

ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

SEPTEMBER 8, 1994

The Bridegroom's Coming

Does anybody care?



Perils of Alcohol

Thanks for Roy Adams' editorial on the perils of alcohol ("Even More Deadly," July 28). Before becoming an Adventist, I was an alcoholic from age 13 to 26. My father, a connoisseur of fine French and Italian wines, allowed me a portion of these epicurean libations at mealtime. I was thereby ushered with elegance into a drunkard's career.

The Lord rescued me from this pseudoreefined degradation through the power of His gospel. He also mercifully brought me into association with this church, which took an uncompromising clear stand on the evils of alcohol, psychoactive drugs, and tobacco. Had the witness of the church been muffled or ambivalent on this point, I have no doubt that the weakness of my will would have lured me back into drinking during the early days of my spiritual struggles. But I was sustained by the knowledge that I had become part of a church that was committed to a better way and believed in the power of God's grace to enable all believers to gain permanent victory over every sin, including alcoholism.

Let the words of Scripture serve as a warning to all who waver on this subject: Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1; Galatians 6:7, 8; 1 Peter 5:8. And for those who long to be free from the disease and sin of alcoholism, take it from a former liquor addict—God's grace is sufficient to give you the victory.

Brian Jones

Frametown, West Virginia

Competition

I'm appalled at Calvin Rock's response to the question about competition ("Which Fight Is the Good Fight?" June 30). The writer of the question seemed to indicate a desire to be Christlike as a basis for asking the question, but the answer gives only an opinion rather than Jesus' answer: "Take my yoke upon you, . . . for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29).

It was competition, rivalry, and a

desire for supremacy that caused Satan's downfall in heaven. "He [Satan] allowed a desire for supremacy to take possession of him, and he was expelled from heaven" (*This Day With God*, p. 309).

Not one of the references in the *Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White* under rivalry, competition, and supremacy upholds the use of competition in our

150-Year Anniversary Issue

Coming soon—a 64-page special issue celebrating the marvelous acts of God in our past.

This banner production, undated but corresponding to our October 6 issue, will also highlight the mission still before us, with other challenges and possibilities as we face tomorrow.

Articles by Roy Adams, James Coffin, Walter Douglas, Richard Duerksen, Jon Dybdahl, Robert Folkenberg, William Johnsson, Alfred McClure, Beatrice Neall, James Nix, Brian Strayer, G. Ralph Thompson, Kit Watts, and Myron Widmer.

churches, schools, and institutions. I have always understood that the Word of God in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy has more authority than anyone's opinion.

Wilbur Zalabak
Arpin, Wisconsin

Praying Staff

I was pleasantly astonished to see the brief segment in the NBC film about heart transplant recipient Paul Holc (see "The Loma Linda Report," July 7), showing one of the medical staff asking the mother-to-be if she would be comfortable with his praying with her before Baby Paul was delivered. She agreed. Isn't that beautiful!

We know that many Adventist doctors and nurses pray with their patients, but it seems special that such a scene

was included in the movie.

Genevieve Gyes
Vancouver, Washington

Throwing Darts

A letter in the July 7 issue voiced an opinion that deserves response. The writer expressed the view that the "historical-critical hermeneutic destroys the foundations of Adventism both at the scriptural and Spirit of Prophecy levels."

I doubt that the majority of Adventists worldwide, or even nationwide, know what the term *historical-critical* refers to, and my frustration increases every time I detect an attack on what must at least be considered a viable and legitimate method of studying the Word of God. For example, I never study a text of Scripture without considering the historical context surrounding that passage, and I always attempt to study each verse afresh, not bringing any bias to the text. This approach is both reasonable and consistent with the spirit that our Adventist pioneers had as they searched the Scriptures.

To suggest that the consideration of context and laying aside of presupposition "destroys the foundations" of our faith is to raise red flags unnecessarily. Isn't it apparent that what really threatens to fragment the Seventh-day Adventist Church are the many well-meaning folk who feel the need to throw darts in the direction of other well-meaning folk who are part of the same family?

