

Wings

oj

Freedom:

Religious

Liberty

Today

LETTERS

Impossible

"Creating the 'Impossible'" (Mar. 17) was like a breath of fresh air! God bless Valley Grande Academy.

Not every student fits the teacher/ preacher/doctor/nurse mold. We would lose fewer of our young people out the back door of the church if we would provide training in vocational skills that would equip them to make a living after graduation. The same skills could give them a means of earning money for college, if that is their goal.

Many times we have heard the complaint "Teaching vocational subjects doesn't pay for itself." Does teaching Bible, English, history, etc., pay for itself? A dedicated person with a vocational skill can be a powerful witness in his or her community.

Academies with programs similar to that provided by Valley Grande Academy should be encouraged and supported, not hassled. Mrs. Joy Ball Harrah, Oklahoma

Connections

Love! Romance! Togetherness, forever! It's not Janette Oke. It's the Adventist Review!

Thanks, Roland Hegstad, for such a heartwarming story ("Great Connections," Apr. 7). I never knew that behind the serious pages of *Liberty* magazine beat the heart of a hopeless romantic!

And thanks, Mr. Contact, for showing that God has many ways of using people in ministry—including helping God's children find the love He created. Marilyn Thomsen Glendale, California

We thank you again for running the article about Adventist Contact. Calls and letters from people wanting to join have more than tripled since the article, and they are coming from all over the world.

We would like to mention that our zip code was incorrect. Our correct address is: Adventist Contact, P.O. Box 5419, Takoma Park, Maryland 20913-0419.

Your article also said, "On a good week we will receive a half dozen wedding and engagement announcements." Actually we have received more than that.

We do appeal to professionals, but we have members from all walks of life and backgrounds. One woman called and wanted to know if we had any farmers, and the answer was yes. You do not have to be a doctor, lawyer, or minister to join Adventist Contact. We want to be a full service to our entire church family. Adventist Contact

I hope that the Adventist Review will continue to focus on ministries for singles in the church. Another computer dating ministry, SDA Computer Cupid, was designed to fill a need for those Adventists who cannot afford to pay several hundred dollars for a dating service. A year's membership is available for only \$30 and guarantees 12 matches before expiration. Members answer 71 questions pertinent to today's lifestyles, and matches are sorted and mailed promptly. A budget membership is available for \$15, which makes the member available for referrals, but the member will receive no mailings. Adventists and Christians attending the SDA Church can find out more by sending a SASE to P.O. Box 16823, Wichita, KS 67216.

> Nannette K. Thacker Wichita, Kansas

Investing

I was deeply impressed by "Is the Golden Goose Sick?" (Apr. 21). Certainly we have to do more in providing needed funds for our beloved church.

God will finish His work with or without our funds. The lack of funding for some institutions will prompt the members of that institution and all the church to reevaluate our mission, our goals, and the urgency of the times in which we live.

What is it that we really need the money for? I think the whole church is moving in the right direction by providing more funds for Global Mission projects and funding ministries that are rapidly accomplishing God's will on earth. Let's pray that our people invest their lives, health, money, ideas, and all to glorify our Master and soon-coming Saviour.

Please give more articles like this, that stimulate thinking about our actual condition. Manuel E. Alva, M.D. Elk Grove Village, Illinois

Why do you brethren have to be so brutally honest with us? I'd like to suggest five points for consideration in dealing with the current financial picture for our church.

1. Let's remember that our stewardship relation is to God first and foremost as part of our covenant with Him. In harmony with that relationship, let's handle His holy tithe in the manner that He outlined in Scripture—return the whole tithe to the right place, the storehouse, for the support of the ministry.

2. Let's recognize that God loves cheerful givers. How could any of us keep our sanity today in this chaotic world without a knowledge of God and His plan of salvation?

3. Let's be honest with ourselves and God, and recognize that our real problem is not inflation but selfishness!

4. Let's not fret over the perception that "the church is always asking for more money." Can't we recognize that the appeals for money are the direct result of opportunities that God has provided to advance the work?

5. Let's recognize that the financial problem can't be solved by anyone individually, but we can all do our part.

G. Edward Reid Stewardship Director North American Division

Saudi Arabia

Let me tell you how encouraged, uplifted, informed, and even entertained I have been since I've started receiving the *Adventist Review* some three years ago.

Being so far away, I sometimes receive issues of the *Review* weeks after they're posted. Keep those articles coming! I really enjoy keeping in touch with the rest of the Adventist world.

> Euzel Pompey Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

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¹² A story of faith

Cover photo by Orville Andrews

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Vol. 171, No. 26.

EDITORIAL



Free at Last

With fireworks, parades, and speeches, Americans throughout the United States will soon celebrate Independence Day.

On July 4 the nation will commemorate such courageous acts as the midnight ride of Paul Revere and the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which helped to set up a new sovereign state 218 years ago.

As an African-American I'm approaching the Fourth of July with a heart filled with joy. There's a new cause for celebration. For the first time in more than 300 years 30 million of my Black brothers and sisters in South Africa are tasting the joy of self-determination—after 45 years of apartheid. Now all South Africans are citizens with the right to vote.

With open elections conducted April 26-29, South Africa now has its first democratically elected parliament and its first Black president—Nelson Mandela.

This modern-day Joseph rose to the presidency after spending 27 years in prison. A pivotal leader of the country's Black nationalist movement, Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964 on charges of sabotage. Mandela taught himself law, economics, history, and Afrikaans. He also taught his fellow prisoners.' His life story reflects the country's long bloodstained road to freedom.

Political analysts peg the beginning of the apartheid era in 1949, with the enactment of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act. Antiapartheid demonstrations emerged in the 1950s, but these movements led to an aggressive governmental crackdown in the 1960s, including the 67 Blacks killed in the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, and the jailing of Mandela in 1962.² International reaction to apartheid resulted in the expulsion of South Africa from the Olympic games in 1968, a United Nations-imposed arms embargo in 1977, and economic sanctions voted by the U.S. Congress in 1986.³

Growing isolation from the world community led to the release of Mandela in 1990. Even so, between 1990 and 1994 more than 12,000 Black South Africans died in violent political demonstrations (many of these, however, resulted from clashes between rival Black groups).

Though it took 45 years of protests, negotiations, and political sanctions, and millions of prayers, South Africa now has a new government and constitution. Every South African has the basic rights of citizenship, including the right to an education, to enter and leave the country, and to move freely within its borders.

The segregated homelands—those depressed, overpopulated territories that 74 percent of the nation's population occupied—are now abolished. The new constitution also calls for restitution of land seized by the state.

Along with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, South Africa's change from apartheid to majority rule ranks as a miracle that showcases the power of morality. Words cannot adequately explain it. We must accept it as a providential blessing. It illustrates what happens when people unite for a just cause.

Timeless Example

For Christians the liberation of South Africa also holds several lessons:

■ Liberty comes with a high price tag. The 12,000 Blacks who died since 1990 in demonstrations, protests, and massacres testify to the high cost of freedom.

As I reflect on the untold sacrifice of South Africans, I appreciate anew the unfathomable sacrifice that God made for me in giving of His Son, Jesus. His death on Calvary liberated all humanity from the shackles of sin and eternal death.

■ Persistence pays. As soldiers in God's army, working to set up Christ's kingdom, we must never give up. The example of Nelson Mandela, who began working 47 years ago for equal rights for South Africans, shows the steady, persistent resolve we need in the struggle to spread the gospel message throughout the world.

No matter how bleak, hopeless, or futile our struggle may appear, we must always press forward. Paul writes, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Gal. 6:9, NIV).

■ God remains in control. Who would have thought that after 45 years apartheid could be peacefully dismantled? This just shows that God is still on the throne. Though God hears our prayers and knows our difficulties, He acts within His own timetable. As we work and struggle to make a difference, we must never forget that "the battle is the Lord's" (1 Sam. 17:47, NIV).

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17, NIV).

¹ Newsweek, May 9, 1994, p. 34.

² Ibid., p. 36.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 36, 38.

