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N.A.A.D. ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

MAY 5, 1994

The Changing Church

Trends that would fragment us

ANOTHER LOOK AT MOTHER'S DAY 16

NEEDLE- PREACHING THE DISTINCTIVES 18

Catalyst for Thought

Spending time in the Heritage Room of the James White Library at Andrews University helped me to understand how the *Review* helped shape and unite the church during the early years. I am comforted to see that your staff has sensed the role of this global church paper as a catalyst for thought.

Talking openly about sexual misconduct, examining divergent theological views, and overhauling old denominational structures have all been tackled. For a fellow who grew up in the seventies, this kind of honest self-analysis is a refreshing wind.

One editorial practice does, however, seem a bit out of character from the way in which you conduct business these days. I refer to the ever-increasing number of anonymous letters to the editor and articles with pseudonyms.

For a people who see their God as presiding currently over an "investigative judgment" wherein all our deeds are being displayed for all the universe to see, we certainly are not very forthcoming with one another. If the "Ancient of days" is flipping through our life's record at this moment, wouldn't we all do well to begin coming to grips with the reality of our need as individuals and as a people?

Sometimes the letters and articles with no names attached are the most moving and substantial pieces you print. But their spiritual power is diluted when the names are withheld. Christ says, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor. 12:9, NIV). I trust Him when He says that. Maybe the *Review* can help us all exercise our trust muscles a bit more by encouraging us to step out from the shadows and "into His marvelous light."

*Brian Pleasants, Pastor
Lake City, Florida*

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

Historically, Seventh-day Adventists have considered the Religious Right as the primary agent of persecution in the last days ("The Church and End-Time

Conspiracies," Mar. 17). Such a narrow-minded focus could entail serious risks, especially if it causes us to ignore other possibilities. I believe the Left could be the agent of persecution just as easily, especially since they try to expand government (e.g., various health-care plans) in ways that could be used to make it impossible to buy or sell. As far as persecution coming in the name of morality, the Left could easily try to co-opt traditionally conservative themes (e.g., President Clinton's recent series of speeches on family values) to promote their agenda of expanding government.

Rather than opposing the Religious Right at every turn, we might do well to consider Ellen White, who worked with the Religious Right of her day on temperance, opposing them only where wrong (i.e., Sunday laws). Otherwise, we run the risk of antagonizing them to the point where we are cast as enemies of morality, which could make such persecution theories a self-fulfilling prophecy.

*Ron Thomsen
Houston, Texas*

Killing the Ox

I take exception with Miriam Wood's usual good judgment in "Ill-gotten Gains" (Mar. 17).

I know of no store where paid workers are not given an advantage or discount, let alone volunteer workers, be they Catholic or Salvation Army outlets. Should we take the stand that Seventh-day Adventists should not shop at our thrift stores or even be served until all other needy persons have their chance?

In our own thrift store I find at least 50 percent of the patrons are Seventh-day Adventists, but sometimes the "affluent" church members are that way because they are good shoppers and would prefer being able to give larger offerings to the church budget than to their own "selfish" needs. Are they to shop only at non-Adventist thrift stores?

Those who work in our centers are generally not street people, or the very

rich, or the ones who criticize how the work is done. I wonder if they would volunteer if the present workers were "muzzled." Let's see before we kill the "ox."

*John Erhard
Apopka, Florida*

Take an A

I just put two A's in my grade book after the names of Myron Widmer and Roy Adams for the articles "Come On, Smile" and "The Final Days—Abominations" (Mar. 24). Both articles show sanctified reason at work, avoiding the ditches on both sides of the narrow path.

Widmer has no mud on his shoes from either ditch: frivolity on the left and moroseness on the right. Adams balanced addressing the weightier matters of the law with tending to the jots and tittles, as Christ said we should. I could hear the "tears in His voice."

Thanks. Balance beautifies.

*John Keyes
Collegedale, Tennessee*

... And the Insert (cont.)

I cannot find words to tell you how proud I feel regarding our church. My 8-year-old daughter and I couldn't be more pleased with your pamphlet "When the Unthinkable Happens . . ." (insert in special Family issue, Feb. 3).

I passed the whole issue of the *Adventist Review* (pointing out the pamphlet) to my sexual abuse group therapy group, and everyone was impressed. One of the ongoing subjects of discussion involves the fact that churches generally push for immediate forgiveness without stressing that the perpetrator take proper responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions.

You have touched on all issues in a tactful but explicit manner. We wouldn't change one word!

The therapists for my daughter's sexual abuse group were also impressed. Thank you for doing Jesus' work in a very courageous (and effective!) way.

Name Withheld

ADVENTIST REVIEW

MAY 5, 1994

DEPARTMENTS

- 2 Letters
- 6 Newsbreak
- 20 Spotlight on NAD
- 27 Global Mission Update
- 29 World Report
- 31 Reflections

EDITORIALS

- 4 North America and World Mission
- 5 A Model of Love

NEXT WEEK

"The Reconciliation"
Dennis and his mother never really got along. Somehow his desire to live as a Christian and her worldliness always seemed to clash. Dennis knew a change had to be made, but who needed to make it?

ARTICLES

NEWSBREAK

6 The State of the Church's Finances

What's happened to the Church's income? Is there enough money? An interview with the General Conference president and undertreasurer.
by William G. Johnsson

ANCHORPOINTS

8 Feet That Run and Arms That Embrace

Salvation isn't just a teaching; it's an experience!

by Kendra Haloviak

COVER STORY

12 Seven Factors Fragmenting the Church

As we near the twenty-first century, what factors are fragmenting God's remnant church?
by William G. Johnsson

LIFESTYLE

16 Another Look at Mother's Day

How can sensitive church members support those for whom Mother's Day brings more pain than pleasure?

by Sandra Doran

FROM THE HEART

18 Needed: Preaching the Distinctives

What makes Adventist preaching truly Adventist? Should it be different or should it make us different?

by Robert S. Folkenberg



8 The Father's love



16 Making Mother's Day appropriate

Cover by Steve Trapero

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North America and World Mission

Is interest in world mission dead in North America? Has the church on this continent, which gave bountifully of its sons, daughters, and means to plant Adventism around the globe, turned in upon itself and become preoccupied with its own concerns?

Some evidence would so suggest. Once returned missionaries with exciting tales of far-off lands and mission appeals galvanized Adventist camp meetings, but no longer. In many Sabbath schools today members rarely hear a mission report, and Thirteenth Sabbaths come and go with hardly a mention. Not surprisingly, giving to mission shows a steady decline.

Further, with North America sending fewer workers abroad and several overseas divisions surpassing our membership—North America now accounts for only about one tenth of the world church—it is easy for Adventists here to feel reduced ties to our brothers and sisters abroad. They feel like parents whose children have left home and no longer need—or should need—them.

But world mission isn't dead in North America! When the work overseas is presented personally and powerfully, Adventists will sit enthralled like those of an earlier generation who were gripped and changed by that ambassador from the South Pacific, Kata Rangoso; and they will give just as generously to the needs in faraway countries.

I saw this dramatically illustrated recently. Under the direction of the Southern College church, the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Chattanooga, Tennessee, area combined for a full day of Global Mission outreach. About 5,000 people came out for a program that began at 9:00 a.m. and closed only at 6:20 p.m. Even though the metal chairs were anything but

comfortable, most stayed right through the long day.

The Southern Union has adopted the Southeast Asia Union Mission as a sister union, and the rally centered on one of the countries in that area—Cambodia. Although the reports of the day featured Global Mission in Nepal, Mongolia, Bulgaria, and China, the meeting focused on “Cambodia for Christ: Healing the Killing Fields.”

The horrors of the Pol Pot regime devastated the country, and no trace can be found of the small company of believers we had there in 1975. But many Cambodians who fled their country found Christ in the refugee camps. Now, with Cambodia relatively stable, the people are hungry for the gospel. As recently as two years ago Adventists had no members in the country; now we have 37 companies.

The Sabbath at Collegedale featured 20 speakers, videos, and music by several groups, with Wintley Phipps as the chief artist. Leaders of the world church had convened for discussions at the nearby Cohutta Springs Adventist Center, and several of them took part in the program.

High Point

For me, the high point of the presentations came from a layman, however. Adventist entrepreneur Garwin McNeilus, of Dodge Center, Minnesota, told how the Lord had prospered him in business to the extent that, starting from scratch, he now is the major supplier of ready-mix concrete and garbage trucks in the United States. The audience was moved as he related that the more he and his wife gave to the church, the more the business flourished.

Yes, there was an offering for Cambodia. Robin D. Riches, president

of the Southeast Asia Union Mission, dreamed of perhaps \$50,000. Instead it was \$570,000!

“We wanted to help the Adventists of the Chattanooga area raise their sights a little,” said Wolf Jedamski, administrator of the Southern College church and organizer of the event. He and his helpers surely succeeded. Children’s Sabbath schools, for instance, have adopted a Cambodian congregation and will raise funds to help with its most urgent needs.

What happened at Collegedale can happen across the North American Division. Adventists will be encouraged, inspired, and motivated as they catch a new vision of the world.

And renewal of interest in world mission will revitalize the work in the homeland. Ellen White assures us that “the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off” (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 27).

Recently the General Conference set up an Office of Mission Awareness, directly accountable to the General Conference president. Heading the new office will be Gary Patterson (previously assistant to North American Division president A. C. McClure) and his wife, Rae, in a team ministry approach.

Gary and Rae will bring many new ideas to this office. The potential is enormous—for our churches and schools, for our children and young people, for all of us. The inspiration of Kata Rangoso can grip Adventists in North America again as we hear the words of Jesus: “I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest” (John 4:35, NIV).

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



A Model of Love

Jesus spent time experiencing the important, meaningful things of life. He recognized that expressing His care to others was more important than many of the so-called great issues with which He dealt.

Jesus led a life filled with stress-producing events. He consistently mingled with people who besieged Him for help. If anyone could have hidden behind the front of being too busy to relate to people and their needs, it surely would have been Christ.

Listen to how Jesus took time, even in a most difficult situation, to care for the one who was so dear to Him: His mother. Listen as Jesus speaks to His mother from the cross, answering her anticipated need. Even while He suffered intense mental pain because of the abuse and sins He bore for all of us, while He endured all-encompassing physical pain, His last thoughts before death were of His mother. She was the one who had instructed Him when He was but a child, and had believed in Him throughout His life. Listen as Jesus slowly and painfully speaks words of love and tenderness to His mother: "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple whom He loved: "Behold, your mother" (John 19:26, 27, NASB).

In the Midst of Stress

Why did Jesus remember His mother at such a time as this? So much was pressing in on Him. Surely He was concerned with universal problems. But He took time to care tenderly for His mother.

This little open window reveals for us Christ's deep love and abiding care for His mother. The view of Christ through this window prompts a poignant lesson for us in the twentieth

century who often express our lack of concern for the meaningful things of life—*others' needs and feelings*.

We often need to change our outlook, our paradigm, in relation to how we respond to the needs of people. We need to allow our hearts to be enfolded by the gentleness of the Holy Spirit rather than constantly being concerned with self and therefore reacting in a negative way to the people who need our love.

If we would live as Christ lived, taking time for the needs of others, what a change would come in our homes and in our churches—all would see that Jesus lives here. This would become the greatest power ever witnessed to turn people to Christ.

Only a Mother's Love?

Our mothers often express this kind of acceptance to us. Their love illustrates the love of Jesus. Think how much their gentle spirit has influenced our lives for good because of their desire to respond to our needs. We need to set aside time to allow their tender love to invade our hearts, making us more like Jesus. This world would have little to offer without a mother's love. Mothers demonstrate a love for us that is as near to our Saviour's love as we can experience.

It's like the warmth you feel when a mother stops by the bakery on the way home from teaching school to have fresh cinnamon rolls for a Friday evening treat.

It's like the belonging you feel from a loving smile a mother gives her child that is like no other smile in the whole world.

It's like the acceptance felt by a young boy who accidentally sent the slide projector crashing to the floor while helping in an evangelistic meet-

ing. The mother understood the boy's dreadful embarrassment and said she knew he was only trying to help, so he shouldn't worry about it.

It's like the understanding you feel when a violin and saxophone duet in church turned out not to be a duet because each person was playing a different hymn. A mother said, "You did your best; it was all right."

It's like the caring you feel when you mention in a letter home that someone in your family is sick and a long-distance phone call comes to see if everyone is all right again.

It's like the comfort a little boy receives when he hurts his finger while he is on the roof with Grandpa and climbs down and runs to Grandma for solace.

It's like the inspiration a mother gives when she is true and faithful in her duties, giving your life an eternal dimension.

It's like the interest a mother takes in each of her children and grandchildren, making them feel as though he or she is her favorite one.

It's like the right principles established in young minds by reading and explaining the meaning of the Word of God in words a child can understand.

