nationwide.

A national evangelistic campaign in Romania using nationwide Revelation seminars began on January 18. The goal was to establish thousands of seminars, with an attendance of 110,000 non-Adventist visitors. It is the largest evangelistic thrust ever by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Romania.

In Prahova, youth from the church in Cimpina came to the Department of Education, where they discovered the board of inspectors assembled in a meeting, and asked for permission to conduct Revelation seminars in one of the high school buildings. The principal was hesitant but deeply interested in this unprecedented program. The inspectors listened to the explanation, examined the advertising brochures, and expressed their appreciation. They gave their approval, and one of the inspectors even registered to attend a seminar himself.

But the Revelation seminars are not just for the youth. One member, the only Adventist from the village of Babeni, was sick in bed. He wondered what he could do for these seminars and decided to offer a room in his home. God blessed and two groups were established, each with 10 to 12 in attendance.

Teen Evangelists

At the opposite pole are juniors like Emmanuel, 13, who used a survey in a public park to gather three or four boys together. He prepared a prophetic chart and two times a week is conducting a lively meeting. George, one of the boys attending, said, "It sounds good to me. When I grow up I'm going to become a preacher."

Revelation seminars are being presented in areas where the SDA message has never been preached. Even non-SDAs are promoting these seminars. In the village of

Podgoria one non-Adventist family not only offered their home, but went through the village inviting others to attend. Through their zeal two seminars were established, with 40 in attendance.

In Nasal, youth from the Buzga church gained permission to use the local school and widely advertised their meetings. But on the opening night the local priest persuaded the principal not to open the rooms. After an hour of futile waiting, some villagers offered their homes, and two strong groups were started, one of which has 37 visitors attending. When the priest sent his wife through the village to persuade the people to stop attending the seminars, the hosts answered, "We are the masters here! If we want to repent, who can stop us?" Many decisions were gained, some after only the first few lessons.

In Barasti the local priest had a change of heart. Wondering what a Revelation Seminar was, he registered and attended regularly. After the first lessons another

seminar began in the priest's home.

Near Bucharest the leader of a Revelation Seminar was invited to conduct one in the Baptist church. When the Baptist leaders asked why SDAs were conducting meetings in their church, the members responded, "Since Adventists are preaching the gospel and Christ, we decided to help them." Another Baptist church requested a seminar. When no one came to conduct it, the Baptist members conducted it themselves. Following insistent requests, another large seminar began in a Pentecostal church.

Fasting and Prayer

In Ianca, after no visitors came on opening night, the 25 Adventist members decided to fast and pray all night, pleading with God to move the hearts of the villagers. The next morning 13 people came to the church, all having been influenced by dreams or messages from God. Ultimately 30 attended the seminar, and 15 have decided for baptism. In the past five years no one has been baptized in this church.

A young lady in Moldavia sent a letter to her grandmother in Bucharest, sharing her joy over discovering the Revelation seminars and expressing her desire that her grandmother attend also. She told her she would be visited by a man who would invite her to attend. Just as she was reading the letter, a man knocked at the door and introduced himself—the same man mentioned in the letter. The grandmother was so impressed with God's intervention that she accepted the invitation with tears running down her cheeks.

The church in Baragan planned to evangelize a neighboring village. Nobody accepted the invitation except some Gypsy families. The weather turned severely cold on the first day, but the Gypsies waited at the entrance of the village to escort the seminar leaders and then accompanied them back on their departure. For every meeting they repeated their welcome, explaining, "It's the first time that anyone has cared for our souls. We are acquainted with contempt, but we discover now that you love us and that God loves us too."

Among the 161 attending a seminar in Valeni was a young church painter. When asked about the change in his life, he responded, "Until now I have painted a lot of saints, but I remained a pagan. Now I'm going to be a saint myself."

Laypeople Win Souls

Describing the benefit the seminar has brought him, one leader said, "These seminars caused me to discover three facts. First, that the people are not as bad as I thought. There are many souls whom God's Spirit is leading. Second, laypeople like me can win souls by the power of God. I did not imagine that the Holy Spirit could unearth so many hidden talents in a member like me. Third, by this work my own dull life has gained meaning. I am one very happy man."