EDITORIAL



Sociology 101

I've been involved in a type of sociology project at my church. For the past two months a group of about 15 of us have voluntarily met once a week at the church on Thursday nights to discuss human behavior and its impact on our local church. We present our findings, exchange data, and then adjourn until the following week, at which time we present new findings, discuss research, and share more data. For some of us it's a sociological study at its finest. For others it's better known as nominating committee.

I can think of a kazillion other things I'd rather do on Thursday nights than sit around and discuss primary teacher hopefuls, or social committee chair candidates. I mean, who would *choose* to scour the church directory looking for finance committee members or yearn to hear the Y word when calling cradle roll leader nominees? Fortunately for the church, there are some of us who suffer from chronic amnesia, blocking out painful memories of past nominating committees, and continue to agree to do it.

Not That Simple

I support the theory of surveying church members before nominating committee meets, and having them write down those offices they feel gifted for, or are interested in. But unfortunately it's not that simple. Take, for example, the Sabbath school divisions. Some people don't want to commit to helping in a division until they know who the leader will be. Others are willing to help, but don't want to be leaders. Others are willing to be leaders, but want to get their own helpers. And others just don't want to help at all.

Then there are people willing to lead

out in Sabbath school divisions if they don't have to get up front or teach the lesson. Greeters who are willing to greet if they don't have to shake hands or approach people. And elders who are willing to be spiritual leaders if they don't have to get up front and pray.

I'd like to think my church is unusual, but I suspect it's not. In fact, I suspect that churches through the years have had to deal with such anomalies. The First Church of Galilee was probably no exception. When Jesus selected 12 misfit candidates for church office, He exposed the sociological phenomenon of the ages. With the personalities of Peter and Philip, Nathanael and Thomas, no wonder Judas, with his "keen discernment and executive ability," was favored by the disciples to be Jesus' assistant (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 294).

Lest we stack our churches with Judases because of their initial appeal, let us learn from the experience of the past. Worldly fitness should not be a factor in selecting people for the work of God. The more helpless and weak we may be, the more fit we are for the power of God to manifest itself through us. "We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (2 Cor. 4:7, NIV).

So before you answer the call of a nominating committee member (or anyone, for that matter, who needs your help), I wish you would consider the following:

1. Volunteer. Don't wait for the nominating committee to come to you before you go to your pastor or church leader with your burden to serve in a particular capacity. The church is always in need of good help. The pastor or nominating committee will then be glad to consider your request. 2. "I'm too busy." That excuse doesn't work anymore. Ten years ago you may have gotten away with it, but not today. Everybody's busy. A more believable excuse might be "I don't want to."

3. **Pray.** Before saying "No," "I don't want to," or even "Yes," pray about it. Visualize yourself doing that job. Obviously others think you are capable of serving in that capacity or they wouldn't have asked you.

4. **Be open and willing.** Just because you've never gotten up in front of people doesn't mean you can't start. The people currently leading out in church probably don't like being up front any more than you do. They're just more willing to try.

5. Do something. Even if it's cutting carrots for potluck or counting labels for Investment, there's something for everybody to do. Ownership of a church won't come unless you get involved.

6. It's God's work. Remember, this isn't your show, but God's. Ask Him to provide you with sufficient help and the right resources to do your work effectively. Hold Him accountable for the challenges that lie ahead. Also, pray for the people who will be affected by your ministry.

7. Utilize resources. The church has a host of resources. Use them! Contact your local conference or the North American Division Distribution Center: (402) 486-2519. Talk to others who have led out and get their sources.

Best wishes as you embark on your church ministry project(s). I'll be right behind you as youth division leader at my church.

JACKIE ORDELHEIDE SMITH

NEWSBREAK

NORTH AMERICA

Southwestern Union President Hurt in Car Accident.

Southwestern Union president Cyril Miller was one of two persons who suffered multiple injuries when his car struck a tractor-trailer that swerved across the road in front of him near Burleson, Texas, on June 8. Miller's passenger also suffered multiple injuries. At presstime, June 15, both remain hospitalized.

A First for Adventist Women in Chaplaincy.

Bernadine Archer, from Detroit, Michigan, became the first Adventist woman to be employed as a correctional chaplain, says Martin Feldbush, associate director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries.

The Master of Divinity graduate from Andrews University was appointed chaplain of the Macomb Regional Correctional Facility in New Haven, Michigan, an all-male institution. Another Adventist chaplain there has just moved to another facility. There are 17 Adventist chaplains working in correctional institutions in North America, Feldbush says.

To New Position. Charles

Griffin, an associate director of the General Conference Church Ministries Department and codirector of stewardship ministries, was elected Greater New York Conference president. Griffin replaces G. Merlin Kretschmar, who retired.

GC President Urges UN to Restore Peace in Rwanda

General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg has joined the outcry calling upon the United Nations to restore peace in Rwanda.

In a letter addressed to UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Folkenberg said, "I want to urge you personally, and the United Nations generally, to do everything possible to restore peace to Rwanda so its citizens can begin rebuilding their lives and their communities after the tragic bloodletting that turned neighbor against neighbor and made refugees out of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children."

Folkenberg expressed concern for all citizens and for the more than 275,000 Seventhday Adventists attending nearly 800 churches in the central African country that has been rocked by violence since the April 6 death of Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana.

Folkenberg has also asked the UN to appeal to the warring factions to guarantee the

By Rick Kajiura, an assistant director of the General Conference Communication Department. safety of humanitarian nongovernmental organizations, including the church's Adventist Development and Relief Agency, that want to help Rwandan's rebuild their communities.

ADRA has been involved in helping provide aid to many refugees from Rwanda in the surrounding countries of Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda. Before the war erupted, the agency operated numerous development projects in Rwanda.

Adding that Seventh-day Adventists will pray for success in UN peacemaking in Rwanda, Folkenberg ended the letter by quoting Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

In other news about Rwanda, 17 ADRA employees are burying about 100 bodies a day near Golo, Uganda. The corpses wash onto the beaches along Lake Victoria, says Barry Chapman, ADRA/Uganda director. In all, about 8,000 bodies have been buried by relief workers and volunteers from various agencies since the end of May. "The people of Uganda asked us for help, and we're going to do whatever we can," Chapman says.

Oakwood Biology Graduates

Noted. According to the United States Department of Education, Oakwood College ranked twelfth nationwide in the number of African-American biology graduates in the 1990-1991 school year, according to the Journal of Black Issues in Higher Education.

WORLD CHURCH

Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital

Opens. After years of negotiation and construction, the 400-bed Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, China, officially opened on May 9 with a special ceremony. Named after the 90-yearold Hong Kong film magnate and financial donor (see right photo), the show-



Hospital president Dr. David Fang has overseen the construction for nearly five years.



case teaching hospital is a cooperative venture between the Zhejiang

provincial government in China, Zhejiang Medical University, Loma Linda University Medical Center, and the General Conference. It is now one of the finest hospitals in China.

With a dream to improve health care in his home province, Shaw contributed more than US\$10 million for the hospital's construction, and LLUMC is helping to staff the hospital.

GC Expresses Concerns. In

an effort to uphold the Adventist Church's position against unbiblical sexual behavior, the General Conference Administrative Committee took an action on May 17 to request all GC personnel to decline invitations to speak to gatherings of homosexuals, including those sponsored by Kinship International.

GC president Robert S. Folkenberg says that the Kinship International homosexual support organization appears to condone a homosexual lifestyle in spite of unmistakable biblical injunctions that proscribe such behavior and that undergird the clear position of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.

East Colombia Outreach Nurtures New Converts, The

East Colombia Conference conducted multiple evangelistic meetings in the cities of Bucaramanga and Cucuta from February 26 to March 19. The meetings resulted in 462 new members, says Nelson Vargas, conference communication director.

AWR First Quarter Mail Tops

6,000. Adventist World Radio reports that listener mail for the first three months of 1994 reached 6,100 letters. The count includes reports from nearly 50 studios and media centers as well as mail received by AWR stations and offices worldwide.

The mail possibly represents 3.5 million listeners, using the Voice of America formula of 600 listeners for each letter, according to



Adventists Build Marshall Islands Health Center

About 75 volunteers with Maranatha Volunteers International built a two-story 8,500-square-foot health education facility on the Marshall Islands atoll of Majuro.