Thank you, dear mothers, for expressing the fruit of the Holy Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

May we accept and practice this model of *love*, which is the greatest honor we can give you on Mother's Day.

ROBERT DALE

*Vice President for Strategic Planning
for the North American Division*

The State of the Church's Finances

With rapid growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide, the General Conference increasingly finds its funds stretched to meet demands. Adventist Review editor William G. Johnsson asked General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg and General Conference under-treasurer Donald E. Robinson, who is responsible for preparing the General Conference operating and appropriations budget, to address leading questions.

Johnsson: How healthy are the church's finances overall?

Folkenberg: I am an incurable optimist. Some trends cause us concern, and we have taken some steps to address them. As we look at the ways the Lord has led us in the past, I am confident for the future.

Robinson: The finances of our church are basically healthy. It is truly a miracle church, with a multitude of programs occurring on all levels.

What do you see as problem areas?

Robinson: One is the difficulty the church has in identifying duplicate or archaic programs that need to be phased out. Another is our tendency to add superstructure when the only activity that really counts is what happens at the local church level. We need to look at structure on all levels to make sure all the wheels that fit within the organization are maintained only as they relate to the church's mission. Further, the church *must* determine priorities based on their accomplishment of that mission.

Folkenberg: I will mention two areas. A recent 10-year study in one conference revealed that even though total tithe increased slightly each year, the number of family or giving units returning tithe, mission, and local offerings actually decreased. If this is true, we are not doing well in laying the spiritual foundation for our relationship with God.

The second is our tendency to consume an ever-increasing proportion of total resources to care for those who already have received the gospel. Only 11 percent of our believers live in the portion of the world that contains 77 percent of the population. Yet we spend *most* of our resources taking care of ourselves! The danger is that we may be deceived by our own rhetoric and believe that the small amount that goes to world mission offerings and Global Mission is meaningful!

What about project giving—how is it impacting the church? Has it affected regular mission giving?

Folkenberg: It is tempting to look for dark clouds to cover

the silver lining! With about a US\$5 million increase in 1993 over 1992 in giving toward specific mission projects in which the funds flow through the General Conference, project giving has become more than a silver lining.

There is a temptation to point out the US\$1 million decrease in North American regular Sabbath school mission offerings and blame project-related giving for this decline. However, since the decline is only about US\$1 per member *per year*, this trend should be (and must be) correctable.

As leaders we must confess that we have not done a good job keeping before our members an adequate worldview or the vital role Sabbath school mission offerings play in our world mission. Several major steps already have been taken to remedy this.

Robinson: The question of how project giving impacts regular mission giving is difficult to quantify. Many individuals who give to projects are not willing simply to give to the general mission fund.

On the other hand, individuals who are committed and give as much as they can to this church will be more likely to respond to a specific appeal than to follow the more traditional approach of giving through the regular mission offering program.

How critical is *undesigned* mission giving to the program of the church?

Folkenberg: Its import cannot be overstated. While a myriad of projects are very appealing to donors and what they accomplish is extremely valuable, the basic operation of the world mission of the church cannot depend on project giving. Only through *undesigned* offerings, given through an organization in which we develop confidence, can we operate so vast and complex a worldwide operation.

We need to put a face back on mission offerings. In previous years members could easily associate the Sabbath school offering with a missionary who spoke at camp meeting or to their congregation. Further, we need to remember that many, if not most, of the projects funded by project giving depend on regular mission offerings for their implementation. It does little good to fund a project if we don't have the personnel or organization to carry it out.

Robinson: At present we have approximately 1,000 expatriates (including spouses) serving outside their home base divisions. The support for these interdivision workers comes from *undesigned* mission giving. We have a host of educational and health-care institutions and publishing programs supported by nontithe funds.

This past year tithe increased by 1.8 percent in North



R. S. Folkenberg



D. E. Robinson

By William G. Johnsson, Adventist Review editor.

America. Is this acceptable? If not, what can be done about it?

Robinson: Inflation was considerably higher than the increased tithe, and that alone would indicate that the growth in tithe is unacceptable. Further, church growth continued in 1993, causing tithe per capita to decline.

Folkenberg: The church is not a business that operates on sales and profit margins. Tithing is an eminently spiritual decision, and thus these trends can be addressed only from a spiritual perspective. Spiritually robust, biblically well-fed members who understand righteousness by faith and our distinctive judgment-hour message are the ones God has designated through whom He can finance the proclamation of the gospel to the world.

Thus, first and foremost, we must address the message and mission the Lord has given us. With this as a foundation we can provide our members an understanding of the biblical basis of Christian stewardship. I believe these two elements are vital both to the soul salvation of our members as well as fulfilling our Lord's commission.

What are the ramifications of the projected 8 percent cut in appropriations to the world church in 1995?

Folkenberg: They are extremely serious. Even with the initiative launched at the 1993 Annual Council intended to increase the financial self-reliance of each field around the world, it is premature to expect results of this magnitude so quickly. For most divisions the pain will be greater than that faced by any North American organization in recent history, for this proposed cut comes on top of several years of frozen or decreased operating appropriations. North America is insulated from this reduction, for it takes its percentage off the top.

Robinson: Without a doubt, unless trends change there will be reductions, and many programs will be affected. From the positive side, our church will be driven to do in difficult times what it should have done in good times—prioritize, clearly identify duplicate programs, and eliminate those aspects of church operation that provide limited returns in terms of our world mission. The area most vulnerable to reductions in appropriations is our interdivision worker (missionary) program.

Do you foresee the need to make changes in administrative structure to free up more dollars for use at the local levels to win more people?

Robinson: Without a doubt, the church must address the issue of superstructure. We are spending too much money on administration. If we would be willing to address the matter of adequate administrative structure to support *needed* church programs, we could free a lot of money for the church's basic mission.

We also need to look at all related operations. Some operations that have served the church well for years are causing increased administrative problems. Every such program

needs to be reviewed, and if it is not helping to accomplish our mission, alternatives should be reviewed. The Adventist Church around the world has enormous capital assets. Some significant assets could be sold if they are determined not to be of core value to mission.

Folkenberg: Yes and no. We have made significant reductions in the administrative structure of the General Conference, and in most unions and local conferences as well. There is no evidence that these savings have led to any soul-winning initiatives. On the contrary, the funds we saved from General Conference downsizing, and cut from appropriations to the world field, have served simply to maintain the status quo in North America.

It is easy to develop unrealistic expectations. Since the General Conference does not appropriate funds to North America, we are not in a position to influence directly the proportion of funds spent on organizational structure. Though we must and will carefully review and prioritize all the activities carried on by the headquarters office, we must remember that the total amount of money spent at world headquarters represents only a small percentage of the total world budget. This means that reductions will, of necessity, affect primarily the world mission program of the church, which flies in the face of what we really need to do!

Again I suggest that we haven't decided to get serious about our message and mission. We urgently need changes at headquarters, in the world church, as well as at home. Financial trends will cause these to happen at headquarters, as well as in the world field. But changes within North America must be initiated by our collective leadership. And I think there is evidence that these changes may well occur. However, if these changes are as significant and thorough as they should be, it will be painful and cause all of us to confront the challenge of unachievable expectations. History teaches us that only when the pain of the status quo exceeds the pain of change do we deal with the twin challenges of accountability and expectations.

My prayer is that we will move forward under the guidance of God to do what He has commanded us to do because it is right, because it represents collective sacrifice, and because we truly do want Him to return, and not make the changes out of fiscal duress.



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- June 1 Church Information Package**
(7:30 p.m. all time zones, Galaxy 4, Channel 13)
- June 5 Disaster Update** (1 p.m. EDT, Galaxy 7,
Channel 16)

Feet That Run and Arms That Embrace

The Experience of Salvation

BY KENDRA HALOVIK



My project report is on the subject of salvation," said Vini as he walked to the front of the classroom.

For the next few minutes Vini told us about a young woman who, diagnosed with cancer, decided to take her little boy and attend church for the first time in years. In church that day the woman accepted Jesus Christ as her

Lord and Saviour. Thrilled to witness her decision, church members embraced her. Family members who had prayed for her salvation for years rejoiced.

Vini told us that he was the little boy who had attended church with his mom. He also told us that just a few weeks later, on November 11, 1985, his mother died. Vini showed us a picture of his mother and

read John 3:16, 17: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him" (NRSV).

Then Vini shared with the class one of his deepest convictions: "I know I will see her



again someday, because she was saved when she accepted Christ as her Saviour."

Is Vini correct? Did his mom experience salvation during that hour in church? After running from her Lord for years, does she now rest secure in Him, awaiting the trumpet blast of the archangel at Christ's second advent?

Compassion Beyond Words

My favorite statue in Washington, D.C., rarely makes it into shiny picture books about the city or into the routes of tour buses. The statue sits in the rose garden beside the National Cathedral. It portrays a forgiving father embracing his wayward son. The plaque at the base of the statue contains a quote from Luke 15:20: "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

There are marvelous lessons

in the parable of the prodigal son. The prodigal realizes his folly and concludes that the best course of action is to return home. The father welcomes home a son, never even hearing the son's offer to work as a servant. Before the end of the day, the father invites both sons into a time of celebration.

But my favorite scene in the whole story is captured by the statue. After running to his boy, the father embraces him. The father's arms surround the boy, whose few coverings have fallen. But though naked of covering, the boy is not exposed, for the father's own body covers him. At that moment the son experiences salvation. He will not starve. He will not die alone and without inheritance. He is saved!

The father's actions of running and embracing tell the story of salvation. These actions portray the vital elements in salvation. God runs. God embraces. Let's look briefly at these two actions and their relationship to the experience of salvation.

First, the father runs to the son.

In the culture of Jesus' day, grown men did not run. To run meant losing one's dignity. To run, a grown man would need to gather his robes up above the knees, an act of disgrace. But the father in the parable doesn't think twice about such an action when he sees his son trudging toward the house! "The father came out of the house and in a dramatic demonstration showed an unexpected love publicly, even to the point of humiliating himself. The father's actions were without restraint. He ran. Even if he were in a great hurry, for an aged Oriental to run would be beneath his dignity. . . . Yet he ran."¹

As Jesus described the

father running to meet his son in this parable, He shared a vital element in regard to salvation of all wayward sons and daughters. The father humiliates himself. Divinity places dignity aside and "runs" to a world full of sinful children.

From the beautiful hymn in Philippians 2 we remember:

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross" (verses 5-8, NRSV).

Christ's death on the cross tells us that the first key act for our salvation has already taken place! We needed feet that would run to greet us. We needed a God who would disgrace Himself to save us from our sins. Calvary was the ultimate picture of God running to us.

God's Embrace

In the language of the parable, the father has already run from his home to the dusty road where his son completes the exhausting jour-

The Experience of Salvation

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit, we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, as Substitute and Example. This faith that receives salvation comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him, we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment. (2 Cor. 5:17-21; John 3:16; Gal. 1:4; 4:4-7; Titus 3:3-7; John 16:8; Gal. 3:13, 14; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; Rom. 10:17; Luke 17:5; Mark 9:23, 24; Eph. 2:5-10; Rom. 3:21-26; Col. 1:13, 14; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 8:7-12; Eze. 36:25-27; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rom. 8:1-4; 5:6-10.)—Fundamental Beliefs, No. 10.





ney. *At that moment the second vital action for humans to experience salvation takes place. The father embraces the son.*

The father's embrace and kiss meant that the son was forgiven.² The gifts given by the father—robe, ring, san-

dals—signaled the boy's full acceptance back as a son. All sins were forgotten; all embarrassments were realities of the past. The son could begin anew, with all the promises and hopes for a pleasant future.

Vini's mom knew what God's embrace felt like. Peter

and the thief on the cross who asked Jesus to remember him knew what God's embrace felt like. Paul and the woman caught in adultery knew what God's embrace felt like. They all knew the experience of salvation. Salvation means seeing the God of Scripture as a God

My Search for Reconciliation

BY DANIEL JACKSON

"Son! Get up and pack your things, we are leaving!"

It seems light-years away now. But to a 14-year-old boy facing the rest of his life, the gravity of those words and the severing of our family marked the beginning of a period of estrangement and pain. How horribly distressing this tearing apart that we call divorce and family breakup.

My world had convulsed. Within only a few days I was enrolled in a nearby boarding academy. Mother had moved 600 miles away to find necessary employment in order to provide for us and help pay for my education. I felt disoriented and alone.

As I was less than 100 miles away from "home," I would frequently go to visit my sisters and the familiar places in the old neighborhood. However, a feeling of isolation haunted me. Throughout the next year I wished for nothing more than the reunion of my family, the healing of my world. For a brief period my wish came true, but ultimately that momentary peace failed, and family ties were permanently fractured.