Gary McCary, Pastor
San Diego, California

The 1986 Annual Council spelled out the dangers of the historical-critical method. In its extreme form this approach negates any supernatural element in Scripture. However, the term can be used in various senses, as Elder McCary points out.—Editors.

Letters should not exceed 250 words and should carry the writer's name, address, and telephone number. All will be edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's meaning will not be changed. Views expressed in the letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or denomination.

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Cover photo by Joel D. Springer

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Children of the Light

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5, RSV).

The murder of Colombian soccer player Andres Escobar shook up more than the sporting world. It starkly outlined the crazy, distorted values of our age and should sound a wake-up call for Christians.

Escobar, 27, was shot 12 times by a group of men who confronted him at 3:30 a.m., outside a nightclub in Medellin, Colombia. They apparently blamed him for the team's early ouster from the World Cup competition. Police reported that the men at one point yelled about Escobar's "own goal"—a reference to the match against the United States, when his deflection of a crossing pass by an American player inadvertently sent the ball into Colombia's goal.

Colombian authorities were said to be investigating a link to members of powerful drug cartels who were angry at having lost millions of dollars in bets placed on the team's expected success.

Whatever has happened to values? How far out of kilter must they have moved when winning a soccer game is more important than human life!

We who confess the name of Jesus as Saviour and Lord must heed what is happening around us. We must remember who we are—children of the light.

At War

It's easy to forget that we are in a war. It's easy to conform gradually to the mold of this age.

But we are children of the light. Jesus, the Light of the world, has shone into our hearts, and we have said "Yes!" to Him. We belong to Him; we are His. We are on His side in the strug-

gle of good against evil, of love against hatred, of compassion against cruelty, of truth against falsehood, of integrity against deception, of action against apathy.

Long ago, the Bible tells us, the war began in heaven. From the beginning there were two sides. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels" (Rev. 12:7). In this war no one can remain neutral, be a spectator.

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms," wrote the apostle Paul (Eph. 6:12, NIV). For him as for other biblical writers, the controversy between Christ and Satan was terribly real.

And here we are, nearly 2,000 years later. Seventh-day Adventists have particular insights into the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Apart from the scriptural data, Ellen White wrote a book under this very name.

We believe we are in the last days, just before Jesus will return. Revelation 12-14, we believe, focuses on this period. It portrays a time when good and evil are intensified, when the contrast between the two becomes so magnified that all people must confront the choice before them.

Indeed, we see in our times parallels with the days when Jesus came to earth the first time. Then the forces of evil concentrated their efforts to thwart His mission of salvation. Men and women enslaved by these powers "were being corrupted, murdered, and lost" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 36). And in our day the powers of ancient paganism have made a comeback. In our so-called enlightened society, astrology,

witchcraft, satanism, and even human sacrifices are resurgent.

As followers of Jesus, children of the light, we cannot, we must not, take our values from the world around us. We must not be seduced by the entertainment industry: Hollywood isn't in business to build up the kingdom of God. Only by a daily personal relationship with Jesus can we keep on track. Only by using the spiritual weapons Paul describes can we fight the good fight—the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:13-17).

Jesus came to set people free. He cast out the demons; He healed men and women in body, mind, and spirit. "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed," He said (John 8:36, NIV).

Satan and His evil powers concentrated their efforts on the climax of Jesus' life. They drove Him to execution reserved for the vilest offenders—on a cross. They sought to discourage Him, to weaken His resolve by taunts and mockery.

But Jesus won the decisive battle. After He "disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (Col. 2:15, NIV).

And that victory assures the final outcome of the great controversy. It guarantees that Jesus will come again, not to deal with sin, but to receive His waiting followers because He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The darkness will never overcome it.

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



A High Five for Pathfinder Leaders

Today* I am surrounded by more than 10,000 happy, singing, playing, marching, squealing, clapping, sun-drenched Pathfinders in Colorado.