The Henry Samuel Memorial Health Education Center (above) includes a gymnasium, classrooms, and apartments for student missionaries. Amata Kabua, president of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, who joined the volunteers in laying the first block, expressed appreciation for the Adventist Church's work on Majuro.

There are seven Adventist schools in the Marshalls that are operated by 32 student missionaries, says Elwyn Platner, Pacific Union Conference communication director. The schools form the backbone of the Adventist Church's evangelism to the Marshalls.

AWR program director Allen Steele. One reason for the large response is that new programs are being aired from Radio Slovakia.

Ukrainian Schools Provide

Evangelistic Setting. Public schools in the Ukraine have become a new frontier for Adventist evangelism, says General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg.

Class periods formerly used to teach Communism are now available for religious instruction. Funded by donations from Adventists in the Bentonville, Arkansas, area, Adventists Hellen and Yuri Yakovenko and staff are leading 120 teachers who are working in 113 schools teaching the gospel to 3,970 students.

Polish Radio to Broadcast SDA Programs. The Polish Union recently announced a new breakthrough in the Adventist Church's ministry there. On July 1 Adventist radio broadcasts will begin airing nationwide on Polish state radio.

An hour long radio program will air twice a week at no cost to the church. "This wonderful opportunity will, however, place considerable stress on the personnel of the Adventist radio studio in Warsaw," says Roman Chalupka, union communication director. "Extra space and equipment are urgently needed."

FOR YOUR INTEREST

SDAs On-line Membership

Kits Available. If you're interested in joining the Adventist computer forum on Compu-Serve, you can now order an SDAs On-line membership packet (in DOS, Windows, or Macintosh versions) for US\$15. The church's on-line forum starts July 5.

To order your kit, call (800) 260-7171 from within the United States, and (616) 471-6083 from outside the U.S. You can order the kit by fax at (616) 471-6072. Fax orders must include credit card number, card type (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), expiration date, shipping instructions, and signature.

For more information, call the General Conference Communication Department at (301) 680-6300.

International Youth Congress Convenes in July. More than 5,000 young people from 20 countries are expected to attend the Euro-Africa Division's international youth congress in Lausanne, Switzerland, July 26-30.

The five-day congress will feature workshops, concerts, and worship services. For more information, write to John Graz, P.O. Box 219, 30000 Berne 32, Switzerland; call 031 352 62 62; or fax 031 352 62 66.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- July 2 Vacation Witnessing
- July 23 Home Study International Promotion Day
- Aug 6 Global Mission Evangelism Emphasis
- Sept 3 Lay Evangelists Day
- Sept 10 Missions Extension Offering

Like an Organ

As I listened, a parable came to mind.

BY DANIEL AUGSBURGER

As I sat in church about a year and a half ago listening to the organist play, I thought I heard a parable. It was as if Jesus said, "My church is like an organ with thousands of pipes, each different from the other."

I look carefully at the pipes before me. Some are many feet long and large around; some are short and tiny. The longest one (a low C) vibrates at a frequency of 32 vibrations per second; a high C, on the other hand, vibrates more than 8,000 times per second. One pipe is 30 feet long; one has a speaking length of only a half inch. Most of the pipes function in a vertical position, but the *trumpets en chamade* are positioned horizontally.

The sound of some pipes is hardly heard—some, in fact, provide only background music. But the trumpets have a brilliant tone and seem to dominate the whole organ whenever they get a chance to sound. Then there are the carillon bells, which sing outside the church, giving an ethereal dimension to the harmony.

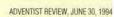
Must Have Air

To give its sound, each pipe must receive a breath of air. The organ may be very beautiful, but it will be totally silent if no air blows through it. People will see the pipes, but will not know the blessing of their sublime harmonies. For the power of the organ lies not in the metal of its pipes, however precious, but in its breath. The organ becomes a musical instrument capable of "singing" and "crying" only when stroked by a flow of air. You can see the pipes but not the air. Yet the air is everything.

If all the pipes played at the same time, you would have noise but not harmony. It might be a tympanumtearing cacophony, but it would not grip you; it would not talk to your soul. To make music the organ must be played by someone trained, someone capable of selecting notes, of controlling volume, of manipulating registers. At times it seems the organist crushes the pedals to bring a torrent of sound out of the big pipes. At other times the organist seems to caress the keys gently, as a father caresses a newborn child, his soul charmed by the cooing of the little one.

Some pipes get used again and again; others, very seldom. But at given times each is indispensable. The worth of a pipe is not determined by how much the organist uses it. What matters, rather, is that it is there when needed, whether it whispers or thunders.

Separated from the organist, the most beautiful organ is voiceless. It may be lovely to see, but it can produce no music by itself. Strangely, a pipe



becomes truly itself only when totally controlled by the organist.

What if We Change the Pipes?

As the parable played in my mind, someone came along and rearranged the pipes-thinking they're too stiff, too formal. Move them around, that person thought, to create more fantasy. But the harmony was gone. The instrument could make music only as the pipes stood where the builder originally placed them. The order was not arbitrary. It had to do with the very character of the pipes.

Another onlooker said: It is not fair that some pipes are so long and others so short. There should be more equality in the instrument. So that person proceeded to make an organ with pipes of the same length. Proud of the new work, the individual went to the console and tried to play. But the new sound could not lift up minds and souls to heavenly heights. For the richness of an organ's tone comes precisely from the differences, the variety, in the pipes.

In the parable another visitor came by and attempted to make the organ better. I do not like the sound of those big pipes. Too solemn. Too straitlaced. Too somber.

Too earthbound. They do not vibrate enough. I will take them out.

With confidence the visitor removed them, then went to the console to play. But the sound was thin and the liveliness of the remaining pipes was lost.

That experiment was hardly finished when another bystander came up with a new idea. Leave the big pipes. I like their solemnity. But remove those tiny ones, and the trumpets especially. Those trumpets always want to dominate. They sound so dogmatic. And those little pipes—they always jump around like flashes of light on the facets of a diamond. Such undignified pipes do not belong in a solemn organ.

Sure that the instrument had been greatly improved, this new adjuster moved to the console, only to realize that the solidity of some pipes required the liveliness of the other pipes to produce beautiful harmony.

Another observer questioned the need for the mouths and reeds in the pipes.

We are valuable, not because we're all the same, but precisely because we're all

different.

Take the pipes just as they are. What matters is their willingness to make sound.

But the Master Organist replied, "Friend, a plain pipe makes noise, not music. To produce the right pitch and the right tone, a pipe must meet very severe specifications. Sounds follow laws just as much as the planets in the universe. Only pipes that obey those laws can be used."

Like the Church

My church, Jesus concluded the parable, is like an organ. It is made up of a variety of people—different in looks, in action, in speech. Some like to be heard; others would rather be in the background. Some seem always cheerful and sprightly; others more restrained. You cannot miss seeing some; others you notice only by chance. When some speak, they expect everyone else to listen; others are not heard very often.

They are in the church because I want them all. They are valuable, not because they are all the same, but precisely because they are different. I need them because each can do something that no one else can. They all have their personality and their temperament. That is what makes them precious in My sight. Do not try to make trumpets sound like basses. Do not be upset if some are more dominant than others. That is the way I want it. I do not want conformity; I want harmony.

Yet they must meet My specifications. My laws do not reduce them to meaningless things, but enable them to be all they are able to be.

But they cannot, by themselves, produce the harmony of witness that touches souls. They can be heard only as they themselves are moved by the breath of the Holy Spirit. By themselves they have little value. But when my Father "plays" them all together, there's born a melodious unity that makes hearts vibrate and minds respond.

Christians are effective only as they work in harmony. God, not they themselves, chooses the ones who will play the solos, the ones who will be heard. They may strive hard to reflect the heavenly beauty of the Father, but without the breath of the Holy Spirit they are not worth much more than metal pipes, for there is no life in them. Aside from the heavenly Organist, they can produce nothing but noise.

The organ is Mine, said Jesus. I have chosen and shaped the pipes. And with My Spirit they will accomplish the mission to which I've called them.

Daniel Augsburger is professor emeritus of historical theology, Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Religious Liberty Today

Which way is the pendulum of religious freedom swinging?