Painful Reminiscence

Years later, as I stood beside the pastor watching my lovely bride walk down the aisle, I began to weep. The impermanence of my first home was casting a shadow over the joy of that moment. I began to fear that this new relationship would also be broken; that perhaps some disaster would strike, some irreconcilable difference arise between me and my love to shatter my world once again. Oh, how I craved the luxurious experience of continual unity with loved ones!

Twenty-five years have gone by. I continue to love my love, and she still loves me, praise God! Yet in spite of the satisfaction I find in her love, there is another sense in which I feel that I have not found complete emotional and spiritual union. It is as though I have not arrived home yet, though I have long been on the journey.

Life's experience has given me an awareness of a potential relational challenge that threatens my eternal security—the potential disruption of the intimacy between me and my heavenly Father.

This too is painful. The separation created by one initial sin seems to hover over the human family, over me—continually beckoning for resolution. I have searched for it in so many familiar places, but the isolation prevails. I am in need of permanent reconciliation with my God. Unable to initiate it myself, I look to Him.

The Change

Incredible as it may seem, this is precisely what He has done! I have come to accept the fact that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17, 18, NIV).

Marvelous grace! Paul does not speak of my reunion with God in a futuristic sense. No! His statement conveys to me the assurance that God has made me a permanent member of His eternal family now. Reconciliation is mine if I choose it. This message has brought immense satisfaction to me. I accept and cherish the thought of it!

I have now begun to gray and otherwise to show those telltale signs that indicate the impact of middle age. I am very familiar with the fracture lines in my own character, in my relationships, and even in my friendship with God. Yet as a result of God's gracious gift of reconciliation, I have a sense of security as I pursue my relationship with Him. God's proclamation at Calvary brings real happiness. "Be reconciled!" He calls me to union with Him! It is a wonderful invitation!

God's universal overture commences a glorious hope. There is no need for the family to remain isolated and broken. One day soon the success of His appeal will be transformed into an eternal reality. I will finally arrive at my home.

I am determined to remain close to Him, in a state of reconciliation, so that the joy I now experience will never be broken.

Daniel Jackson is senior pastor of the College Heights SDA Church on the campus of Canadian Union College in Alberta, Canada.

who runs! Salvation means feeling the embrace of God.

Do we know the feeling of God's embrace? Have we experienced acceptance after watching God run to greet us? What does it feel like to have the best robe wrapped around our shivering body? What are the sights and smells during the feast that celebrates our return home?

Ellen Harmon knew the feeling of God's embrace. In 1842 she was struggling to know God's will. Her resistance, as a teenager, to the pull of the Holy Spirit left her in despair. Finally, at a prayer meeting she allowed herself to be embraced by the God who runs to meet us. She later wrote: "I opened my mouth in

prayer before I was aware of it, and the promises of God looked to me like so many precious pearls that were to be received by only asking for them. As I prayed, the burden and agony of soul that I had so long felt left me, and the blessing of God came upon me like the gentle dew. I gave glory to God for what I felt, but I longed for more."³

The ultimate experience of salvation from this world of hatred, injustice, and death will be the moment when evil evaporates before the presence of God. But we can also experience salvation as did the son in Jesus' parable. Feet run, and arms embrace the ones who have sinned against God. The

experience of salvation this side of the Second Advent can be real for the prodigal son, for Vini's mom, and for all of us.

¹ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke* (New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 1992), p. 150.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Early Writings*, p. 12.



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VOICES OF ADVENTIST FAITH

With each AnchorPoint we will run a cross section of Adventist voices responding to the topic presented or one related to it.

Question: Do you have assurance?



Andrea Brown, 20

Student
Silver Spring, Maryland

Since I have seen that God is in control of every situation, I have begun to understand that there is nothing too complicated for Him. He has used both good and bad experiences in life to help me develop a deeper faith in Him. This fills me with the assurance that Christ will be with me at all times.



Earl A. Canson, Jr., 42

Pastor
Tuscon, Arizona

Three factors brought assurance of salvation to me as a youth: (1) my parents as they spoke of their own faith in God; (2) biblical examples of faith; and (3) gospel music, whose lyrics embedded themselves into my heart, giving me "blessed assurance" and convincing me that "Jesus saves."



Susan White, 36

School Bus Driver
Takoma Park, Maryland

My faith in Jesus Christ has come through the reading of God's Word. In Luke 24:27 Jesus begins with Moses to show us that all Scripture points to Him. The whole of Scripture tells me two things: first, I am a sinner in desperate need of a Saviour; and second, salvation is mine through belief in Jesus Christ.



A. Bruce Knutson, 59

Disabled
Barre, Vermont

I have found assurance in the realization of the great sacrifice God made in giving us His Son and allowing Him to die for our sins. The love of God is displayed in His guidance in my life, and in the hope of eternal life that He gives to us all.



Anna M. Stout, 72

Retired
Winchester, Virginia

I found assurance through the wooing of the Holy Spirit. I obeyed God's call to repentance and now have the blessed hope. John 10:27, 28 says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

SEVEN FACTORS FRAGMENTING THE CHURCH

Can we stay together in the days ahead?

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

The church—our church—is a miracle.

Among the hundreds of Protestant denominations, you will not find another like the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Whereas all others, if they exist worldwide, are a loose confederation of national churches, ours is one universal faith communion—one in beliefs, mission, way of life, and structure.

And this in the face of amazing diversity. You can find Adventists at the northern tip of Norway and the southern shores of Argentina, from Buffalo to Beijing, from Wales to New South Wales. We are a microcosm of the entire globe, a fellowship 8 million strong in more than 190 countries.

But can this miracle of divine grace continue? Can we continue to remain one universal family? The pressures toward fragmentation increase daily, and they come from at least seven sources:

1

The spirit of the age

The cover of the February issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* portrayed a collapsed globe. That well betokens our times: society is falling apart on a worldwide scale.

Rampant individualism leads to pluralism, and pluralism to relativism. All around us we see the collapse of values, mores, and institutions, and Alvin Toffler's predictions in *Future Shock* have come to pass. Pressure groups, rebellion, demands—the age of tribalism is upon us.

It's a terrible time to try to lead anything. The United States and every society have become practically ungovernable. Our mass communications make everyone aware of the problems, and we demand instant solutions. This is the age of the analyst par excellence: we delight in second-guessing, in Monday morning quarterbacking.

And the media feed the frenzy. They carped at the heels of President George

Bush (boring) and courted contender Bill Clinton (charming); when Clinton was elected they turned on him and have been savaging him and Hillary ever since.

The zeitgeist—spirit of the age—has affected our church also. Can we resist it by God's power? Can we ward off the toboggan slide into congregationalism? Can we refuse to be part of the instant analysis and denigration of leaders?

2

The low spiritual condition of God's people

Let's face it—we are Laodicea. We think we have it made; we don't realize that we are pitiable and wretched and blind and naked, that we have need of the heavenly gifts of faith and righteousness (Rev. 3:14-22).

Ellen White had it right: "A revival of

true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121).

We make high profession—we claim to be *Adventists*, people who expect and long for Jesus to return. But so often how we live denies what we say.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church needs reformation, and because it does, "reform" groups among us—as they like to call themselves—find a hearing. No matter that the message of these "reformers" may be not the gospel but a false gospel, no matter that their attitudes and methods may run directly counter to the counsels of Ellen White (whom they seek to use to validate their efforts), their pointing out of the flaws in the church strikes a responsive chord among those who "sigh and cry" for the low spiritual state of God's people.

3 Generational differences

In every age society has experienced some stress from the gap between the generations. However, in our times generational differences have become more powerful than ever, because the traditional family structure has changed.

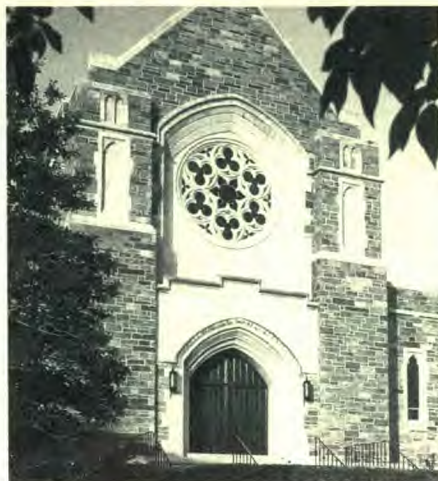
Once the generations met and learned and shared under the umbrella of the extended family, and often under the same roof. But today the family as we have known it is in tatters, and each generation goes its own way.

William Strauss and Neil Howe, in their important work *Generations* (William Morrow, 1991), analyze the 13 generations from the founding of America. They give particular study to the generations that have shaped and are shaping the twentieth century:

The GI generation, born 1901-1924

The silent generation, born 1925-1942

The baby boom generation, born 1943-1964



The baby busters, born 1965-1985

The thirteenthers, born 1986-

In the United States the GI generation—the "can do" people who fought and won wars and who gave seven presidents—are in conflict with the baby boomers, that huge 75 million bubble that has different attitudes, values, and communication.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church reflects these generational differences. Although the United States now has a baby boomer president (the silent generation did not produce even one), the church, with some notable exceptions, hasn't passed on the torch to the baby boomers.

Many differences among us aren't a matter of principle (no matter how we want to claim them to be such) but merely generational. How can we begin hearing each other? Will the yawning gaps among us lead to fragmentation?

4 Education

We have become victims of our own success. By and large we have taught the youth "to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought" (*Education*, p. 17). They have studied and thought, and have come up with different answers.

Especially is this true in the area of lifestyle. While overall the Adventist lifestyle has been massively vindicated

by scientific studies, in some points that the church has emphasized, the youth have reached variant conclusions. They have weighed our use of Scripture in support of the dress code and found it wanting: some passages could not support the conclusions we sought to draw from them, while we neglected other scriptures that seemed to bear on the subject.

And beyond that was our seeming inconsistency: we could make a big issue out of the wedding band, but wear gold tie clasps and watches and drive home from church in a Mercedes-Benz.

In today's church in North America you will find wide differences in how Adventists dress and adorn themselves. Many saints are shocked by what they see, but many other saints are not.

5 Frustration over the perceived "delay" in the Second Coming

We are still here—after 150 years we are still here. Why?

For many Adventists the Second Coming has lost its luster. They have heard too many preachers say that Jesus is about to return, have given themselves in response to that message too many times. And we are still here.

For others the solution lies in getting our theology right. If we can only get the right message or do the right thing, Jesus will come.

So out of this frustration a series of theological answers emerge. They come from theologians on both the "right" and "left." But they all have this in common—they make us ultimately responsible for the "delay."

This topic demands far longer treatment than space permits here. The *Adventist Review* will continue to address it in future issues. For now, I simply invite each reader to take a concordance and study the biblical passages on the Second Coming. Notice especially who talks about "delay" in these passages.

6

Amazing growth

Here is another area in which we have become victims of our own success. The vision of Revelation 14:6, 7 is being realized in our day, as the everlasting gospel goes forward with ever-increasing power.

But this growth creates tremendous tensions for a church that seeks to continue as one, a united communion. I will mention two areas of tension—money and race.

The more the church grows in underdeveloped areas, the greater the strain on the Adventist dollar. The traditional “home bases” find themselves increasingly strapped for funds. And the situation becomes heightened each year.

Fifty years ago the Seventh-day Adventist Church had about 600,000 members. Today that number is touching 8 million.

Fifty years ago North America accounted for 37 percent of world membership. Today our share is only 10.5 percent.

Given current trends, by the year 2000 there will be 12 million Seventh-day Adventists worldwide. Africa, Latin America, and Asia will account for 86 percent of them, while North America and Europe together will total only about 10 percent.

Can we avoid ugly battles over finances, between the “haves” and the “have nots”? Can we find by the power of the crucified and risen Christ the answer that no one else has yet found—power to break down the barriers of race and ethnicity? And can we avoid what has befallen all other Protestant churches—fragmenting into national churches?

7

Two theological streams

The watershed in Adventist theology

isn't, as some want to claim, 1956, when the church issued *Questions on Doctrine*. Not 1956 but 1888 saw the origin of two distinct theological streams.

Adventists tend to be strong individuals, and from our earliest days we have debated and argued among ourselves (and with others) over doctrine. We united on a common platform of “present truth,” but many differences have continued beyond this foundation.

The two streams that flow from 1888 concern weightier matters than the king of the north, the “daily,” or Armageddon, however. They reach to our most basic message, the one we are called to sound in Revelation 14—the everlasting gospel.

I believe the miracle

will continue . . .

because I believe

in Jesus!

“What must I do to be saved?” That is still the question on which Adventists differ.

One stream tends to emphasize the divine side in salvation without negating the human side; the other, the human side without negating the divine. For one the key word is grace; for the other it is victory.

Some of those in the “victory” stream see the issue in terms of a theological scheme that links Jesus’ human nature with end-time perfection and the “delay” in the Second Coming. Christ *had* to be exactly like us, they argue, in order that we might overcome sin as He overcame, thus attaining sinless perfection; and until we reach that state, Jesus cannot come back.