And it is spectacular! Who said Christians can't have fun? Or that Adventism is just a can't-do-this-or-can't-do-that religion? Certainly none of that can't-do spirit is evident here. In fact, this morning's front-page headline in the *Denver Post* coined an unofficial but apropos theme for the third international Pathfinder Camporee: "Camporee credo: Thou shalt enjoy."

And indeed these Pathfinders are enjoying these five days—donning velcro suits and jumping onto a velcro-covered wall, touring the National Earthquake Center, viewing dinosaur remains, kayaking, mountain biking, trading Pathfinder Club pins, watching dragsters race, and participating in the evening spiritual feasts.

This is one of those once-every-five-years extravaganzas that thousands of youth around the world dream about—and often work and save toward for years.

Field of Dreams

But today all those tiring car washes and other fund-raising efforts are now history, and they're living their dreams and enjoying the fruits of their labors. The air is alive with vibrancy and enthusiasm—just what we would expect with so many 10- to 15-year-old Adventists crowded onto 150 acres surrounding a drag racing strip in the foothills above Denver!

But nothing here has happened by sheer chance. Years of diligent planning by leaders on all levels is paying off—and this brings me to the heart of this editorial.

While I commend all the youth for

helping to raise the hundreds of dollars to attend, I heartily applaud all the behind-the-scenes adults who make the Pathfinder organization and all its events a reality for our young people. They are truly the heroic ones.

The reasons hardly need stating. But let me name a few:

■ From experience as a Pathfinder years ago (not too many, though!) I can say that the abundant energy of

*Who else would travel
with a bunch of excited,
talkative youth in a van
for three days straight?*

Pathfinders isn't always channeled into the most angelic expressions and ways. Pathfinder leaders often have to embody the patience of Job and the courage of Esther.

■ Who else in local churches is willing to give up so much time and energy to "adopt" youth and plan for their fun and spiritual needs? Leaders spend days and nights making lists, raising and collecting money, buying craft supplies, rounding up leaders, making sure the doors are unlocked, cleaning up afterward, communicating with parents, and lining up vans, tents, stoves, and backpacks.

■ Most of the work of Pathfinder leaders is out of sight of our congregations. Many parents drop their children off for meetings and camping trips, and don't get involved in helping the corpo-

rate group. Like other behind-the-scenes leaders in local churches, Pathfinder leaders aren't publicly thanked enough for the commendable work they do in training and helping our young people grow in Christ—the ultimate purpose of Pathfinding.

■ Who else is willing to sit for up to six days (round trip) crowded into buses, cars, and vans with a bunch of excited (and soon tired) youth to attend a camporee? And that's not even mentioning the flat tires, rainstorms, emergency bathroom stops, and meal preparation on the trip.

One group—the Genesis Pathfinder Club from Quebec, Canada—said in yesterday's camporee newspaper that three days without a shower wasn't much fun, but that the trip got better the closer they got. I bet it did, for Pathfinders and leaders!

■ And who else is willing to stay in camp and miss some of the fun events because they are preparing meals—like those feeding the 67 campers with the Evergreen Pathfinders from Pioneer Memorial church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Feeding 67 is more like setting up a restaurant than camping!

All of this is to say that Pathfinder leaders around the world—especially those whom I see giving up their vacation time to be here working at this camporee—deserve our commendation and our help to lighten their loads.

In the lingo of our younger generation, they merit a high five for all they do for our young people in the name of Jesus Christ.

*Aug. 3, 1994.

MYRON WIDMER

WORLD CHURCH

London Series Brings 105

Baptisms. In West London, the baptism of 105 persons took place in a large portable swimming pool after evangelistic meetings July 3-30.

Most new members in England come primarily from a West Indian heritage, but this time many of those baptized had a British ancestry.

"West London is a very difficult area for evangelism," said Cecil Perry, British Union president. "This is the highest amount that has ever been baptized there."

Five local pastors and 30 church members assisted evangelist Leslie McMillan under a five-pole tent pitched at Shepherds Bush, Hammersmith. McMillan is the communication director and a ministerial associate for the Inter-American Division.

Adventism Comes to Elk.