BY BERT B. BEACH

R eligious liberty is on the move—often for the better, but sometimes for the worse. A quick look at the "better" developments reveals at least four underlying and supportive realities.

First, we continue to enjoy, since 1948's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reasonably strong support for religious liberty from the United Nations and international community. Such support is shown through its International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Through the Helsinki "final act," religious liberty has been made a legitimate concern of international relations.

Second, religious groups enjoy (also since 1948) the continuing support of the World Council of Churches, which for several years even had a religious liberty secretariat. Most leaders of the ecumenical movement realize that there can be no meaningful ecumenism without the basic of religious liberty.

And third, the Roman Catholic

Church has officially espoused religious liberty. This came forth when the Second Vatican Council adopted a groundbreaking declaration in 1965 in support of religious liberty. Since then, numerous papal statements continue to

We must not timetable God and let our imaginations soar into wishful sensationalism.

uphold religious liberty, including the freedom of all minority religions wherever a dominant or established church exists.

This new approach is also seen in certain Catholic countries in which considerable persecution once existed but now expanded religious liberty prevails. However, this situation needs to be watched, assessed, and constantly reevaluated, keeping Bible prophecy in mind.

A fourth positive factor for religious liberty is the collapse of totalitarian Communism in Eastern Europe, with its great opening for religion, including Seventh-day Adventist work.

Yet in spite of the positive trends for the "better," some trends for the "worse" of religious liberty cannot be overlooked.

1. Most Muslim countries resist freedom of religion, religious pluralism, and of course, all Christian evangelism.

2. The worldwide growth of religious fundamentalism and extremism, with their corresponding intolerance, provides strong resistance to religious liberty.

3. The awakening or rebirth of Eastern religions is not favorable to religious liberty, especially when Christianity is viewed as a colonial import and a threat to national or local culture.

4. The growth of nationalism (with the emphasis on a nation's identification with a majority religion) is often becoming inimical to minority religions and religious liberty. Under these circumstances, *national* sovereignty stands out against *universal* human rights.

5. The territorial mentality of Orthodoxy contests the presence of, and evangelism by, other churches in what many Orthodox consider their ecclesiastical "hunting preserves."

6. Opposition to so-called proselytism (winning members from other denominations or religions) is growing, particularly in the former Communist nations of Eastern Europe. Many church leaders feel threatened by Western evangelists and oppose the gaining of members from among those who have been baptized as babies, even though they have no living connection with the church and cannot be called believers in any New Testament sense. Efforts are currently under way to pass laws and use the police power of the state to restrict proselytism, especially by relative "newcomers" on the ecclesiastic scene.

7. Finally, the north-south tension in the field of human rights is not helpful to religious liberty. Some nations wish to give priority to economic development, even at the price of reducing human rights. Other leaders of developing nations claim that *individual* human rights, including religious liberty, is a Western concept coming from the Enlightenment. They say that in their countries the *collective* rights of the nation, society, tribe, or family—not individual rights—form the building blocks of human rights. This has ominous implications for religious liberty.

Religious Liberty Victories

Beyond these windows of vulnerability, marvelous religious liberty victories have surfaced in the past few years.

The most recent victory (Nov. 16, 1993) was the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in the United States.

Catholic country of Mexico, legal recognition was granted to the Seventhday Adventist Church, making the church eligible to benefit from the sweeping religious liberty provisions recently enacted in Mexico.

In 1993 the United Nations prepared and issued an official commentary on Article 18 of its International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It states that religious liberty includes the right to change one's religion and to observe days of rest and feast days based on religious belief, even though Article 18 does not specifically so state. This was an important victory, because Seventhday Adventists are an evangelizing church and observe a day of rest that

runs counter to the general practice.

In Spain the non-Catholic churches have received legal recognition for the first time in Spanish history. The religious liberty law for Protestants, passed at the end of 1992, guarantees the right of Seventh-day Adventists to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

In Italy the Roman Catholic Church is no longer the state church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church is listed on the Italian taxation forms as one of four orga-

A sign of the growing religious freedom around the world is the holding of public baptisms by numerous Christian groups in Russia.

The Supreme Court in the 1990 *Smith* decision dealt a blow to religious freedom by doing away with the government's need to show a compelling interest to burden religion and limit religious freedom. All that was then needed was for the law to be generally applicable, singling out no one. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act has now restored the requirement *(Sherbert* test) that the government must show a "compelling interest" if it ever wants to restrict the exercise of religion.

Another victory is the demise of the new and restrictive law on religion in Russia that was voted by the nowdefunct parliament and never signed into law.

In 1993 in the predominantly Roman

nizations that can receive from the taxpayers, if they so desire, the *otto per mille* (.8 percent of taxes) for charitable, welfare, and development purposes. This brings in millions of dollars every year for Adventist Church community and development projects.

In China this year the first foreign Adventist since 1949 was allowed to preach. And in May the first official Adventist Church delegation since before 1949 was invited to visit China to meet with government and church leaders.

The Sunday Law Pendulum

The pendulum is currently swinging away from Sunday laws. Despite the 1961 U.S. Supreme Court decision declaring Sunday laws to be constitutional if deemed social and not religious in the text or legislative history of the law, a number of states have abolished Sunday laws, and in others they are inoperative. Only a few states still have effective Sunday laws.

In Britain also, the trend is away from Sunday laws. On December 8, 1993, the House of Commons, despite strong opposition from the "keep Sunday special" lobby, voted for partial deregulation of the Sunday Trading Act. Small shops will be able to open all day on Sunday, and big stores and supermarkets for up to six hours, when the bill is voted by the House of Lords. This is expected by the middle of 1994.

The European Parliament is trying to standardize throughout the European community the weekly day of rest. Individuals have, however, been able to insert into the legislation a statement requiring that in applying the weekly day of rest, existing religious facts must be taken into account. Among the facts is the day of rest observed by minorities, such as Adventists.

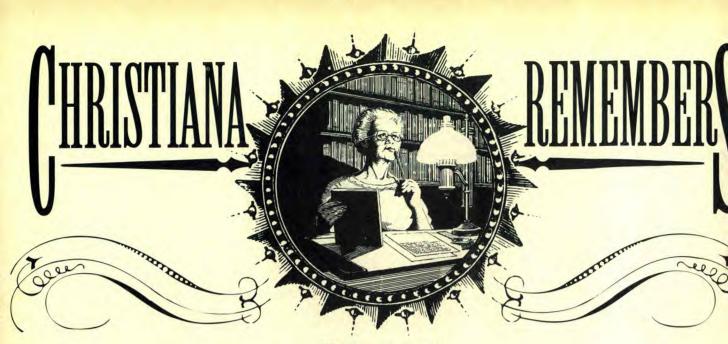
In view of all these trends for and against religious liberty, we need to watch the prophetic clock and be aware of the pendulum swings without timetabling God and letting our imaginations soar into the realm of wishful sensationalism. We are indeed living in what the New Testament calls "*Kairos*" time, the time of special divine opportunity and grace.

The universe is in the hands of a mighty God whose purposes know no delay and no defeat. We worship a Saviour and serve a God of liberty—that is what salvation, redemption, and deliverance are all about. Any persecution and suffering can be only temporary. When we are on God's side, we are on the winning side and will inevitably bask in "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).



Bert B. Beach is the director of the General Conference Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department.

IGIOUS NEWS SERVICI



The first of six parts

From the Old World to a New Religion A story of faith, love, and relationships.



reat fields of wheat were my first childhood memories living green

in the springtime and golden brown in the fall. I was born the youngest of eight children. My parents owned a large wheat ranch in South Dakota, near the town of Lebanon, later Tolstoy.

My father and my older brothers worked hard to make the land produce. My mother and my sisters were busy from dawn to dark. I remember as a child being wheeled all over the farm in a little cart by my older sister Freda.

I got into mischief occasionally. Like the time I hid under the bed, giggling to myself while everyone searched for me. When I couldn't keep quiet any longer, I crawled out laughing. I suppose I should have been punished, but my loving family was overly lenient with "the little one," as they called me. I went with my older brother and sisters to a one-room country school a mile away when I was 7 years old.