You can find several theological variants on the above scheme, but the radical dissidents among us—those who are becoming offshoots—all share it. They charge the official church with apostasy because it does not endorse the scheme.

Strongly antiauthoritarian, they employ print and video to propagate their views, accept tithe funds, and run parallel meetings and camp meetings. Some have gone so far as to ordain their own clergy.

None so far has registered as a separate denomination, although in function that is what they are. Here Ellen White, whom they otherwise seek to quote to support their position, denies categorically their logical course.

Will these dissident groups unite in a major schism? Can we find unity on what the everlasting gospel really is?

The Days Ahead

As I consider the factors tending to fragment the Seventh-day Adventist Church—and there are more than the seven I have listed—I would be pessimistic except for one factor—Jesus.

Jesus Christ is head of the church, not any individual (Col. 1:15-20). He gave Himself for the church; the church is His bride. He wants to present the church pure and spotless to His Father (Eph. 5:26, 27).

And John saw the church in vision. He saw a vast, numberless multitude redeemed from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (Rev. 7:9, 10). He saw them—saw those who came through the end-time crisis (Rev. 14:1-5).

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall,” wrote Ellen White (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 380). How true that has been in the past! And it will continue to be true in the days ahead!

I believe the miracle will continue. I believe, not merely because I am an inveterate optimist, but because I believe in Jesus. I believe that His cross has won the victory over evil for all time and guarantees the future of the church.



William G. Johnsson is editor of the Adventist Review.

Global Mission Projects



Youth Evangelism in Euro-Asia

Project #110

During 1993 400,000 people were baptized worldwide as a direct result of youth evangelism; that's 60% of overall church growth! In Russia and other countries of the Euro-Asia Division, church leaders are capitalizing on the strength of their young people by planning 50 youth crusades to be held in 1994. Costing \$1,000 per crusade, these meetings will bring many—young and old—to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and His soon return. You can help make it happen!



	Received as of April 8, 1994					Goal	Still needed
	% 0	20	40	60	80	100	
YOUTH EVANGELISM IN EURO-ASIA #110: <i>Hold 50 evangelistic crusades</i>							\$50,000 \$50,000
ANDORRA #410: <i>Evangelize unentered areas</i>							\$4,900 \$1,032
ISTANBUL #612: <i>Establish an English language school</i>							\$100,000 \$70,910
VIETNAM #704: <i>Establish five English language schools</i>							\$25,000 \$13,140
MALI #905: <i>Support two Bible workers for door-to door visitation</i>							\$6,152 \$6,000
MANITOBA/NEW MEXICO #1503: <i>Evangelize and provide health programs for Native North Americans</i>		COMPLETED					<i>Thank You!</i>

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Another Look at Mother's Day



How can we avoid embarrassing people who find Mother's Day a hard day?

BY SANDRA DORAN

Before I became a mother I spent eight years unflowered on the second Sabbath in May.*

One year in particular stands out. While virtually every woman in my small congregation stood expectantly waiting for the pink and white carnations being delivered by small eager hands, I sat alone with the men. After the service, the yearly questions revived in earnest. "Aren't you going to start a family soon?"

And while I now stand with the privileged on the Sabbath before Mother's Day and accept a pink carnation from a small eager hand, I haven't forgotten. Looking into the hearts of the church family all around me, I know that there are many for whom Mother's Day is not a time of joy.

The barren. Like pre-Samuel Hannah, there are many in the congregation who feel that the angel has passed them by.

Yearning for a child, they live through monthly cycles of hope and despair, caught in the fragile web of technology's latest promises of fertility miracles. Mother's Day, to the barren, is an empty vase. It's a painful reminder that no carnation will send its sweet aroma their way this year.

The motherless. To those who have recently experienced the loss of a mother, Mother's Day can be difficult.

While others glow with the recent memory of a phone call across the miles, a holiday trip, a shared meal, the bereaved often feel a deep ache for what can never be again on this earth. For them Mother's Day is a dry, brittle flower, devoid of the softness, scent, and color of a former time.

The abused. To those who have been reared in a family that does not remotely resemble the ideal, the day can be one of cynicism and hurt. Listening to the verses, skits, and sermon personifying the ideal mother, they tremble inside, each hyperbole widening the chasm between their own childhood and the bliss being portrayed. To the abused, Mother's Day is a thorned flower, its petals all but obscured by razor-sharp edges.

The less-than-perfect. To those who are acutely aware of their own failures as parents, Mother's Day may remind them of all the things they never were to their own children. Trapped by the limitations of their own flesh, they rue the years gone by, experience again the bitter taste of a cycle they could not stop. To the less-than-perfect, Mother's Day is a flower undeserved, its classic beauty intended for one more worthy.

The bereft. To those who have lost a child to death, Mother's Day can be a wrenching return to grief's relentless pursuit. Here where they are surrounded by families that are intact, the unfairness of their own loss is intensified, the pain becomes more oppressive. To the bereft, the robbed, Mother's Day is a flower crushed, the persistent scent of a beauty that once was.

Tips for the Church Family

How can the church family relate to those for whom Mother's Day may be difficult? Should we cease to mark the occasion and thus strip all meaning from a day intended to honor a significant portion of our congregations? I think not.

Sensitive planning is needed. I believe we can make Mother's Day not only a joyous occasion for those who are often unhonored and unsung but also less painful for those who find it a hard day. Consider the following:

1. Be sensitive.

During one Father's Day program, a man slipped into the back pew toward the end of the Sabbath school superintendent's remarks. He had abandoned his trio of daughters many years before, and his downcast eyes revealed how uncomfortable he felt with all the praise being given fathers.

When the superintendent came down from the platform with a box of white boutonnières, he became visibly uncomfortable. He looked up only long enough to vigorously shake his head no. His message was ignored. While he flinched, a boutonniere was pinned onto his lapel. He left shortly afterward.

On Mother's Day (or Father's Day) let's be sensitive to the signals others are sending out. And by all means:

Don't ask a childless couple when they plan to get with it.

Don't say, after presenting flowers to the mothers, "We have a few left if any of you other women want to have one."

Don't make a distinction between the colors of carnations corresponding to whether one's mother is alive or not.

Do ask a childless couple, a motherless person, or the recently bereaved to dinner.

Do say, "This must be a very difficult time for you."

Do stand ready to listen and support.

2. Be selective.

When choosing material to use this Mother's Day, avoid canned, oversentimental hyperbole. While it won't take long to find a cute rhymed piece about a mother who "speaks softly to *all*, whatever the call . . ." think about the impact of the words on your listeners.

Once the rhyme and the cute juxtaposition of words are stripped away, what is the poem really saying? How realistic is it? Does the message restrict the role of all women to motherhood? Does the poem devalue the contributions of single women, businesswomen, and those in less traditional roles? We can give motherhood its due one day a year without trampling on the accomplishments of those who have made contributions in other ways.

3. Be creative.

Try something different. One mother, grieving the recent loss of a child, confided that she planned to stay away from Sabbath services on Mother's Day. As it

turned out, she was traveling and stopped at a church miles from home. The focus of that church's Mother's Day celebration was on reaching out to others. That afternoon Ann found herself lifted out of her grief by joining a group who visited a nursing home and shared flowers and words of love with the lonely women inside.

Another creative Sabbath school superintendent in a large church plans in advance for every Sabbath school division, from cradle roll up, to be taught by men. Mothers get a well-needed break. The emphasis here is on working together, mutual involvement, solutions. All are caught up in the spirit of the adventure.


4. Be ready.

Above all, be ready. This Mother's Day, be ready for such as the 55-year-old man in the parking lot who told me, "When my mother died, I had two sharply contrasting feelings: 'How can I live without her?' and 'Oh, God, I'm so glad she's gone.'"

Be ready for such as the 39-year-old woman whose three boys were removed from her home by social services 10 years ago but who keeps the image of each in her heart as vividly as the day they filed quietly out the door.

Be ready for such as the young bride who will never forget another day and another time when she took from her very body the developing fetus who drew its sustenance from her.

Be ready for the Sabbath morning phone call with the hollow words "The best thing that can happen to me this Mother's Day is to forget that I'm a mother."

And through it all, be ready, too, with a well-placed word of praise to the struggling mother of three preschoolers, the 40-hour-a-week mother who is putting two teenagers through academy, and the fortunate mother whose life is rich with the joys of family. 

* In the United States, Mother's Day occurs on the second Sunday in May, which is usually preceded by the second Sabbath in May. In 1994, however, the Sabbath before Mother's Day will be the first Sabbath in May.



Sandra Doran is a freelance writer living in Attleboro, Massachusetts.

Needed: Preaching the Distinctives



Robert Atkinson

In the previous articles in this series, I shared two convictions about preaching by and for Seventh-day Adventists—it should be biblical and it should present the gospel clearly and unequivocally. For this final essay I want to express one more concern: We should also proclaim those truths that set us apart as a distinct people.

We are called to preach “the everlasting gospel” (Rev. 14:6), but in a particular setting. God’s messengers have proclaimed His one way of saving men and women throughout human history, and while the essential message hasn’t changed, its context has. In Noah’s time, the gospel came in the setting of the approaching Deluge. In Moses’ day the Exodus experience gave shape to the gospel. For the people of John the Baptist’s era, the message was cast in the expectation of Messiah’s appearance. Jesus, the Word made flesh, proclaimed the gospel in terms of the kingdom of heaven that was breaking through in His life and work.

So today God commissions us to preach the good news in the setting of a worldwide call to “fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (verse 7). Adventist preaching, therefore, cannot be just like that of the Baptists, the Presbyterians, or the Methodists. We are a prophetic people with a prophetic message!

What Are the Adventist Distinctives?

The three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-14 give us our marching orders. For us, the everlasting gospel comes in the setting of:

1. *A global mission.* Every congregation, no matter how small or how hum-

ble in its meeting place, is part of a worldwide fellowship. Our message is indeed going to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. God has brought the remnant church together in a unique blend of people in more than 190 countries. Adventist preaching should lift the sights of the hearers, helping them to think big, plan big, do big—it should call us all to rejoice in the incredible diversity of God’s people, as we respect and love one another regardless of color,

We should proclaim our distinct truths, but always in the context of the everlasting gospel.

race, language, age, gender, or social standing.

2. *The judgment hour.* This truth opens up the understanding of the heavenly sanctuary, with Jesus as our great high priest who represents us before the throne of God. It sweeps our mind away from the petty things of this earth to the very headquarters of the universe.

3. *Worship of the Creator.* In an age when men and women worship themselves, sex, sports, pleasure, or money, Adventists must proclaim Him as the Creator and Source of all things, as well as our Redeemer and Lord.

4. *The law of God.* God’s last-day people will love and follow Him no matter what the cost. “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and

the faith of Jesus” (verse 12). They are law-keepers, not in order to be saved, but because they have been saved. For them, obedience is the expression of who they are as children of the King of heaven.

5. *The Sabbath.* Of all the commandments, the Sabbath is the seal of our love and allegiance to a loving heavenly Father. By choosing to set aside the day that He set aside and blessed, we honor Him as Creator and Lord of time and space. For us, Sabbathkeeping isn’t a burden, but a blessing; more than ever, we look forward to its sacred hours in the midst of the frantic pace of modern living.

6. *The great controversy.* We believe we are engaged in a cosmic struggle between good and evil. The “beast” mentioned in Revelation 14:9-11 represents the forces that oppose God’s last-day people. But we serve One who is far greater, One who holds the destiny of the world in His hands and who will bring us through any and all troubles. By His cross He has won the decisive battle in the struggle with the demonic powers, and His triumph is inevitable.

7. *The Second Coming.* “I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one ‘like a son of man’ with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand” (verse 14, NIV). We are *Adventists*—we believe Jesus will come again. We believe He will keep His promise (John 14:1-3). We believe that the great prophetic time lines and the signs all around point to the climax of the ages when God will send forth His Son a second time, just as He sent Him to earth 2,000 years ago in the fullness of time (Gal. 4:4).

8. *The Spirit of prophecy.* Another Adventist distinctive, not found in the

three angels' messages but identified in Revelation 12:17; 19:10, is our belief in the Spirit of prophecy. We believe that God used Ellen White to bring His messages to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Her counsels do not add to or take the place of Scripture, but we accept them as a continuing source of guidance and nurture. Adventist preaching, while it should be utterly biblical in its foundation and content, should affirm confidence in the Spirit of prophecy.

What breathtaking themes are these! They speak powerfully to life in our times. Adventist preaching cannot help being relevant!

In several places Ellen White refers to our distinctive teachings, using terms like "the pillars," "the landmarks," or "the foundations." She identifies them as the sanctuary and its cleansing, the three angels' messages, the law of God, and the Sabbath. She adds another "pillar"—the nonimmortality of the soul (see, for example, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 30, 31).