Elk, a town in northeastern Poland that received its first Catholic bishop three years ago, now has its first Seventh-day Adventist congregation.

Three individuals, including a young man who gave up studies for the priesthood, were baptized in an evangelistic reaping series conducted by Martin Anthony, personal ministries director for the Trans-European Division, and Piotr Herod, East Polish Conference president. Nine others indicated their desire to prepare for baptism, says Anthony.

European Pathfinders Meet

A wooden cross, sky divers, and fund-raising for Albania highlighted a weeklong camporee that attracted nearly 1,500 Pathfinders from more than a dozen countries in the Trans-European Division.

Meeting in Kopparbo, Sweden, July 26-August 3, camporee leaders chose the theme "Christ Unites" because of the increasing antisocial tendencies and movements permeating youth groups in Europe, according to Ole Kendel, Trans-European Division youth leader and camporee leader.

On opening night, four sky divers landed with canisters billowing blue and yellow smoke—Sweden's national colors. A fifth parachutist followed with the blue-and-white Pathfinder flag.

On Market Day, Pathfinders tried to outdo one another in fund-raising for a church building project in Albania. Pathfinders solicited more than US\$9,000.

Throughout the camporee, Pathfinders could come to a large cross where those wishing to dedicate their lives to Christ could place notes. One of the first notes read, "A drug addict for eight years; a Seventh-day Adventist for three years now." Nearly 160 Pathfinders dedicated their lives to Christ and placed notes on the cross.

World Congress Discusses Substance Abuse Trends.

Addiction prevention in a rapidly changing world highlighted the agenda for the ninth world congress of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, August 14-18 in Hamburg, Germany. ICPA is a nonprofit drug prevention agency supported by the Adventist Church.

More than 500 participants focused on youth and family issues, as well as how religious communities can combat drug and alcohol use. Many Adventists were key participants in the congress.

Four training sessions were presented by the World Health Organization on how to use the Abuse Trends Linkage Alerting System.

The objective of ATLAS is to strengthen each nation's ability to assess and describe patterns of substance abuse and its health consequences.

IAD Celebrates Lay Evangelism.

More than 6,000 Adventists participated in the first of four Festivals of the Laity for Central America and the Caribbean. Sponsored by the Inter-American Division, the first program convened in Martinique August 3-6.

Held once every five years, the festivals celebrate lay members' contributions to evangelism in the Inter-American Division, says Sergio Moctezuma, IAD church ministries director.

Since the last festival in 1989, the division's membership has grown by 24 percent. In 1993 alone 110,265

persons joined the church, bringing the division membership to 1,457,090. Three other festivals are being held: in Veracruz, Mexico; Bucaramanga, Colombia; and Montego Bay, Jamaica.

NORTH AMERICA

Asian-South Pacific Flood.

More than 1,200 youth flooded La Sierra University in Riverside, California, August 18-21 for the Asian-South Pacific Youth Congress.

Leaders designed the congress to help youth and young adults realize their importance to Christ's cause. "The congress was more than just great sessions and programs," says Sue Lee, 1994-1995 Student Association president of La Sierra University. "I really gained insight about Christian leadership."

Asian-Pacific youth and young adults from California churches planned and implemented the entire congress, says George Atiga, the congress sponsor and director of Pacific Union Asian-South Pacific Ministries.

Adventist Theologian Heppenstall Dies.

Dr. Edward Heppenstall, 93, an author and longtime professor at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, died August 22 in



Carmel, California.

Born in England in 1901, Heppenstall started his min-

istry in 1928 as a teacher in the British Union. He later worked as a teacher and youth leader for the Michigan Conference.

In 1940 Heppenstall returned to teaching. During the next 30 years he moved from La Sierra College (now La Sierra University), to the seminary, and later to Loma Linda University.

"During his long teaching career Dr. Heppenstall influenced a generation of Adventists," says *Adventist Review* editor William G. Johnsson, who took seminary classes from Heppenstall. "He was probably one of the greatest thinkers the Adventist Church has produced."