My Family Tree

My grandparents on both sides of the family grew up in Germany. When Catherine the Great of Russia invited some Germans to her country because they were good farmers, she granted them immunity from military service. My mother's parents, Nies by name, moved to the Ukraine. Grandfather Nies was highly respected and for a while was mayor of Glucksdahl. He had three sons, all businessmen, and two very attractive daughters.

The Nies and Trefz families were friends and distant relatives. From child-

hood my father, Jacob Trefz, had been attracted to Dorothea, one of the Nies daughters. They fell in love when they were 20 years old and became engaged. There were problems in the Trefz family, however. The father drank heavily and died at an early age, leaving his wife with quite a debt. Jacob felt obligated to help his mother, even though it meant putting off his marriage to Dorothea.

Time dragged as the debt slowly melted. But finally my father and mother, Jacob Trefz and Dorothea Nies, became husband and wife.

Eager to go to the United States—their dreamland—the newlyweds had to spend the next several years saving money for the voyage. When they did arrive in the U.S., Jacob's uncle urged him to come to South Dakota, where they could homestead and buy additional land as they were financially able.

By Cristiana Trefz Meier as told to Ruth Conard

A Step Closer to God

Once settled, the family attended the Lutheran church. But they learned from relatives and new friends that the Bible taught baptism by immersion. Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved, they were told. Many of these relatives and friends had already been baptized by the Baptists. Father opposed this. But Mother became convinced that according to the Bible, she should be baptized. So once when Father was away on a business trip, she participated in a baptism sponsored by a Baptist church in the area.

Father was quite unhappy when he heard about Mother's decision. But nothing could change what she had done, so he remained silent.

Some years later our nearest neighbor sold his farm and moved away. The new neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Stotz, had a nice family of five children. But this family was somewhat different. Every Saturday, after morning chores were done, they dressed in their best clothes and drove away in the family carriage. They didn't return till late afternoon, when it was time for chores again. This happened week after week.

Mother was curious. Where did they go

and stay all day long with their five chil-

dren? My dear Mother (Mother Dorothea,

we called her) decided to prepare a welcome gift—perhaps a dressed chicken or a loaf or two of fresh bread—and visit her new neighbors. Her real purpose, of course, was to find out where they went every Saturday morning, and what they did while they were away.

> "We go to church," said Mrs. Stotz. "On Saturday?" Mother inquired in astonishment.

"Yes," she replied, "we go to church. We take our noon lunch and stay for an afternoon meeting. Then we come home." Mother informed her that we went to church on Sunday and never heard of anyone going to church on Saturday. "Yes," Mrs. Stotz agreed, "most people do go to church on Sunday, but we go to church on Saturday." Mother's next question: "Is that in the Bible?"

"Yes, it is," she stated firmly. Then she began a simple Bible study. She reminded Mother that God made everything in six days, and that the Lord rested on the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it. "And the fourth commandment, in Exodus 20:8-11," she continued, "tells us: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.' And, of course, when Jesus was here on earth, He kept the Sabbath with His disciples."

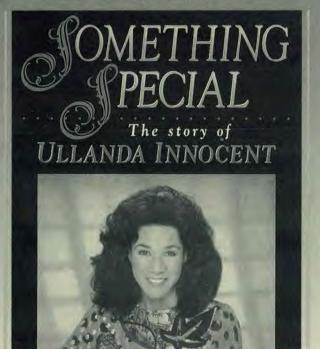
That simple Bible study convinced and convicted Mother. But as she left the new neighbor's home, she turned and said, "It might say that in your

have known many wonderful artists in my life, but few with the faith and determination of Ullanda. Walk with her through the pages of her life, and you too will be blessed."—Wintley Phipps.

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Bible, but not in mine."

Mother went home to get dinner. But she couldn't forget what she had learned. The Holy Spirit kept striving with her. She continued to read her Bible. But she could hardly eat or sleep, for she was troubled. Yes, the Bible clearly said Sabbath, not Sunday—but she didn't want to keep it.

This went on for a year or more, until Mother Dorothea couldn't stand the pressure any longer.

One Friday morning she said to the girls: "Let's do the cleaning and baking today so that we can go to church with the Stotzes tomorrow."

This was a real struggle. But Mother stood firm. "We must go as a family," she insisted. So Mother and her three daughters went to the Seventh-day Adventist church that Saturday. I was the baby and had no choice, so I went too. Mother and the girls liked the service and felt blessed, and some time later the boys joined us.

Mother continued to learn many other Bible truths, and step by step she became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. A new beginning!

Part 2, "Mother Wins Big," coming in our July 14 issue.



Christiana Trefz Meier, 95, is a retired missionary living in Paradise, California.

Ruth Conard is a retired secretary.

FAITH ALIVE!

Which Fight Is the Good Fight?



By Calvin B. Rock

My pastor loves competition. He organizes one church group against another in an effort to get us excited about doing things for the church. I think that competition is wrong and that we would be more Christlike if we stopped competing and simply responded from the heart. Paul says we should honor each other, not outdo each other.

Competition is very much a part of Christian activities. Christian denominations compete with other branches of Christianity for adherents. Adventist schools compete with each other for enrollees. Students compete for scholarships and entrance into prestigious universities. Our hospitals compete for patients, etc.

These realities lead me to believe that certain kinds of competition are not only unavoidable but in some cases wholesome and quite beneficial.

It would seem, therefore, that the more relevant question is not Should there be competition? but What is the difference between wholesome and unwholesome competition? And more important, are there forms of competition that we can, with good conscience, use in raising goals and winning souls?

My own experience is that competition in church work can be wholesome when the following considerations are kept in mind: (a) the project itself is thoroughly justified (spiritualized) by sermons, prayers, etc.; (b) members are organized in "natural groups," such as birth months, residential areas, native states, last-name alphabets, etc., rather than voluntary groups, which are usually formed around social cliques; (c) individual awards are spiritually and/or denominationally oriented, i.e., a trip to camp meeting, or a Bible and hymnal set, etc.; (d) awards are given not just to the winning groups or persons but to everyone involved in the project (with large groups this sometimes means dinners or socials in which all can take part); (e) where money is involved, reports are given at times other than the Sabbath, when a bit of humor and socializing can accompany the program, and Sabbath sacredness is not at risk.

While such activities are capable of fostering fellowship and energizing people, the fact remains—doing for the love of Jesus, not human notice or reward, is the purest form of service.

Why is our church so quiet about social problems? We hear our ministers preaching about tithe, the Sabbath, and the millennium, but rarely about war, poverty, social injustice, and other kinds of community evils. Are we so elitist that we don't care? Why aren't we more socially active?

Of course we care. Adventism is structured to foster healing and restoration of the whole person. Our church via its educational, medical, and publishing branches, not to mention such services as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Christian Record Braille Services (CRS), is doing an excellent job of addressing social needs around the world.

Nevertheless, it is true—with us, as with most conservative religionists that we do not figure prominently in the area of social action. That is, we rarely make public pronouncements or gear our efforts to affect legislation or government policies per se.

One reason is that people who believe in the imminent end of the world are usually very pessimistic about its improvement. They see little value in trying to change what they know will only get worse.

Another reason is that a conservative theological orientation usually stresses the "miracle motif" instead of social action as the better solution for crime, injustice, violence, etc.

In this view the "new birth," not social action, should be the primary emphasis, since a change of heart is the fundamental human need. For such, social activity is not a part of preaching the gospel or "finishing the work."

A third inhibitor to community involvement or social action among Adventists is a misreading of Ellen White that eventuates in "divine determinism"—the view that what is is supposed to be, and if it is not, God will change it in His own time, with or without our help.

A fourth factor is the church's wish not to identify itself with one particular political option or party. Since all parties are driven by what Ellen White classifies as unrighteous principles (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 475-484) and since it is necessary for the church to function no matter who is in power, we try not to alienate any government—local, regional, or national.

None of the above excuses lethargy toward injustice, but rather is a challenge to the creative and courageous use of our powers not only in relieving the suffering that results from injustice but in making legitimate protest against the systems that perpetuate evil.

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



Seventeen Reasons You Should Read to a Child

The most basic of skills can also help you grow, laugh, learn, remember, change, discover . . .