"Let the truths that are the foundation of our faith be kept before the people," she urges. . . . "We are now to understand what the pillars of our faith are—the truths that have made us as a people what we are, leading us on step by step" (*ibid.*, p. 29).

She further counsels preachers: "Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. . . . The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is presented to me again and again as something that is to be brought to the attention of all. . . . The time in which we are living calls for constant vigilance, and God's ministers are to present the light on the Sabbath question. They should warn the inhabitants of the world that Christ is soon to come with power

and great glory. The last message of warning to the world is to lead men to see the importance that God attaches to His law" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 148).

How Shall We Present the Distinctives?

Always and only in terms of the everlasting gospel. This means that Christ will be the center of every doctrine, whether it be the sanctuary, Sabbath,

someone else is wrong. It isn't to put down someone you know, perhaps one of the members. You are called, not to preach *at* people, but to *proclaim* the everlasting gospel.

That means it is *good* news. Always good news, no matter what the specific subject.

And finally, if you want your preaching to have power with the people, you'd better *live* the distinctives, as well as speak about them. The Sabbath must be precious to you, a gracious gift from a loving Father. The Second Coming must be "the blessed hope" when you will meet your Saviour face-to-face, not an event of terror and anxiety. The judgment must give you hope as you trust in the One who speaks on your behalf, not leave you in uncertainty and apprehension. The great controversy must emphasize the power and victory of Jesus, not the deceptions of Satan and the trials of the last days.

What you *are* will mean more than what you preach. Your strongest sermon will be your life.

I pray the Lord will send His Spirit to revive His people. And may preaching be used of Him in this work:

biblical preaching, which comes out of the Word and centers in the Word;

gospel preaching, which points the hearers to the Lamb of God, who takes away our sins and gives us the assurance of salvation *now*;

and preaching the *Adventist distinctives* that provide the setting for the proclamation of the everlasting gospel in our day.

Series concluded

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



law, judgment, or the state of the dead. He will not be added as an afterthought; He will be the foundation, the heart, the alpha and the omega.

Sometimes I find that Adventists today do not seem interested in doctrinal presentations. The reason, I think, isn't that our distinctives don't touch people's lives—what could be more relevant than the Sabbath and the Second Coming? Too often in the past we have preached these truths in a dry, theoretical, or argumentative manner. They haven't come to the hearers warm with the love of Jesus, or they haven't been applied to daily living so that the people see the difference these doctrines can make.

So, preacher, you must study and pray much if you are to present the distinctives effectively. You must ask the Lord to set aside your pride. Your purpose isn't to prove that you are right and



Finding and Empowering Visionary Leaders

These times demand top quality leadership for the church.

BY HAROLD L. LEE

Long-range dreams and goals for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America were developed last fall when the presidents of the local and union conferences, division officers and staff, and a number of pastors and lay representatives met for a strategic planning weekend retreat.

Since March we've been sharing these major objectives with you in a series of articles written for these monthly NAD editions of the Adventist Review. Following is the third of seven.—North American Division Officers.

Athletes competing in the 1994 Winter Olympics were driven by the slogan "Go for the Gold." Their goal was high, not just to receive a medal for their athletic achievements, but to receive a gold medal—the highest award possible.

The words "Go for the Gold" have been used as a slogan to spur others on to attain high goals, to achieve something of great value to them and others. One goal for every Seventh-day Adventist is to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . and teaching them to



obey" (Matt. 28:19, 20, NIV). The Lord Jesus says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isa. 13:12).

We are told that "God has given us a commission which angels might envy."¹ Yet many people are apathetic and serve merely as "pew members"—Sabbath morning spectators in local churches.

Many members are passive and inactive. Consequently, churches are weak and unable to respond well to the challenges and opportunities of Christian faith and to the many needs in the communities in which they are located.

Committed Team Players

Why does it seem that leaders have to work so hard to entice church members into faith development and faith sharing? Can you imagine the coach of a skating or basketball team pleading with players to get them to attend practice? Such a thought is ludicrous! If the coach says anything, it will be something like "Practice is at the regular time tomorrow. Be there!"

Organized sports use a basic principle from the church. Inherent in joining the team is a commitment to play the

Leadership:
Strong, visionary leaders will report that they feel empowered and supported. Church leaders will increasingly demonstrate a lifestyle of evangelism and compassion for people. Increasing use will be made of professional evaluation to hold leaders accountable, instead of the present emotionally charged election process.

game. Inherent in playing the game is a commitment to practice.

And of course, the role of the coach is crucial in enlisting and maintaining this commitment. The quality of coaching is just as vital to the achievement of team goals as is the skill and dedication of each player.

Within the leadership of the church there is an ongoing focus on the mission of the church as we move toward the twenty-first century. Turbulent times are everywhere, and daily challenges make business as usual impossible.

It is still true that growth and action are the main evidences of life. As baby boomers move into middle age and baby busters burst on the scene, societal changes are taking place so rapidly that it is difficult to plan and implement fast enough to keep up. Because the rate of church growth has fallen significantly, it is time to examine a few of the old paradigms carefully and critically and consider new ones that would be relevant today.

Institutional maintenance and preservation are demanding even larger time blocks from leaders than ever before. Leaders are, therefore, reevaluating the role and responsibility of the denomination as a service entity for the local church. The local church must again become the center of ministry and mission; congregations must be the central focus and focal point of gospel proclamation, the primary dispensing agency for the love and grace of God. It is at the local church that people commit to faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour. This historic Adventist paradigm for ministry and leadership seeks revisitation, revitalization, and reinvention by leadership.

Leaders at all levels of the church know that the most important factor for the church's mission is its people—the Hispanics, Asians, Blacks, Anglos, and others who make up the church in North America. Resources to meet the church's needs are available in its members, as many people are gifted by the Holy Spirit for service.

Seven Major Objectives for North America

(Mar. 3)

Spiritual Life—*living and projecting a Christ-centered, relevant, and joyful message.*

(Apr. 7)

Local Church—*developing a mission-driven, inclusive, and accepting body.*

(In this issue)

▶ **Leadership**—*continually evaluating, supporting, and empowering leaders*

(June 2)

Denominational Structure—*restructuring and transforming the organization, making the local church the central focus.*

(July 7)

Information and Communication—*utilizing technology and improving two-way communication.*

(Aug. 4)

Christian Education—*effectively providing direction and spiritual growth opportunities for students.*

(Sept. 1)

Church Growth—*creating a climate for effective worship, outreach, and dramatic growth.*

Christian pollster George Barna says that the 1990s are a time of trying to win adults back to the church. He says that the greatest thing that needs to be considered is "the way" in which we do this.

People in general, and Baby Boomers in particular, have become more distrustful of large organizations, including institutional religion as manifest in denominational structures. Barna states that more than 60 percent of the adult unchurched population feel that the church is not relevant to their needs. His surveys reveal that only a small number of people would turn to a church for

help during times of personal crisis. Many feel that churchgoers are intolerant and uncaring.²

The reality of these attitudes means that our fruitful efforts in spiritual and numerical growth will come not so much as a result of our organized efforts, but rather as a result of people caring about people. In spite of much distrust of organized religion, Barna reports that one in four of the unchurched would attend church if invited by a friend.³

The times in which we live test the church to its limits. Church leaders must enable members of the local church to think about its lifestyle, its faith commitments, its relationship to the community, its care of its members and their families. The congregation must be encouraged to look at the quality and character of their moral intent and at the meaning of Christian faith to them.

The same urgency for mission-driven ministry that shaped the church in its beginning must be rekindled to re-create the church of the future. But this urgency is being short-circuited by the tyranny of the immediate.

How can the corporate church help a congregation or conference get hold of itself—its mission and purpose, its direction, the quality of its own life, and its relationship to the community around it? What do leaders and pastors need to activate, mobilize, and transform in order for churches to come alive in the Spirit and grow so that Christian faith can be more profoundly expressed in the life of a congregation? What must congregations do to prepare themselves for the future? A prepackaged plan is not the answer.

The North American leadership of the Adventist Church is committed to a reemphasis on the primacy of evangelism—focusing the church and its human resources on people helping people, inviting people to know and experience the love of God. This is who we are, what we are about, how we do things.



Provocative Questions for Leaders

A number of crucial questions about the mission and future of Adventism require dialogue from leaders at every level of the church, from the congregation to the division:

- What does it mean to be a Christian in a post-Christian, secular, multicultural, diverse society?
- What is the calling of church members in daily life, in the home, the community, and the workplace?
- How can congregations recover a clear sense of focus on Christ's great commission, the task of making disciples—of enabling men and women to relate their faith to their life and ministry in the workplace and the world?
- How can congregations and conferences be transformed from an inward preoccupation with institutional survival and success to a preoccupation with God's plan to demonstrate His love and redeem the lost?
- What would be the marks of a transformed congregation that is capable of empowering its members for ministry?
- What do congregations need from the conferences that they are not now getting in order to empower them to rise to the current challenge?
- What kinds of training in skills development as well as spiritual formation do pastors and lay leaders need in order to effectively lead their congregations in facing the new mission frontier?
- What kind of reorientation and training do conference leaders need in order to provide what is needed by congregations and pastors?
- What will be the role of union conferences in working with local conferences and congregations to bring about the desired results?

The Need for Leaders

The work of leaders is crucial at every level of the church. Each president, pastor, teacher, elder, small group leader—anyone who seeks to influence another person or group to do something, “to go boldly where they have never gone before”—is a precious gift of God.

Leadership is the work of sharing the vision of a proactive future for the shape and work of the church. A leader is any person who has the gift of influence, the one who knows where he or she is going and is able to persuade others to go along.

A leader is one who takes you where you have never been, where God wants you to be. Leadership, therefore, is more than position and power: it is not a title but a function, and it has more to do with responsibility than rights.

Growth means change and often discomfort. God's people must be set free to grow. Both growth and the lack of growth demand it. From the parables of Christ we learn that a tiny seed grows into an enormous plant. The church must be in the “business of growth,” or it will die. It is God's will that it grow both numerically and in faith maturity.

The calling of the clergy is to build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11, 12). A healthy church is built up because it has a balanced ministry involving all of its members. The motive for ministry is service to people. The church exists for ministry. Leaders bring people into ministry according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Today's leadership is very different from yesterday's. It takes more than just good preaching and quick wits for the church to grow and achieve the spiritual

strength required in today's environment, let alone tomorrow's world. It takes a special kind of man or woman to exercise godly, strong, visionary, enlightened, people-empowering leadership.

A godly, visionary leader is certainly not a reactive leader. Achievement of desired outcomes depends on the leader's ability to reach and empower other people, to enable others to take ownership of the mission, goals, and objectives of their church(es) and conference(s).

Accountable leadership is based on trustworthiness, not success. The breakdown of leadership occurs as a result of unwillingness to be held accountable, not because of failure. Understanding accountability encourages us to learn how to be trustworthy as we share leadership and empower others to accomplish the needed tasks.

Leadership Commitments

The leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America—the presidents of the division, unions, and local conferences—have made renewed commitments to planned growth and proactive, intentional processes to bring about positive change. They carry a particular responsibility to carry our Advent hope and remnant mission into the years ahead of us.

“Leadership is the key factor responsible for growth,” says author and lecturer Daniel Brown. “Leadership is cultivating in people today a future willingness on their part to follow you into something new for the sake of something great.” George Barna states that leadership is the “key component if the church is going to progress.” Leaders who do “business as usual” will fail to capture the attention and stimulate the interest of the average adult.⁴

The task of leadership is to create the means whereby members can act upon their commitments. Leadership wants to assist the local church through the provision of appropriate tools that will enable it to express its mission and



commitment to Christ and the community it serves. One of these tools is prayer-based, Scripture-centered strategic planning.

Many times strategic planning has been seen as a way to “deal with our problems.” Rather than clarifying or discerning God’s will for the church, the planning process has focused on demographics, identifying “target audiences” and trying to figure out how to keep structures and institutions alive in a time of declining financial support and generational shift. My own sense is that we are facing issues, questions, contradictions, and trends that require reexamination of who we are rather than reorganization or new programs. The issues seem to call for a new way of planning.

We need processes that bring people together to pray, talk, and think. If we simply focus on goals and achieving them, we may end up with a lifeless document that sits on the shelf, rather than new life in the church. We need an open, nonthreatening process that allows questions to be asked, the Scripture and other inspired counsel to be discussed, and creative new ideas to be shared. People need the opportunity to share their hopes and dreams for their church, to pray together and recommit to making God’s will real in their midst.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18). The people of the Adventist Church have hopes and dreams for the future of their church—God-given hopes and dreams. We get so used to responding to others’ expectations that our own vision remains at an unconscious level. Drawing out this vision and empowering people to move in the direction of that ideal requires inspiration; it is the core task of leadership.