Members Purchase First West Coast Portuguese Church.

Portuguese and Brazilian Adventists in Chino, California, have become the first Portuguese-speaking members to purchase a church building on the West Coast of the United States.

When Edilson Elsen, pastor of the 120-member Portuguese church in Norco, California, started negotiating the purchase, the price was \$405,000 for the church and its 1.17 acres. One acre of land alone in this part of urban southern California sells for more than \$300,000, says Elsen.

But on August 14 he gave the Pentecostal Holiness Church a check for only \$200,000 for full payment of the building and land—their previous headquarters in southeastern California. After years of fund-raising,

Single Moms, Kids Go to Camp

Acknowledging that single-parent families are often an overlooked group in the Adventist Church, the Kansas-Nebraska Conference women's advisory board decided single moms and their kids needed an opportunity to play together (see photo).

They sponsored the conference's first Single Moms and Kids Getaway at the Broken Arrow Ranch, Olsburg, Kansas, July 21-24.



During part of the retreat the 21 single mothers attended support group sessions while their 36 children enjoyed horseback riding, waterskiing, archery, minibike riding, and crafts. The rest of the time mothers joined their children in action.

Realizing the financial struggles of most single-parent households, the conference subsidized a major portion of the meals and lodging. Crystal Ferguson, 12, from Kansas City, Kansas, liked the idea. "You actually get to do something fun with [your mom]."

members raised the final \$50,000 within 30 days. An 83-year-old man who recently accepted Christ spurred the final drive with a \$1,000 gift.

CRS Feels Budget Cut.

Acting on recent recommendations from its board, Christian Record Services cut operating expenses by \$50,000 a month.

The cut abolished the braille *Review* magazine and scaled back the braille *Christian Record*. CRS officials also stopped a new fund-raising attempt and eliminated two production positions. Most employees losing their positions moved into existing vacancies.

CRS donations have increased in recent years, but they have not kept pace with rising costs, says Clarence Hodges, president. The organization has been

struggling to meet its more than \$5 million yearly budget.

To New Position. The Lake Union Conference executive committee recently elected Don C. Schneider as its new union president. Formerly president of the Northern California Conference, Schneider replaces Robert H. Carter, who is retiring.

ADRA Produces TV Spot With Tipper Gore. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency film crew shot and has produced a public service announcement with Tipper

Gore, wife of United States Vice President Al Gore, on August 16. The spots were filmed on location at the vice president's home.

The announcement is an appeal for donations to the Rwanda relief effort, on behalf of all humanitarian agencies helping refugees in the war-torn country and in Zaire, says Tamara Boehmke, ADRA news and information director.

ASI Gives \$1.4 Million.

Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries members contributed \$1.4 million for 18 mission projects around the world at the final banquet of their convention in Dallas, Texas, August 10-13. The annual conference's theme was "Choosing to Serve." The *Adventist Review* will report more on the convention in an upcoming issue.

FOR YOUR INTEREST

Date Change. The new date for the Net '95 satellite planning session is September 19 at noon ET. The teleconference will air on galaxy 7, on channel 18.

The session is for pastors and church members who are participating in the North American Division's first national satellite evangelistic series.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- Sept. 10 Missions Extension Offering
- Sept. 10 *Adventist Review* Emphasis begins
- Sept. 16 Pacific Union Celebration of Recovery retreat begins at Glendale Adventist Hospital in Glendale, California, (818) 546-8400
- Sept. 17 Family Togetherness Week begins

Mrs. White & the Water Skis

BY KATHI ANN WILD

It's the

power source

that matters.

Hit it!" I shouted as I bobbed in the lapping water of the Colorado River, my legs in tuck position.

Arms trembling, I ran a mental check of all instructions: "Keep your ski tips up, arms straight, lean back . . ."

Suddenly I felt the jerk of the ski

rope. Struggling to stand, I lost my balance. My face plowed the choppy water of the boat's wake.

Though I eventually bobbed upright, my legs and arms floundered ungracefully. My skin stung. Frigid river water dripped from my nose.