BY PATRICIA A. HABADA

Control of the floor of my living room surrounded by an array of toys. Her dad had deliberately placed only one book among her options. Immediately she reached for the book and held it up. Mark turned to us and exclaimed in joy, "All these toys, and she wants the book!" He gathered her in his arms and began reading.

Has "Read me a story" become "I want to watch TV" at your house? Has time with the children become a quick hug and a kiss in the morning and another in the evening as you put them to bed?

Research varies, but it seems that many parents spend little time with their

children. One study on fathers in the U.S. says they spend eight minutes daily and 14 minutes on weekends in one-onone experiences with their children. Mothers do little better—13 minutes a day and 32 minutes on the weekends.¹

Jim Trelease² has found that men make up less than 7 percent of his audience at parent-teacher meetings when he



presents talks about helping children learn to read. Yet there is no shortage of males in adult literary classes—they make up more than 70 percent of the students. What can we do to keep our children from joining that group? How can we help them enjoy the learningreading experience?

The First Step to Success

Reading is the one major skill upon which all other learning is based. If you can help your children develop strong reading skills, they will likely succeed in most other areas of learning. And you can help them! How? It can be as simple as reading aloud. Just minutes a day will make a difference in abilities. Here are a few suggestions to get you started. You will think of more as you go along.

1. The earlier you start, the better. Jill Hauser, author of *Learning and Loving to Read*,³ says that an infant is reading at that magical moment when it first responds to a parent's smile. Important meaning is found in that smile, and that's what reading is all about—discovering meaning. It's never too early or too late to begin.

As you read to young children, point to the pictures or move your finger under the words. They will soon learn that pictures tell a story, that words tell about pictures, that sentences (in many languages) are read from left to right, and that pages are read from top to bottom.

2. Time means love. Set aside a regular block of time to read aloud. Avoid times when your child has obligations such as homework or wants to watch a favorite TV program. Make a commitment and stay with it. If necessary, turn down other appointments. Think about the positive message that will send to your child!

3. Listening shows commitment. There will be times when your child wants to share or talk about a book he or she has read. You can't always drop everything, but when you can, do. When you must postpone the request, explain why, commit to a time later in the day, and keep your commitment. The younger the child, the sooner that time should be.

4. Selecting books teaches values.

Listen to your children and discover their interests. Adventure stories? Space? Flight? Pioneers? Horses? You may like "how-to" books, but they may want to read about cowboys.

As children grow older, involve them in selecting books. Introduce them to the library and make regular visits together. In the United States, for example, you can introduce them to those

Nine Benefits for Parents Who Read to Kids

Reading aloud:

1. Creates a bonding experience.

2. Allows you to observe and share in your child's interests.

Demonstrates your commitment to your child.

4. Provides an opportunity to model and transmit values.

5. Develops good communication skills.

 Provides bibliotherapy* opportunities.

Gives children a chance to ask you questions.

8. Combats a passive, couchpotato, TV-viewing lifestyle.

9. Helps you build a storehouse of pleasant memories with your children.

*Using stories and books to help children deal with traumatic events such as death, divorce, loss of a pet, and adjusting to life-changing situations such as moving and entering school.

books that receive the annual Newbery Award for story excellence and the Caldecott Award for excellence in illustrations.

Not all these books will appeal to your children, and not all are books you will want them to read. But you can introduce them to a better quality of literature as you determine criteria together, and they will be better prepared to make their own selections in the future. 5. Discover your child's ability to understand. For example, if your child wants to learn more about space exploration, use materials he or she can comprehend. Younger children will learn more from books with pictures. Knowing that a man traveled to the moon may be enough to satisfy a beginner. How he got there will interest older readers.

6. Assess your child's reading level. Start where the child is. How do you find out? Ask your child to read a page aloud. If you hear five or more mistakes, the book is probably too difficult. But if the subject holds the child's interest, don't deny the opportunity to learn. This is probably one of those books that you should read aloud to your child.

7. A good environment sets the stage. Have plenty of eye-appealing books and magazines in your home—some for you, some for your child. Choose a place where you will read together: a favorite chair, propped up on your child's bed, the porch swing, wherever.

Provide a bookcase that will be the child's own and encourage him or her to store favorites there. It's also a good place to keep those library books so you can find them easily when it's time to return them!

When you're ready to read aloud, eliminate distractions. Turn off the TV or radio, and avoid times when friends or family members are likely to make demands of your time.

8. Practice your own skills. When you read aloud, use voice inflection and tone that will make the story come to life. Share the humor, the pathos, the anxiety. Put some drama into your voice.

9. Make room for laughter. Share jokes, nonsense rhymes, funny stories, puns, words with silly sounds. Read aloud stories or examples of humor that appeal to children.

10. Keep 'em dangling. Start a book, arouse the child's interest, then stop while interest is high. This lets a child ask for more. Older children may ask for the book so they can finish reading it for themselves.

11. Accept your child's pace. Don't

overdo it. Five or 10 minutes is enough at first. The younger the child, the shorter the attention span. You want the child to ask for more, not beg you to stop.

12. Teach your child how to find information. When kids ask tough questions about a topic in the book, be truthful. "I don't know, but I can help you find out" lets you lead them to the other books to find answers.

13. Expand the imagination. Begin reading a story, but stop before the end. Ask the child to imagine what might happen. After you have speculated together, read the rest of the story aloud—or better yet, let the child read the rest of the story, if able to do so, and share the ending with you.

14. Share the fun with others. Kids love to hear themselves talk. Tape-record them reading a story, and send the tape to a grandparent or friend.

15. Seek a response and enlarge a child's horizon. Get a response from your child. Educators call it a compre-

hension check. Have the child act out part of the story. On other days draw a picture, summarize ideas, or review information.

Your children want to

please you. Listen to

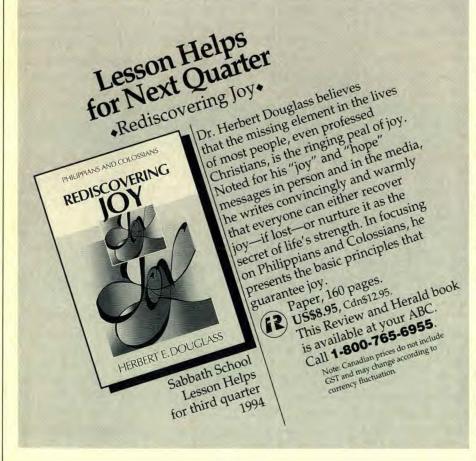
them. Be with them.

Give them the gift of

your approval.

Encourage children to read favorite books and stories to a younger sibling or to share their new knowledge with older persons.

16. Nurture a budding reporter.



After a trip to the zoo, a visit to the park, a sled ride on a snowy day, encourage your child to talk and write about it. Younger children can dictate their story to you—a sentence or two is sufficient. Invite them to illustrate it with a picture, then read it to someone—a grandparent, a neighbor, an elderly friend, a cousin, etc. The refrigerator door is still a good place to display your child's craft.

17. Give the gift of approval. When your child shares a reading (or any other) experience, listen carefully and respond positively. Your child wants to please you. Your approval is a major source of encouragement.

A Bonding Experience

Where do you find time in an alreadybusy schedule? Perhaps you can "make" time the way Kay does. A busy parent, she trades with another mother. Kay takes the children to school, and the other mother picks them up—a trip of 25 minutes each way. Kay persuaded the older children in the car to read to the younger ones.

"You won't believe how quiet the children are!" she exclaims as she describes the morning trip. "I never could get Danny to be still in the car, but now he can't wait to hear the story for the day!"

Sharing good books can become a bonding experience with your child. Just 15 minutes a day will make it happen. Try it.



Patricia A. Habada, Ph.D., was senior editor of the SDA Life Series Reading textbooks that are used in Adventist elementary

schools in North America.

⁴ Reported by editor Carolyn Shadle in the newsletter "For Parents" (7052 West Lane, Eden, New York 14057), September-October 1990.

² For more information, see Jim Trelease, *The New Read-Aloud Handbook* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989).

³ For more on this concept, see Jill Hauser, *Learning* and Loving to Read (Redding, Calif.: Learning Excellence Publishers, 1990).