Truly effective leaders are change agents constantly challenging and repositioning people, programs, resources, objectives, and whole organizations to best accomplish the mission. Accomplishing legitimate, meaningful change is the real test of leadership.

Enlightened leaders are people who

see today’s challenges and changes, and work with today’s resources to meet tomorrow’s agenda. Strong, visionary leaders utilize a balance of logic, emotion, compassion, and control to lead with effectiveness.

Empowering Others

Enlightened leaders empower others by creating an environment, or “corporate culture,” that unlocks their creativity and energy, allowing them to make contributions to personal, spiritual, and church growth. Leaders do this by following certain eternal principles.

Ministry and mission

belong to every

member of the church.

First, there is prayer. Prayer sets the stage for regaining a strong sense of vision. “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:9, 10). Prayer produces faith, vision, courage, and encouragement.

Second, godly leaders utilize the art of delegation. Delegation of responsibility is essential for effective leadership. Delegation is the ability of the leader to transfer work to another person, giving that person the power to see that the task is carried out. Delegation is a strategy that promotes success, especially in an organization that is constantly getting larger, where leaders can no longer keep pace with all the details that they once did.

Third, visionary leaders work constantly to sharpen their skills. A leader does this by learning new leadership methods that work. Leaders can sharpen skills by reading quality books on leadership, attending leadership seminars,

and spending time with other successful leaders who are willing to share what they know. They ask questions, listen, take notes.

“There is no freeway to the future and no paved highway from here to tomorrow. There is only wilderness. Only uncertain terrain. There are no road maps. No signposts. So pioneering leaders rely upon a compass and a dream. Leaders look forward to the future. They hold in their minds visions and ideals of what can be. They have a sense of what is uniquely possible if all work together for a common purpose. They are positive about the future, and they passionately believe that people can make a difference.”⁵

As the body of Christ, we are asked to carry the vision of His kingdom into all the world. This involves a church that knows itself and its community, a church that knows its mission, goals, and plans of action to do what our Lord commands us to do. It requires strong, visionary leaders.

“Go and make disciples of all nations.” We cannot be faithful to that mission unless we grow, affirm, and support those who exercise the spiritual gift of leadership. Unless leaders are valued as a gift of God.

In a time when all of the traditions about organizations and the exercise of authority are changing, it is necessary for the Adventist Church to find ways to continue to value and empower leaders. Church leaders and members must work together to build the leadership roles and processes needed.

¹ *Medical Ministry*, p. 131.

² George Barna, *The Frog in the Kettle*, p. 138.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁵ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, p. 79.



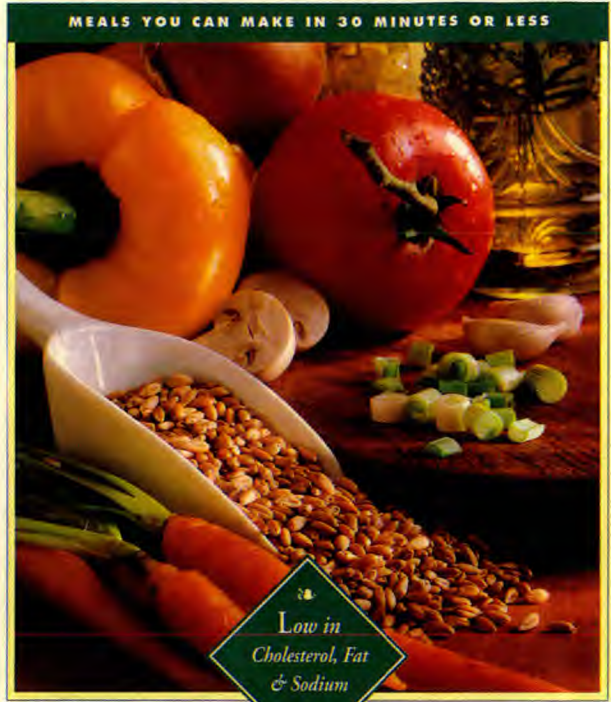
Harold L. Lee is secretary of the Columbia Union Conference, Columbia, Maryland.

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THE

LOMA LINDA REPORT



An elementary school student places the last piece of a giant six-foot puzzle in place at the kickoff ceremonies for the local chapter of the Peace Builders organization. Loma Linda University Children's Hospital is one of the local sponsors.

LLU Children's Hospital supports Peace Builders program

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital is helping children from area preschools and elementary schools move toward a more peaceful environment by being a co-sponsor of the "Peace Builders."

The Peace Builders is a program implemented by the Southern California Inland Agency, a non-profit organization that works with youths on tobacco and drug prevention.

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

Approximately 200 children from private and public schools attended the event held in front of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital on Wednesday, March 16. One group of students traveled nearly 200 miles from Blythe, California, to attend the event.

"Loma Linda University Children's Hospital's involvement in the Peace Builders program shows that in addition to being concerned about the physical well being of children in our communities, we also support this program which will greatly assist in reducing violence in our schools, our streets, and in our

homes," says J. David Moorhead, MD, senior vice president for children's services at Loma Linda University Medical Center and chief administrator of the Children's Hospital.

Peace Builders is a major community intervention program, focusing on violence prevention in the early formative years (ages five to nine) when permanent character building skills begin to develop in children.

Peace Builders is not a school curriculum, but a way of everyday interactions that reduce aggression, increase

Please turn to next page

"FULFILLING THE VISION"

"FULFILLING THE VISION"



Senior vice president for children's services J. David Moorhead, MD, welcomes the audience to the Peace Builders kickoff event at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

positive relationships and improve academic success.

Developed by Dennis Embry, PhD, a licensed psychologist, who has received national recognition for his Pentagon-sponsored efforts to help children and families affected by the Gulf War, Peace Builders was successfully tested in communities in Arizona and Texas.

Peace Builders is different from other programs, according to Dr. Moorhead, because it targets children during their formative years; requires active involvement with the parents; is reinforced in a school setting; and encompasses an entire community.

"The children and parents become excited and motivated about working with this program because of its success," Dr. Moorhead says.

One of the speakers during the event was Margaret Ensley, whose 17-year-old son was killed last year at a Los Angeles area high school.

During her remarks, she introduced the audience to her son, Michael, through a photograph.

"This is my son, Michael," Mrs.



Mrs. Margaret Ensley introduces her 17-year-old son, Michael, to the audience through a photograph. Michael was shot to death by another student at a Los Angeles area high school in 1993 just three months prior to his graduation. Since then, Mrs. Ensley has been helping to reduce crime through her work with civic organizations.

Ensley said. "Three months before my son's high school graduation, a 15-year-old student felt that my son no longer deserved the right to live."

Since that time, Mrs. Ensley has been active in organizations such as Peace Builders doing her best to help see that similar tragedies do not occur.

Other speakers include Melba Suel, founder of Watotohini, the "Children of Royalty." Ms. Suel was instrumental in setting up the Peace Builder's organization in California.

Concluding the kickoff ceremonies was the unveiling of the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Peace

Builders' puzzle.

Children representing 29 area school and after-school programs placed a piece of the puzzle on a six-foot frame.

When completed, the puzzle showed five children from various ethnic backgrounds working together to hold up the world in peace.

Peace Builders has been endorsed by over 64,000 law enforcement officers in California, and by a number of local and state officials.

School teachers who are participating in the program spend anywhere from one minute to 20 minutes a day on Peace Builders, depending on the amount of aggression in the classroom. The students take their story workbook (available in English and Spanish) home to be worked on with their parents. The workbook contains notes that parents find informative and very often allows the parent to fully understand what their child is feeling about his or her world.

The program is sponsored by various community businesses and organizations such as Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

*"Blessed are the
peacemakers, for
they shall be called
sons of God."*

- Matthew 5:9

Bringing in the Sheaves

Global Mission efforts around the world are resulting in conversions and baptisms.

A Difficult Decision

In Czechoslovakia a series of evangelistic meetings was held to reach areas with no churches. After a number of years of missionary work, more than 30 people are worshipping God. One of them is a young lady named Eva. Here is her story.

My name is Eva, and I'm 18 years old. A few years ago if anyone had told me that sports would no longer



Eva, an 18-year-old record-holding Czechoslovakian runner, thought sports was the most important thing in life. Now a baptized member of the Adventist Church, she puts Jesus first.

be the most important thing in my life, I would have thought they were joking. As a long-distance runner for my country, I had repeatedly won the Czech Republic championship and still hold the Czech record in the 800-meter run.

At the time of my conversion I was

preparing for the Olympic Games in Los Angeles. I was not interested in religion at all. However, because I wanted to study medicine, I attended a series of lectures on preventive medicine.

During this series I found out that the road ahead of me offers more than just the sports that had meant everything to me in the past. I believed in Jesus Christ, but I did not want to quit my sporting activities. I wanted to be faithful, but the majority of athletic meets were on Sabbath. The idea of giving up sports was entirely unacceptable to me.

Nevertheless, I began to prepare for baptism. As the date grew nearer, I came under terrible tension. I asked God for power and courage to make the right decision. I told my coach everything, but he did not understand me. Nobody could help me, not even my own family.

After a difficult spiritual struggle, I decided to be baptized. Since that day, I have had wonderful peace in my heart. I know that without God's help, and also without the understanding of my new friends, I could not have made this difficult decision. I'm very grateful to my God. He was and still is with me during all these difficult times.

Shortwave Conversion

Taking the good news of Jesus to millions in China is restricted. There is one specific medium, however, that can't be forced to comply with laws limiting religious beliefs—radio. And

even behind the Great Wall, radio allows Global Mission to reach people like Mr. Wong.

At age 31 Mr. Wong had a successful career teaching mathematics. But he always felt somewhat dissatisfied. He knew there must be more meaning to life. He began to search for that missing mean-

ing. First he studied the ideas of some of the ancient Chinese philosophers. Then he came across a pamphlet on the end of the world that piqued his interest in the Christian Bible.

Mr. Wong borrowed a New Testament and read about the life and death of Jesus Christ. He also began to tune in to the three major shortwave religious stations, one of which was Adventist World Radio.

He then visited a Protestant house church. The services were a great benefit to him, but he was bothered by the



In Guéckédou, Guinea, the youth set out to reach and teach other youth about Jesus. Now their church is flooded with people who want to learn about the gospel and be baptized.



Mr. Wong first heard about the Sabbath on the Adventist World Radio shortwave station that he picked up while searching for more meaning in his life. He's now a leader in an Adventist house church.

discrepancies between what he heard at church and what he heard on the radio. When he asked about the Sabbath, he was told, "The Sabbath is Jewish. Christians keep Sunday."

Mr. Wong kept listening to the

radio and finally taped one of the programs for his brothers and sisters in the Protestant house church. They were still not receptive to the Sabbath truth, but one of the sisters took him aside and said, "If you really believe

this, I can introduce you to people who have the same beliefs."

A few days later she took him to meet the Seventh-day Adventists. From the beginning, he felt at home among them. He began attending the Adventist church, reading the Bible, and keeping the Sabbath. Finally, he was baptized.

Today Mr. Wong is a leader in an Adventist house church. He testifies to the role radio played in his conversion. As a student of electronics, he's using his skills to encourage others to listen to the same radio program that led him to the truth.

Spreading the Word

In 1993, the Year of Youth Evangelism, young people in Guéckédou, Guinea, adopted "Maranatha" as their slogan and worked to further Global Mission through baptisms.

Encouraged by their pastor, Gbale B. D. Jacob, the youth committed themselves to reaching out to other young people in their city. They visited the homes, markets, and hospitals, telling the people about Jesus and praying for the sick.

God blessed their efforts and brought many non-Adventists to their church. Suddenly the place where the local Adventist congregation was meeting became too small to accommodate the new worshipers. Three baptismal classes were set up, and so far, five people have been baptized.

The youth of Guéckédou have more plans to spread the gospel in their city. They're counting on your prayers for success.

Your continued prayers for all the Global Mission efforts around the world are needed. Pray that God will continue bringing in the sheaves. Maranatha!

Compiled by Darcy Smith of the General Conference office of Global Mission.

Rekindle the Pioneers' Fire - the Love of the Truth

E.G. White urged:

We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work.
- RH 5/25/05 (CWE 28)

By beholding we become changed.
II Cor 3:18

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■ NORTH AMERICA

Major New Book Series Released

Bible Amplifier study aids will run to 40 volumes in 10 years.

One of the most exciting Bible study aids ever developed by a Seventh-day Adventist publisher will be on the market in May 1994. That month will see the first four volumes of Pacific Press's Abundant Life Bible Amplifier series in Adventist Book Centers.

This new series, which will eventually run to 40 volumes and approximately 40,000 pages, will add four volumes per year for the next 10 years until every book of the Bible is covered.

Each volume is both a commentary and an instructional tool that will help people learn to study the Bible for themselves. In order to accomplish these goals, each biblical passage (of roughly chapter length) is treated in terms of five components.