How can anyone enjoy this?

Dave, the boat driver, shook his head as he circled and tossed the tow rope my way. *Ski tips up . . . arms straight . . . lean back . . . wipe out.*

Each time it was the same. Each time I wiped out.

Skiing wasn't fun and exhilarating, as I had heard. It was hard—and dreadful.

The Struggle

Returning home, I felt tired, sore, and uncoordinated. As I reflected on the sad episode, I thought that waterskiing was as frustrating as my struggle to have a meaningful devotional life.

Months passed. When my friend Pam invited me to ski at Bass Lake, I hesitated.

Is my body ready for another round of jerking, plunging, and gasping? Do I really want to embarrass and disappoint myself?

I kept thinking of the thrill I saw on the faces of skiers as they jumped the wake and “rooster-tailed” the spray behind their skis. I decided to give it another go.

Again I found myself bobbing in a chilly lake, fluorescent ski belt around my waist, nervously counting the seconds to “lift-out.”

But something was different this time. An experienced skier treaded water by my side and calmly reassured me. Craving success, I hung on her every word.

“Relax,” she directed. Her calm voice quieted my nerves. I smiled.

“Let the boat pull you up,” she continued.

I nodded. She sounded so confident.

Maybe waterskiing is possible for me after all.

The boat engine roared as the ski rope drew me up out of the water. My heart raced as I straightened my shivering body to an awkward standing position. My feet vibrated as the skis skimmed

the choppy wake. From a new perspective I drank in the breathtaking beauty of the Sierras.

Ya-hoo, I'm skiing! The wind whipped my face as I gulped the air greedily. This isn't dreadful; it's exhilarating!

Try, Try Again

How similar my waterskiing experience was to my recent breakthrough in seeking a meaningful devotional relationship with God.

I winced as I remembered trying to read the book *Messages to Young People*, a compilation of Ellen G. White's writings, given to me with cheerful assurance that it would be an invaluable guide.

*My face plowed the
choppy water of the
boat's wake. How could
anyone enjoy this?*

Wow, can I handle this lifestyle?

I tried hard to straighten out my life, but each time I fell short of the ideal. I found myself sinking, wallowing in guilt and discouragement.

Deciding to approach devotions from a different angle, I began reading the Bible through, starting at Genesis. But along about Leviticus I became very bored. As my eyes stared at the pages of Mosaic instruction, my mind wandered.

How can anyone enjoy this? I wondered. How does this apply to my life and bring me happiness as a Christian? Intellectually I believed in the Bible and the church's teachings, but I felt empty. My frustration mounted.

Maybe a daily morning watch book is the answer.

I read the daily devotional book I purchased, but felt I was only skimming the surface of spiritual matters. I just wasn't satisfied. Each devotional try seemed to

end in “wipeout.” It was tempting just to give up.

I longed for a real relationship with God, but how?

“Help me, Lord,” I prayed. “I'm sinking!”

It was then that I began to hear, through caring teachers and pastors, that Jesus is the *only* way, the truth, and the life. I had heard those words before, but now they clicked.

Yes—Jesus is the one I need to know. I need Jesus—not my salvation-by-self methods.

Church friends “treaded water” with me. Together we shared our challenges and questions. *Jesus* became the focus of our search. We prayed to know Jesus for ourselves.

Suddenly my devotional experience took off! My eyes opened to Jesus' enormous love for me. I responded to that love by craving an even better friendship.

I began gliding through study materials in a new way. The Bible was no longer a library of Jewish history and a chronicle of Paul's first-century journeys. It became a lifeline of information from the only One who could lift me, remake my character, and sweep me into eternity. I enjoyed the time I spent immersed in the pages filled with assurance of Jesus' love and plans for my happiness.

I reopened *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages*, and other devotional books written by Ellen White. These magnified my picture of Jesus. I sensed Jesus' love buoying me up as I struggled with the daily grind of life. Faulty or not, I was growing. I discovered the Christian life was exciting, not dreadful.