Back to Work

By the middle of June 1844 the number of Millerite meetings held seems once again to have been on the increase.

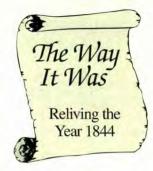
The June 20 issue of the *Midnight Cry* listed four places in New York City alone where meetings were being conducted several times a week.¹ Both *Advent Herald* and *Midnight Cry* also listed

upcoming camp meetings as well as other Millerite meetings around New England.²

There was also a notice stating that the Adventists in Cincinnati, having been deprived of a place to worship, had erected a "plain building, with brick walls, 80 feet square" in which to meet.³

Besides all the meetings, several new Millerite publications were advertised. Foremost among these was *Advent Shield*. It was designed "not only to shield and defend the Advent cause, but the great principles of the Protestant reformation; and especially the principles of prophetic interpretation, as held by the great mass of the old orthodox commentators."⁴

As mentioned in an earlier column, the Millerite movement generally had very little impact in the South.



However, meetings were described as being held "with success" in Richmond, Virginia, and later in Petersburg, Virginia. In the latter location it was reported that "the lectures have been well attended; [and] a spirit of inquiry has been excited." The writer went on to say, "This evening we shall organize a Bible class, and establish a prayer and conference meeting. There are about 30 sound Adventists, and many more convinced, who want a little

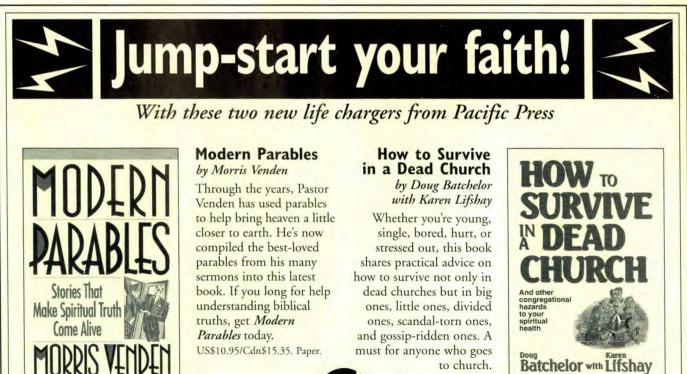
more time to come out and confess it."5

Encouraging reports were also received from still another group meeting in Norfolk, Virginia. And a request that meetings be conducted in Williamsburg, Virginia, had also come in. Still further south, a Brother William Freeman was reported giving Millerite lectures in Charleston, South Carolina.⁶

³ Midnight Cry, June 20, 1844, p. 388.

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Midnight Cry, June 20, 1844, p. 385.

Advent Herald, June 19, 1844, p. 160; Midnight Cry, June 20, 1844, p. 392.

^{*} Ibid., June 13, 1844, p. 384.

⁵ Ibid., p. 383. ^b Ibid.



Speaking the Language of Salvation

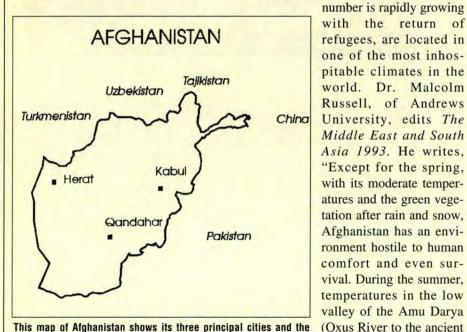
It's not only knowing what to say It's also knowing how to say it.

BY CHARLES R. TAYLOR

A fghanistan is one of the largest of the "unentered countries" in which the Seventh-day Adventist Church has no established work. It vindicates the concept that the medical work of the not on denominational salary but still are building up Christ's kingdom.

Environment

Seventeen million people, whose



This map of Afghanistan shows its three principal cities and the countries that surround it.

Seventh-day Adventist Church is the "right arm" of the message. And it reemphasizes the importance of "tentmakers" like the apostle Paul, who are 110°F. Winter blizzards rage in the high mountains. Even in medium elevations where most people live, as at Kabul, temperatures may drop below 0°F and

Greeks) often hover at



One of Afghanistan's pressing needs is medical textbooks and specialized teachers for the medical school in Herat.

snow lie on the ground for weeks.

"Most of the country may be described as a treeless, windswept land. It is in low valleys where agriculture is intensely pursued and where native poplar trees abound to provide wood for rough houses.

"The most striking geographical feature of the country is the complex series of mountains extending from the eastern tip of Afghanistan some 600 miles southwest before leveling out in the plateau near the border with Iran. The central Hindu Kush mountains have peaks towering more than 20,000 feet above sea level." The rivers that drain the southwestern half of the country end in dry lakes on the border with Iran.

Culture

Afghanistan has two official languages, Pashto (Farsi) and Dari (Persian). The Dari language reflects the influence of Iran (ancient Persia) on the west, and Pashto predominates in the east, where the famous Khyber Pass connects the country with Pakistan. The Tajiki live near Tajikistan on the north. Islamic tradition dominates the religious life of the country, and was a motivating force in the resistance of the mujahideen to Russian occupation of the country during most of the past decade.



The strength of leader Ishmael Khan has provided a peaceful existence for a large portion of the country and is centered in Herat, a city that has grown from 50,000 to more than 1 million in the very recent past.

Travel by land is complicated by the devastation of highways during the war and their present state of disrepair.

The Adventist Presence

Dr. Gordon Hadley worked for the World Health Organization in Kabul a number of years ago. The influence of this one Seventh-day Adventist physician is such that the mention of his name commands respect in educated circles within the country, regardless of political affiliation. People of high positions in the country's health system greet him affectionately as their teacher.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and other personnel from division and world headquarters were official guests of the government in Kabul early in 1992 and were cordially received.

An Afghan family has actually been baptized in a neighboring country, and contributes to the production of a radio



Mujahideen warriors were a key factor in the warfare that tore Afghanistan during the 1980s. ADRA has provided assistance to refugees who have fled to Pakistan.

program in the Pashto language.

A Seventh-day Adventist leader. now retired, has been publicly welcomed by leaders of Islamic countries in international gatherings of the International Congress for the Prevention of Alcoholism (ICPA) with their full knowledge of who he is and what he stands for.



Grain is threshed in Afghanistan much the same as it has been since Bible times.

A Philosophical Approach

Seventh-day Adventist leaders are increasingly aware of the potential relationship between Adventists and pious, devoted followers of God in Islamic countries.

Personal contacts at the very heart of Islam—in Saudi Arabia—indicate that there is common ground on which we can stand with the honest in heart in any

culture on earth. We both believe in one God who created heaven and earth, and in His prophets who have led His people away from idols to worship Him.

In Afghanistan, as in other countries of Asia, there are many who turn away from the monotonous rituals of organized religion to focus on the practical application of the ideals that spring from their understanding of the Creator.

Seventh-day Adventists everywhere would do well to be more conscious of the distinction between the broad principles of God's character—reflected in His law and the Sermon on the Mount—and the particular applications of those principles that are tied to the culture in which they live. Contextualization, wrapping the message of a soon-coming Saviour in the familiar vocabulary and familiar surroundings of the prevailing culture, has shown great promise in several Islamic countries stretching from Mauritania to Irian Jaya (in Indonesia).

Pray for those who seek to find the combination to the lock on the doors of Islam, doors on which frontal approaches have had barely an impact in 120 years of Adventist foreign mission work.

Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen—four of the five largest unentered countries in the world (more than 10 million population each)—are Islamic countries that constitute a challenge to the gospel commission. Somalia, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania, four of the middle-sized unentered countries (2 to 9 million each), fit the same description.

Surely the Lord is standing today, as in Jesus' parable, saying, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt. 9:37, 38, NIV)."

Charles Taylor is in charge of research and statistics for Global Mission, General Conference, Silver Spring, Maryland.

WORLDREPORT

MARYLAND

Office of Women's Ministries Awards Scholarships

Young women in 14 countries benefit from sales of devotional books.

Fifty-three young women in 14 countries received scholarships from the General Conference Office of Women's Ministries. Funding for the scholarships came from the sale of the women's devotional book *Among Friends*.