The first, and one of the most important, is entitled Getting Into the Word. The function of this component is to get people into a personal study of the Bible passage under consideration. These sections ask leading questions that are aimed at unlocking the meaning of the biblical passage in its context. In the process, the questions and exercises suggest which Bible study tools (such as concordances, Bible dictionaries, maps, and marginal cross-references) will help readers to unlock the answers. Thus, readers not only gain Bible knowledge but also develop skills in how to unlock the meaning of the Bible for themselves through the use of simple tools.

The second component for each biblical passage, entitled Exploring the Word, is a commentary in which the volume's author brings scholarly insights into the study of the passage. Unlike the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, the Amplifier volumes are not verse-by-verse treatments.

George R. Knight, editor for the Abundant Life Bible Amplifier series.

Rather, the series treats larger passages of Scripture with the aim of unlocking each Bible passage's major theological themes within their developmental and literary context. Thus, one might say, the approach of the Amplifier series is more interested in examining the shape of the forest rather than merely identifying the individual trees.

The third component in the treatment of each biblical passage is Applying the Word, which leads the reader to apply the principles learned to his or her personal life.

The fourth component, Researching the Word, is for those who have the inclination to dig deeper into the Bible than the average student.

The final section, Further Study of the Word, suggests readings on specific topics that go beyond the depth of the Amplifier volumes.

The Bible Amplifier volumes will be helpful for Bible study groups, prayer meetings, Sabbath school and sermon

preparation, and personal study for both devotional and intellectual growth.

The first four volumes are *Exodus: God Creates a People*, by Jon L. Dybdahl; *Matthew: The Gospel of the Kingdom*, by George R. Knight; *Timothy and Titus: Counsels to Young Persons for Struggling Churches*, by Charles E. Bradford; and *Hebrews: Full Assurance for Christians Today*, by William G. Johnsson.

Forthcoming volumes will include treatments of such biblical books as Daniel, by William Shea; Acts of the Apostles, by Nancy Vyhmeister; the Gospel of John, by Jon Paulien; Peter and Jude, by Robert Johnston; Romans, by John Brunt; Joshua, by Roy Adams; the books of Samuel, by Alden Thompson; Ezekiel, by Robert McIver; James, by Pedrito Maynard-Reid; and Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah, by Angel Rodriguez.

Each volume is being published in both softback (\$12.95) and hardback (\$17.95). The books may be purchased through your local Adventist Book Center or by calling 1-800-765-6955. There is a 20 percent discount for those purchasing all four volumes.

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Expecting



The first inkling that something was wrong came when my maternity ward roommate's pediatrician, Dr. Gray, made rounds.

"Your baby had a hard time when he was born," he told Linda. "This first morning we're going to let him stay in the incubator. By afternoon you should be able to hold him."

Linda took it in her stride. Don, as she and Jack planned to name their new son, was their third child.

"Get Ready for Your Babies"

When the intercom crackled "Mothers, get ready for your babies," I prepared eagerly for the morning visit with my new daughter, and Linda simply settled back to wait for afternoon.

"That's a *pretty* baby!" she exclaimed, sharing my pleasure when the white-uniformed nurse bustled in and placed my little girl in my arms. But when the afternoon message "Mothers, get ready for your babies" came and nurses distributed newborns from one end of the ward to the other, there was still no Don. Linda pushed her call button.

Soon a young nurse appeared with a small white-blanketed bundle.

"He's kind of cold," she said, "but you can hold him just a little." As Linda cuddled her baby boy, I noticed that he was not pink like my child. During the moment she held him, he began to cry.

"Whatsa matter?" she soothed, like mothers clear back to Eve. "Whatsa matter?" She looked up questioningly at the nurse. "Do you want to take him?"

Bending, Linda kissed Don's tiny forehead, then handed him back.

A little feeling of apprehension settled over me. Later Dr. Gray came by to say that Don wasn't doing well.

"The baby has a sort of bubble in his chest cavity," he explained evenly. "It needs to be punctured." Sitting there in a new green robe she'd made for the occasion, supper tray before her, Linda listened quietly. Dr. Gray continued.

"Dr. Simmons, a noted chest surgeon, will do the surgery. But we need you to sign here."

Nurses distributed

newborns from

one end of the

ward to the

other—but little

Don was missing.

The room was very still. "Are they going to operate pretty soon?" she asked.

"They're doing it now."

Linda pushed away her tray, and for the first time I saw her cry. Only a few feet away from her, my own precious little girl safe and pink in the nursery and my joy a cruel contrast to her pain, I sensed one thing. Had she been able to, Linda would have undergone surgery for her son. And I *knew* that the loss of a newborn is not a lesser grief. It is grief unspeakable.

It was after bedtime when Dr. Gray returned. "The baby has taken a turn for the worse," he said soberly. "Would you like me to call your husband?"

Jack was with her a short time later when Dr. Gray and Dr. Simmons entered the room together and pulled the curtain between my bed and Linda's.

"I'm so sorry," one of them said. From the other side of the curtain I heard great, low sobs.

With Trumpets and Bundles

Does it seem strange that, for me, a little parable of the second coming of Jesus derives from that hospital maternity ward?

"And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet," the Bible says succinctly, "and they will gather together His elect from . . . one end of heaven [the earth] to the other" (Matt. 24:31, NKJV). As I imagine it, graves large and little are shaken open. And here's the part I like—angels, white-uniformed, as it were, hurry about, carrying little bundles.

Mothers, get ready for your babies! . . .

The prophet John glimpsed that day. I can only imagine it. But for Linda—and all of us—I echo his response:

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20, NKJV).



Ann Burke is a poet and freelance writer living in Yucaipa, California.

BY ANN BURKE

Come to our 90th birthday celebration.



It'll really light up your weekend.



You're invited to join the festivities this June, when Paradise Valley Hospital turns 90.

You can attend our worship services with special guest speakers. See performances by gifted presenters, singers, and musicians, including a Saturday evening concert with Jim McDonald, baritone. View antiques, memorabilia, and the dedication of one of our original buildings as an historic site. You can even tour our brand-new Outpatient Pavilion.

So join us June 3-5, for a weekend full of exciting events. You'll be delighted you came.

Friday, June 3

7pm: Friday Night Vespers, dedicated to Paradise Valley Hospital Nursing School alumni. Guest speaker: Nancy Bailey, R.N., MA Science, Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Saturday, June 4

9:30am: Sabbath School. Guest speaker: Dan Matthews, Lifestyle Magazine.

11am: Worship Service. Guest speaker: Benjamin S. Carson, M.D., Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery, Johns Hopkins Hospital.

3pm: Video presentation and live performance: "The Story of Paradise Valley Hospital" and "Ask The Pioneers."

8pm: Concert featuring Jim McDonald, baritone.

Sunday, June 5

10am: Dedication ceremony for Heritage House, including a parade of 200 antique cars.

Noon: Grand opening festivities for our new Outpatient Pavilion. Featured speaker: Antonia Novella, retired U.S. Surgeon General.

1pm-4pm: Entertainment in the main tent.

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- U.S. Post Office grants Sabbath accomodation
Page 9
- Adventist loses Sabbath work case in court
Page 10
- The EEOC is asking for your help
Page 8

Hate Crimes and *The Great Controversy*: Another Rumor?

By Diana Justice

Have you heard that police are ordering Seventh-day Adventists to stop distributing *The Great Controversy* because it violates a local hate-crime ordinance?

This year's rumor is "[Name of city or county] has passed a hate-crime law, that prevents [name of person, church, or other organization] from distributing *The Great Controversy* because it's anti-Catholic."

Liberty Alert asked the North Pacific Union Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty to investigate.

We immediately began to research hate-crime ordinances and cities that have them.

Several municipal governments in our union (Olympia, Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma, Washington, for example) have adopted hate-crime ordi-





Diana Justice

nances within the last couple years. Their purpose: to categorize and reduce crimes in which the acts leading to the crime (and here we quote from the Olympia hate-crime ordinance adopted this past fall) “were intentionally targeted at the victim or victim’s race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, his/her/their mental, physical, or sensory disability, or the accused’s perception thereof.”

Suppose your city or county passed hate-crime legislation? How might it affect distribution of *The Great Controversy*?

First, you would have to do something far more drastic than leaving the book inside your neighbor’s screen door. You would have to assault your neighbor in the process—or damage his or her property.

Second, authorities would have to determine that sufficient evidence existed to charge that your criminal behavior was connected to distribution of the book.

Third, authorities would have to rule that *The Great Controversy* is discriminatory, and attorneys advise us that that would be hard to prove.

The Great Controversy is a historical work written in light of the author’s own religious convictions, attorneys tell us. This makes it an extremely unlikely target for book banning by courts in America today. Our courts are regularly upholding such First Amendment rights as freedom of speech and freedom of the press. (In point of fact, Canada exempts religious literature entirely from the hate-crime prosecution process, says Karnik Doukmetzian, attorney-PARL director for the Canadian Union Conference.)

Why then are some Adventists so prone to accept unquestioningly rumors that distributing *The Great Controversy* has become a violation of the law?

(Continued on page 11)

News and Views from *Liberty Alert's* National Correspondents

A T L A N T I C / Theodore T. Jones

FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS—The Massachusetts Council of Churches, the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, and the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Boston were three of four principal sponsors of a winter forum titled "Labor and Leisure: A Look at Contemporary Values."

Special guest speaker: Juliet Schor, author of *The Overworked American*. Other voices: Rev. Dr. Norman Faramelli, Episcopal priest; Dr. Stephen Pope, Catholic theologian; and Robert Haynes, secretary-treasurer, Massachusetts AFL-CIO.

Want to guess the *real* issue?

That's right . . . Sunday sacredness.

The forum invitation said it all:

"On November 8, 1994, Massachusetts voters may decide on a referendum which, if approved, would delete the remaining 'Sunday closing laws' and make Sunday another working day in the Commonwealth. 'Labor and Leisure' will examine some of the social and ethical implications of such a transition."

The forum wasn't absolutely free. Registrants had to post a nominal \$5 to get on the list.

Atlantic Union Conference public affairs and religious liberty director Ted Jones intends to watch where the green goes. While the forum fee was to be sent to the Massachusetts Council of Churches, the event itself was conducted "in cooperation with and funded by the Lord's Day League of New England."

T H E N O R T H W E S T / Richard Lee Fenn

OLYMPIA—The Washington State Human Rights Commission will investigate a religious discrimination complaint filed by Summer R. Smith, 19.



*Compiled and edited
By Richard Lee Fenn*

A nursing student at Walla Walla Community College, Smith worked as a nurse assistant at Park Manor Convalescent Center, a facility belonging to nursing home industry giant Hillhaven Corporation, based in Tacoma. The complaint charges that Park Manor should not have fired Smith the very day she learned the state certification exam was scheduled for an upcoming Saturday. State rules allow an uncertified assistant 120 days from employment to achieve certification. At the time Smith was terminated, she still had 75 days to arrange an alternate test date. No big problem there. The policy of the Washington State Department of Nursing is to accommodate. In this matter Smith's designated representatives are the officers of the Religious Liberty Association of the Northwest, an affiliate of the Religious Liberty Association of North America and the International Religious Liberty Association.

JUNEAU, ALASKA—Cordell E. Reiner, pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church here, now has an additional role. The executive committee of the North Pacific Union Conference has appointed him government relations representative for Alaska. He reports to NPUC Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty.

CANADA / Karnik Doukmetzian

CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA—A Seventh-day Adventist maintenance mechanic denied Sabbath accommodation by his employer and then fired has been awarded \$50,000 in damages for lost income.

Relying on legal principles established in earlier decisions of the Canadian Supreme Court, the local court held that the mechanic's request for accommo-

The new government relations representative for the state of Alaska is Pastor Cordell E. Reiner from Juneau.

ation was based on a sincere and honestly held religious belief. As such, the court said, the individual should be accommodated.

The court found that the employer discriminated against the Adventist by failing to take steps short of undue hardship to accommodate the employee.

Says attorney Karnik Doukmetzian, director of the Canadian Union Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty: "This case is the first to rely on a landmark Supreme Court decision which recognized the inherent right of an employee in Canada to be accommodated for his or her religious belief and practice."

KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA—Larry Renaud, appellant in Canada's landmark Supreme Court religious accommodation case and featured personality in the 1993 *Liberty* video, has been restored to work by his employer.

And since Renaud's seniority was restored retroactively, he was given a position that does not interfere with his Sabbath observance.

But there's a downside to this story, says Karnik Doukmetzian, director of public affairs and religious liberty for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada:

"Since both the employer and the labor union were ordered to pay Larry's lost wages, the working relationship with members of the union has not been very pleasant. The union rank-and-file were told that their dues would be increased substantially in order to cover Renaud's court judgment.