How much has changed for me—on skis and in life—since I learned to rely on the Power Source? Now I can hardly wait to take a few laps around the river of life.

“Hit it!”



Kathi Ann Wild writes from Redlands, California.



Gary and Rae Patterson as they were in June 1960 when they left the seminary and started their ministry.

How God Prepares Us for Mission

My personal story

BY RAE PATTERSON

Rae Patterson and her husband, Gary, were recently appointed to head up the (new) Office of Mission Awareness at the General Conference. The following is condensed and adapted from a talk given at a General Conference worship during National Women's History Month last spring.

Part of the excitement of this new position is that I intend to find out for myself more about women (and men) in mission, with the hope that the enthusiasm of discovery will be sensed and shared by churches everywhere. In reality there are people involved in mission all around us. One does not have to cross the ocean.

Starting Way Back

How did I prepare for this job?

It goes clear back to the time I packed up my bags, left my home in Cashmere, Washington, and headed for Walla Walla College to become an English major. My daddy, not quite sure what I

would do with an English major since I could already speak and write in that language quite well, gave me this advice: "Honey, you go down there and take some pianna and vocal, and find yourself a real good man." Since none of you have ever heard me sing and only rarely do I play the piano, you can quickly realize that I excelled far more in finding a real good man. But my original interest in writing and journalism also continued to grow.

Incidentally, when I brought Gary home, my mother was immediately impressed. He had this wonderful head of black, curly hair, and that was enough.* You see, my mother had her own way of judging men. She voted for Franklin D. Roosevelt instead of Thomas E. Dewey because Dewey had a mustache and she knew you could never trust a man with a mustache. My dad, however, was more skeptical. He wanted to see Gary work. So he invited him to come and work a while on a house he was building. After only a few

days Dad was convinced—amazed, in fact—that Gary could paint with both hands! (Gary is ambidextrous.) "He's a good man," my dad told my mother. "If the preachin' don't pan out, he can always paint for a livin'."

Gary and I were married and working in the ministry when we received a call to River Plate College in Argentina—to teach theology courses, including Greek and Hebrew in Spanish to Germans!

We were thrilled. We started trying to remember all the Spanish we had learned in academy, and I got so I could read quite a little in the Spanish Bible, provided I already knew the story. But that very week our little boy, Geoff, not yet even a year old, began to experience severe tachycardia attacks, and the doctors would not give us medical clearance to take him out of the country. Our mission plans were over!

Our years of ministry continued to take us back and forth across North America. Then in 1990 Gary went with Adventist Development and Relief Agency personnel to visit some of their outposts. They opened and dedicated water wells, and visited projects all across the Far East, where people were being taught skills to help better their lives. I began working very closely with disaster response activities here in North America.

It doesn't take a formal mission call with a salary—or even large grants of money—to respond to need. It only takes someone dedicated to service.

Wherever There Is Need

Times have changed since our first mission calls. Our son is married now. He and his wife are at the seminary in Michigan, preparing for their own ministry. And with our new appointment, Gary and I have started thinking about the topic a great deal.

Rae finds 3 little girls to hug at an ADRA funded school in Ibaque, Colombia.





Gary and Rae pose in the colors of Bulgaria; a gift from the Eastern Orthodox priest at Rila Monastery.

One of the points that Gary brought out in one of his recent sermons was that when disasters or troubles strike, (things like the Gulf war, Hurricane Andrew, earthquakes in India or California, or famine in Somalia) most of us see them as signs of the end, as God trying to tell us something. Wake-up calls. And we redouble our efforts to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

But how often in these situations are we reminded to turn to the passage in Isaiah 58:2-9? Notice the dynamics of this conversation between the people and the Lord.

The Lord: "For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them."

The people: "Why have we fasted . . . and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?"

The Lord: "You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. Is this the kind of fast I have chosen . . . ? is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?"

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

"Then your light will break forth like the dawn, . . . then your righteousness will go before you and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer" (NIV).

I believe that wars, disasters, and pestilences can serve as wake-up calls from God—so that Christians might link arms together to turn back the darkness of evil in every place we find it. To establish the kingdom of God in the very places the effects of sin have been manifested the greatest.