Revelation seminars are breaking out in club buildings and houses of culture, such as in Manastirea, where 40 people attend in spite of strong opposition. In Timisoara a university hall finds hundreds of students gathered in four large groups. In Arad a medical doctor attends a seminar conducted in a local clinic. In Oradea a seminar is being conducted at the Hospital for the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the police officers there. In Pincota two groups meet in the city hall.

In Urziceni the seminar is conducted at the radio-relay office, with responses coming from listeners to the radio classes. In Bucharest and Braila three entire high school classes were organized as Revelation seminars. In Sloboizia seminars are run in the courthouse, with high government officials as students. In Tulcea a seminar is conducted at the police station. And in Aiud and Colibasi seminars meet in prisons.

Sabbath, May 30, World Baptismal Day, will see the first fruits. The next results of this national evangelistic campaign will appear at the beginning of June, during eight harvest festivals throughout Romania.

By Lucien Cristescu, evangelism coordinator, Romanian Union. Translated by Florin Laiu.



They're Back!

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Flying Lessons

Weekday mornings at our house are not full of philosophical musings. Routine is reduced to the essentials, and conversations are filled with such phrases as "Hurry, Jaime, find your shoes" and "Lauren, have you brushed?"

I sat on the edge of the big cast-iron bathtub in our mountain house, putting the finishing touches on a stubborn curl that wouldn't.

In the mirror I saw Jaime's reflection. Wistful blue eyes peeked out from below angel floss hair.

She was humming one of the songs again.

It was from the TV classic *Peter Pan*, the one with actress Mary Martin playing the lead role. The girls loved it. Especially Jaime. She seemed to have an affinity for Peter. She didn't know he was played by a woman. Or about the invisible wires. Peter was her friend.

Almost 3 years old, she would often break into a child's version of "I Won't Grow Up" or "Think Happy Thoughts."

When dressing, she would carefully lay out her sweat pants on the floor, plop down on top of them with baby legs outstretched, and declare to me that she had found her shadow! Jaime stopped humming.

"Mommy." She turned her cherub face toward me expectantly.

"Yes, honey."

"Mommy, would you teach me how to fly?"

No Joke

I chuckled and hugged her, enjoying the joke. But then I immediately realized that she wasn't joking. And she wanted an answer.

Of course, I was teaching my children how to fly—figuratively speaking. At least I thought so. Evan and I worked hard at helping our children to grow "roots" and "wings." You know, instilling and encouraging self-esteem, creativity, social skills, and moral and religious values. Mostly we tried to introduce these miraculous creations to their Creator and make Jesus real for them, too.

"Mommy." More insistently this time. "Will you teach me how to fly?"

She wasn't interested in figurative flying. She wanted to learn how to honest-to-goodness fly.

"Well, honey..." I hesitated. "Right now we



*Wistful blue
eyes peeked out
from below
angel floss
hair.*

have to use airplanes to fly. But someday, when Jesus comes on the big cloud to take us to heaven, then we'll be able to fly."

Now, I knew about airplanes flying. I had practically grown up in the back of a single-engine Cessna.

My parents, both private pilots, would often gather up suitcases and kids to fly to Grandma's house—thereby avoiding both the slow-moving trucks that frustrated my father and the fast-moving violations that sometimes caught up with him when he "flew low" on four wheels.

From Kansas to Tennessee it was a four-hour flight instead of a 13-hour drive. Still, my siblings and I would regularly whine, "When will we get there?"

We always did. And the best part was flying over my grandparents' house. Dad would buzz in and "rock the wings" as he circled. The tiny occupants of the little house far below would run out and wave a hand or a dish towel.

By the time we put down at the nearby landing strip, they were there to greet us. Yes, I knew about flying in an airplane.

I looked at Jaime. She didn't seem to be devastated by my inability to match aeronautics with Peter. She was thinking about Jesus coming on the big cloud.

"Mommy, will it be a *very strong* cloud?"

"Yes, sweetheart, a *very strong* cloud!"

I hugged her and thought of how heaven might be. In heaven, will flying be an immediately acquired skill? Or will we take lessons? Who will teach us? Our guardian angels?

Will we feel cool breezes as we travel through the air about Paradise? Or will we simply "think" ourselves to desired destinations?

I hugged Jaime again and determined that, by God's grace, I'd be there to see her first flight.



Sheree Parris Nudd is a vice president at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in Rockville, Maryland. She and her husband, Evan, have two daughters, ages 4 and 8.

**BY SHEREE PARRIS
NUDD**

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