"But Larry continues to be cheerful and is a Christian gentleman with his fellow workers despite the cold shoulder he receives from them."

Adds attorney Doukmetzian: "It wasn't easy for Larry Renaud to step out in faith to meet the challenges of his convictions. But unless we all do what Larry did, the benefits of religious liberty will not be forthcoming."

"It wasn't easy for Larry Renaud to step out in faith . . . But unless we all do what Larry did, the benefits of religious liberty will not be forthcoming."

Karnik Doukmetzian

The prospect of having a male witch running in a Bible-belt legislative district was more than the Socialists could endure.

MISSION, BRITISH COLUMBIA—B.C.'s governing party was faced with a delicate problem when one of its candidates for a seat in the provincial parliament revealed that he is a priest of the Church of the Covenant of the Goddess.

The prospect of having a male witch running in a Bible-belt legislative district was more than the Socialists could endure. In the face of mounting press coverage of the candidate's religious affiliation and offbeat style of worship, the party dropped the priest's nomination.

But British Columbians haven't heard the end of this story. Citing religious discrimination, the cult priest-cum-political candidate has launched a court challenge to regain his chance to become a Socialist member of B.C.'s provincial parliament.

PACIFIC / John V. Stevens, Sr.

SACRAMENTO—Turns out California's advocates for state aid to parochial schools weren't undaunted after all (see *Liberty Alert*, January-February 1994, p. 4). Richard J. Barnett, associate director, Pacific Union Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, reports that the sponsors of four new voucher initiatives filed after the smashing defeat of Proposition 174 have decided that rather than withdraw them they'll just let 'em die. Says Barnett: "They know they can't get the required number of signatures or raise the millions required to finance passage. New time target: 1996."

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA—John V. Stevens, Sr., former PARL director, Pacific Union Conference, believes the California constitution is threatened by an initiative process that provided for amendments to be adopted by a simple majority of

persons voting. Warns Stevens: "Just think what would happen and where we'd be if the U.S. Constitution could be amended this way!"

So PUC PARL asked Willie Brown, powerful speaker of the California Assembly, to push for approval of a bill raising the initiative passage margin to two thirds. Speaker Brown ran a head count, then told Stevens: "We don't have the votes to get it through."

Says Stevens: "The Republicans won't support this reform because they still want California to adopt an education voucher proposition. So we're asking Speaker Brown to let our bill be voted on, even if we lose. Then it'll become an election issue!"

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, and SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH—The legislative assemblies in these two states will consider measures to rescind all of their previous calls for a national constitutional convention.

THE SOUTHWEST / Samuel Green

FORT WORTH—Do on-the-job attitude and performance bear on accommodation? Texas Steel Corporation vice president Frank Laminik must think so. Referring to Adventist employee Michael George, who needed—and got—Sabbaths off at the big plant, Laminik told SUC PARL Director Sam Green: "We need 300 employees like Michael George."



John V. Stevens, Sr.

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*By Mitchell A. Tyner
General Conference
Legal Counsel*

EEOC Solicits Church Assistance

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency to which so many SDA's go for assistance when their employer's requirements conflict with Sabbath observance, has now asked assistance from the church.

EEOC recently filed suit in St. Louis, Missouri, against Dillard Department Store, Inc. The Commission alleges that Dillard Galleria store ordered a sales person with eight years seniority to either work on Sundays—in violation of her religious beliefs—or face termination. The Commission also alleges that Dillard will refuse to hire anyone who objects to working on either Saturday or Sunday on religious grounds.

The Commission is seeking to identify persons in the following categories:

1. Persons with sincere religious beliefs preventing work on either Saturday or Sunday who have applied for work at Dillard, and
2. Persons with such beliefs who have been unemployed within the past four years and who chose not to apply for work at Dillard because they heard that Dillard would not accommodate their beliefs.
3. Persons who have knowledge of whether other large retail stores are willing to accommodate or in fact have accommodated persons with religious beliefs requiring Sabbath observance.

We are delighted that the St. Louis office has taken note of the seriousness of the religious accommodation issue and decided to pursue this case.

If you encounter anyone who fits any of the categories mentioned, please contact the North American Division Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty at (301) 680-6322 immediately. ■

Post Office Grants Sabbath Accommodation

While the United States government should set an example in employer accommodation of religious practice, it is often far behind the private sector. Consequently, the U.S. Postal Service's agreement to accommodate a sabbatarian scheduled to work on Sabbath was welcome news.

Taran Simmons, a member of the Detroit-Northwest Seventh-day Adventist Church in Detroit, Michigan, was scheduled to begin work at 6:00 p.m., with Thursdays and Fridays off. Friday sundown presented no problem, but beginning work at 6:00 p.m. on Sabbath did.

Simmons enlisted the assistance of the Postal Service Equal Employment Opportunity Office, her union representative, her pastor, and the director of the Lake Union Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty. "Taran was determined that regardless of the consequences, she was not going to work on Sabbath," says her pastor, Mike Conley. With continuous efforts, an accommodation was arranged and provided in writing by the legal representative of the Postal Service the day before a pre-trial hearing was scheduled at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The agreement states that each week Taran can revise her starting time for Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 7:45 p.m., thus keeping more than half of her Saturday shift actually on Saturday (a U.S. Postal Service requirement). Additionally, during the summer when the sun sets after 7:45 p.m., Taran can take either leave without pay or annual leave from 7:45 p.m. until she reports for work after sundown.

Taran and her supporters are grateful to God for this answer to prayer and to the U.S. Postal Service for accommodating her Sabbath observance.■

By Vernon L. Alger

"Taran was determined that regardless of the consequences, she was not going to work on Sabbath."

—Pastor Mike Conley

ADVENTIST LOSES IN COURT

By Richard Lee Fenn



**"There's no way he deserves this. It's a quirk of the law."
—Lewis A. Stout**

Jimmy Holley got his day in court. The state supreme court, in fact. But it turned out to be one of the saddest days in Jimmy Holley's life. He lost.

A Seventh-day Adventist who lives in Greenville, North Carolina, Holley worked for Mount Vernon Carpet Mill until he was fired for refusing to work on Sabbath.

Holley had no one to advise him of his legal rights, and by the time he realized he had probable cause to file a religious discrimination complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the 180-day window of opportunity was shut.

Unaware that his church, through the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, provided legal assistance in Sabbath work cases, Holley contacted Douglas Churdar after learning about this conservative Baptist attorney known throughout North Carolina for his interest in religious liberty cases. Churdar took Holley's case free of charge. The lawyer believed 1985 amendments to a South Carolina "blue law" could restore Holley to his old job—maybe even provide compensatory damages.

The amended law provides that all employee rights granted to Sundaykeepers also pertain to those who observe a Saturday Sabbath.

Seems clear enough, right? Wrong.

First, a lower court found for the employer. Then, on appeal to the South Carolina Supreme Court, Holley lost again.

Why?

Harking back to the days when carpet mills were the state's basic manufacturing employers, the very law that now grants Sabbatarians privileges avail-

able to observers of Sunday also exempts the textile industry from the requirement to accommodate.

Churdar, familiar with the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its concern for its church members, called Southern Union Conference public affairs and religious liberty director Lewis A. Stout to advise him of Holley's case.

"Jimmy Holley is a fine person," observes Stout. "There's no way he deserves this. It's a quirk of the law. Suppose he worked in a different industry at a plant right across the street. In all probability he would have won!" ■

Are you aware that your church, through the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, provides legal assistance to members with Sabbath work problems?

Rumors *(continued from page 2)*

Some Adventists disproportionately emphasize certain areas of our biblically based eschatology until these areas become the growth medium for a persecution complex. These Adventists are quick to believe—and then help spread—unsubstantiated snippets of information about public laws or actions that they are convinced are going to lead to immediate persecution of Sabbathkeepers and the onset of the time of trouble.

If you hear that your city or county has banned the distribution of *The Great Controversy* pursuant to a hate-crime ordinance, contact your union conference PARL department before you rebroadcast the story. Chances are it's only a rumor. But if it's true, expect your church's religious liberty ministry to respond quickly and fervently.

We believe—and we think you do too—that America is still "the land of the free," and your PARL department is working hard to keep it that way. ■



*By Gary M. Ross
Congressional Liaison*

Unnecessary Solutions to Nonexisting Problems

This caption, taken from an exclamation by Representative William Ford, chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, aptly characterizes the two legislative challenges faced by church-state separationists in February and March 1994.

First, in the course of committee action on the pending Elementary and Secondary Education Act (H.R. 6), language requiring teachers to be certified in the subjects they teach was wrongly interpreted as requiring parents to be licensed to teach their children at home. Angry religious conservatives besieged members of Congress with phone calls, faxes, and letters—demonstrating the power of orchestrated grass-roots campaigns. Several days later home-schoolers convinced representatives of private schools that they too could be vulnerable.

As a result, the House passed, overwhelmingly, an amendment exempting home schools from the requirements of H.R. 6. Then a broader bill—one that did not “permit, allow, encourage, or authorize any federal control over any aspect of any private, religious, or home school” was also introduced and passed.

With private interests mollified, this year’s biggest education bill, a \$12.7 billion school-aid package, edged toward bipartisan passage—but not before dredging up America’s relentless school prayer controversy.

When educational reform package Goals 2000 came before the Senate for consideration, conservatives wishing to prolong the school prayer issue saw their opportunity to wreak mischief. Their three prayer amendments have confused school administrators and most observers.

One offered by Senator Jesse Helms would deny federal funds to school districts that bar “constitutionally protected,” individual, voluntary prayers in schools. A second amendment introduced by Senators John Danforth and Nancy Kassebaum favors daily periods of silence for students to contemplate their aspirations. Senator Carl Levin’s measure—probably intended to blunt the efforts of Senator Helms—says that a district cannot be denied federal funds if it adopts in good faith a constitutional policy on school prayer.

Either the term *constitutional* renders such provisions redundant or it serves as code language for practices thus far approved only by lower courts. An example of the latter would be student-organized prayer at graduation services. The Supreme Court scotched state-written prayers, periods of silence for purposes of prayer, and clergy-led prayers at public events.

Because Goals 2000 passed the House without school prayer amendments, the door was open for removal of Senate provisions. Though the provisions were removed, additional prayer strategies loomed at this writing.

Meanwhile, the prayer issue impacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. On the House floor H.R.6 was amended to jeopardize public funding of any school district preventing participation in constitutionally protected prayer. This action, drafted by Representative Sam Johnson, won by a lopsided vote of 345-64.

Because the Senate has not begun work on a companion bill to H.R. 6, House members will probably continue to try and score on an issue of little substance and much symbolism.

Editorial Note:

Goals 2000 has since been passed in the Senate after a filibuster by Senator Jesse Helms was broken.

The Judgment and Religious Liberty



By Clifford Goldstein

Though Adventists view the pre-Advent judgment of Daniel 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 in the context of what happens in heaven, that judgment has some very earthly consequences, especially in regard to religious liberty.

The vision of Daniel 8 itself consists of the ram (verse 3), the he-goat (verse 5), the little horn (verse 9), and finally the sanctuary being cleansed (verse 14).

The ram is identified as Media-Persia (verse 20), one of the major, most important powers in the ancient world. The he-goat is identified as Greece (verse 21), another player of major historical significance. The little horn is Rome, both pagan and papal. Here too, the importance of this power cannot be overemphasized. We are living not only with the effects of that power, but *with* that power today.

And finally, the vision of Daniel 8 climaxes with the sanctuary being cleansed.

Only four elements compose the vision of Daniel 8: Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the cleansing of the sanctuary. If the first element, Media-Persia, was so important; and if the second one, Greece, was so important; and if the third, Rome, was and is still so important—what does that prove about the fourth element? It must be crucial too!

One aspect of the event that gives it such importance is that it brings about the demise of the persecution of God's people by the little horn!

In the interpretation of the vision, Daniel is told that this little horn power "shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (verse 24). This persecution, which began in the early years of Christianity, will continue until the end (although

there is a temporary halt after a 1260-year period, Revelation is clear that it will resume again), when that power will “be broken without hand” (verse 25), meaning that it will be God who brings about its end, not man.

And it is the cleansing of the sanctuary, another description of the heavenly judgment of Daniel 7, that leads to its demise, because when the judgment ends, Christ returns to establish His kingdom: “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion [the little horn, now seen in Daniel 7], to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom” (Dan. 7:26, 27).

Thus, a crucial aspect of the pre-Advent judgment—whether seen as the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 or the heavenly tribunal in Daniel 7—is that it leads to the end of the persecution of God’s people. Apparently, until the judgment is completed in heaven, the Lord will allow this persecution to continue on earth. Eventually, however, the judgment will culminate in the Second Coming and the establishment of God’s kingdom.

We can, therefore, expect religious persecution. But fortunately we have the hope that what Christ does in heaven will one day bring that persecution to an end here on earth.



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