Most of the young women are enrolled in college- or graduate-level programs around the world.

One scholarship recipient in Finland plans to specialize in women's ministries. A young woman from Myanmar (formerly Burma) will conduct Vacation

Ardis Stenbakken is coordinator for the Year of the Adventist Woman and scholarship coordinator for the General Conference Office of Women's Ministries. Bible Schools in villages where Eric B. Hare worked for many years. In Australia a scholarship recipient will continue her involvement in youth ministry. And a young Liberian woman studying in Ghana wants to teach in an Adventist high school.

Most of the 14 scholarship recipients from Russia are recent converts to the Adventist Church, and are already actively involved in evangelism. One of them is leading out in one of the "home churches" that meet in that country.

Rose Otis, director of women's ministries for the General Conference, said, "We are particularly pleased to give scholarships, because education is one of the greatest needs of women around the world." Margaret Guptill, faculty member of Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College, wrote, "In this country where women's opportunities are so limited, and regard for girls is so low, we welcome this chance to advance these Christian girls."

The scholarships may be applied for through the women's ministries director in each division. Thus far eight divisions and one attached field are participating in the scholarship program.

Operation Buffalo Hug

Russian pastors serve immigrants in the United States

Operation *what*? You've heard of Operation Bear Hug, in which pastors and laypeople in the North Pacific Union went to parts of the former Soviet Union for evangelistic meetings that featured warm bear hugs and good news of God's love. In Operation Buffalo Hug, Russian church members in the United States are helping American Adventists evangelize Russian immigrants living in this country.

In the summer of 1992 Vasily Stoyer and a team of Russian nationals visited several churches in the Washington



Ludmila Krushenitskaya, women's ministries director for the Euro-Asia Division (left), presents full scholarships to Oksana Bondar, Terje Vihur, and Tatyana Pochvalinskaya (left to right), three of the 14 recipients of the women's ministries scholarships in that division. The young women attend the Zaokski Theological Seminary in Russia.

WORLDREPORT

Conference to report about what God had been doing in their country. The meeting in Bellingham was attended by about 50 Russian and Ukrainian Christians who were living in the city. On subsequent Sabbaths a number of them visited the Bellingham church again, leaving Pastor Ken Parker wondering how his church could minister to these people who spoke little or no English.

Eventually Parker contacted Michael Oleinik, a Russian pastor studying theology at Walla Walla College. In September of that year Oleinik spent a week in Bellingham ministering to those interested in learning more about Adventism.

He returned again that December and, with Parker, baptized three of those who originally expressed an interest. Washington Conference administrators quickly saw the potential benefits of Oleinik conducting a full-message series in the city of Kent, which has a high concentration of Russian immigrants.

In July 1993 Oleinik and Pastor Victor Korchuk held meetings in the Seventh-day Adventist church in Kent. The meetings began with more than 100 Russian people in attendance, and 160 people heard Oleinik present the prophetic message about the mark of the beast. Nine new members have now joined the Adventist church there.

Korchuk has returned to Novosibirsk to resume the responsibility of pastoring his 400-member church. Oleinik is continuing his studies at Walla Walla College. And a nucleus of Russianspeaking Adventists continue sharing the Advent message with their fellow Russians living in the area.

Dave Weigley is ministerial director of the Washington Conference.

Prayer Requests

Every Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. the Adventist Review staff meets together to pray for the corporate and personal needs and concerns in the church. If you have a personal request you wish us to pray for, please send it to Prayer Requests, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervant prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

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This index, for January to June 1994, includes the articles, editorials, and columns in the list of abbreviations below. Children's Corner stories and poems are not included. The index has four sections: Authors, Titles, Subjects, and News. Indexing is prepared by the SDA Periodical Index, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-1400.

List of Abbreviations

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THE DOUG BATCHELOR STORY

As the teenage son of a millionaire father and a show business mother, Doug

had everything money could buy-everything but happiness. Before his

search ended, a cave in the hills above Palm Springs became his home. The

happiness he wanted eluded him until the day he began reading the dust-

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ADVENTIST REVIEW, JUNE 30, 1994

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The Best Witness

The success of the gospel message does not depend upon learned speeches, eloquent testimonies, or deep arguments. It depends upon the simplicity of the message and its adaptation to the souls that are hungering for the bread of life. "What shall I do to be saved?"—this is the want of the soul.

Thousands can be reached in the most simple and humble way. The most intellectual, those who are looked upon as the world's most gifted men and women, are often refreshed by the simple words of one who loves God, and who can speak of that love as naturally as the [worldlings speak] of the things that interest [them] most deeply.

What Unbolts the Doors

Often the words well prepared and studied have but little influence. But the true, honest expression of a son or daughter of God, spoken in natural simplicity, has power to unbolt the door to hearts that have long been closed against Christ and His love.

Let [workers] for Christ remember that [they are] not to labor in [their] own strength. Let [them] lay hold of the throne of God with faith in His power to save. Let [them] wrestle with God in prayer, and then work with all the facilities God has given [them]. The Holy Spirit is provided as [their] efficiency. Ministering angels will be by [their] side to impress hearts.

If the leaders and teachers at Jerusalem had received the truth Christ brought, what a missionary center their city would have been! Backslidden Israel would have been converted. A vast army would have been gathered for the Lord. And how rapidly they could have carried the gospel to all parts of the world.

So now, if men [and women] of influence and large capacity for usefulness could be won for Christ, then through them what a work could be accomplished in lifting up the fallen, gathering in the outcasts, and spreading far and wide the tidings of salvation. Rapidly the invitation might be given, and the guests be gathered for the Lord's table.

But we are not to think only of great and



Thousands can be

reached in the

most simple and

humble way.

gifted [persons], to the neglect of the poorer classes. Christ instructs His messengers to go also to those in the byways and hedges, to the poor and lowly of the earth.

In the courts and lanes of the great cities, in the lonely byways of the country, are families and individuals—perhaps strangers in a strange land—who are without church relations, and who, in their loneliness, come to feel that God has forgotten them. They do not understand what they must do to be saved.

Many are sunken in sin. Many are in distress. They are pressed with suffering, want, unbelief, despondency. Disease of every type afflicts them, both in body and in soul. They long to find a solace for their troubles, and Satan tempts them to seek it in lusts and pleasures that lead to ruin and death....

In these suffering ones we are to see those whom Christ came to save. His invitation to them is "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.... Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live" (Isa. 55:1-3)....

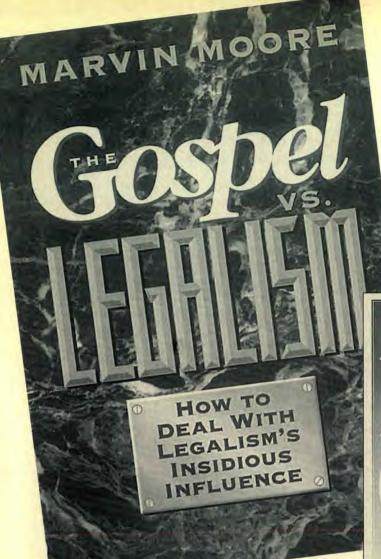
Christ's servants are to follow His example. As He went from place to place, He comforted the suffering and healed the sick. Then He placed before them the great truths in regard to His kingdom. This is the work of His followers. As you relieve the sufferings of the body, you will find ways for ministering to the wants of the soul. You can point to the uplifted Saviour, and tell of the love of the Great Physician, who alone has power to restore.

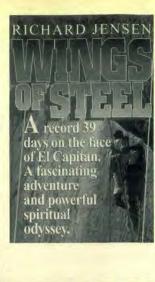
This material originally appeared in *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 231-234.

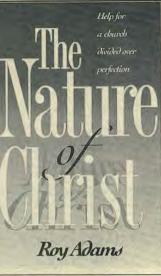


Ellen G. White was a cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which recognizes her as possessing the prophetic gift.

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

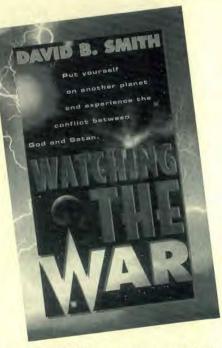






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