And why do I believe all this so strongly?

Listen to God's words to His waiting church gathered before Him at the last day: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you

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gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. . . . Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:34-40, NIV).

With all of these things going through our minds, we recognized, when we took up our new responsibility for mission, that the Holy Spirit had already been preparing us. We have accepted the challenge, and our motto is to help "turn back the forces of evil and establish the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven." In this we'll be joining a long line of missionaries who have led the way for all of us.

Caravan to Canaan

Maybe we can take a lesson from the geese. You hear them when they go

overhead, and you see the large V-shaped caravan as they migrate south in the fall and return north in the spring. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

Like geese, people can get where they are going much more quickly and easily if they share a common direction and sense of community. For in doing so, they'd be traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back in the line and another goose flies the point. It makes sense to take turns doing demanding jobs—with both geese and people.

I've even heard that geese will honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed and courage. What are you saying when you honk from behind?

We are all in a caravan heading for the Promised Land. Every position in the line is important for the realization of our goal. Sometimes it's your turn to lead. Sometimes it's your turn to drop back and help the fallen, or maybe even sometimes you are the one in need. But through it all the caravan continues, until we arrive safe and sound to rejoice around that heavenly sea of glass. ☸

* The remark brought a chuckle to the entire audience, as Mrs. Patterson intended, since Gary's hair, such as remains, is no longer thick, black, or curly! Editors.



Rae tries fresh Coconut milk from a tree by the "Church of the Lake" by Managua, Nicaragua.

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The Midnight Cry

Prophecy guided

the movement in 1844,

and it continues to give us something

to look forward to.

BY C. MERVYN MAXWELL

They should've known better. Isn't that what most of us think when we reflect on those early Adventists and the events that led up to the disappointment of October 1844? No one knows the day or hour of the Lord's return. Jesus said so Himself.

Then what is it that intrigues us about 1844?

Perhaps it's the feeling that for one of the few times in the history of Christianity there was a group of people who believed they were actually going to see Jesus in merely a matter of weeks . . . days . . . hours.

Ellen G. White predicted once that the Seventh-day Adventist movement would close "with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry." It sounds like an exhilarating prospect, but what did she mean by the Midnight Cry?

The term comes from the parable of the wedding attendants in Matthew 25. When the bridegroom did not arrive at the bride's home as early as expected, all the attendants fell asleep. "And at *midnight* there was a *cry* made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (quoting the King James Version, used by almost all English-speaking Christians in the 1840s).

During the years leading up to 1844, our Millerite Adventist forebears used the term *Midnight Cry* to summarize their entire message. But in the summer of 1844 they began to use it in a very specialized sense.² In turn, they found it to be a key to help explain the Great Disappointment.

In the parable, Millerite Adventists correctly recognized the bridegroom as Jesus Christ. The bride, who isn't actually mentioned, was assumed by almost

all Christians to represent the church. And because Jesus told the parable in connection with His second coming (see Matt. 24 and 25), Millerite Adventists, like most other Christians, saw in the coming of the bridegroom the second coming of Christ to marry His church on the earth.

Because they believed that the Second Coming would occur in 1844, the Millerite Adventists also believed that they were being called by God to proclaim, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh"! They called one of their major periodicals, published in New York, *The Midnight Cry*. In Cincinnati they published *The Western Midnight Cry*.

As early as 1818 William Miller had believed that the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 pointed to the cleansing of the sanctuary in or near the year 1843 (later corrected to 1844). His followers discovered that the date for the annual symbolic cleansing of the earthly sanctuary (see Dan. 8:14) was assigned by God to the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16).

This *Midnight Cry*—the "true *Midnight Cry*," or "true cry" for short³—received special impetus at a large camp meeting held in Exeter, New Hampshire, beginning August 12, 1844. "There was light given and received there, sure enough," recalled Joseph Bates.⁴

People traveled to this Exeter camp meeting from all over New England and also from several other states and Canada. Samuel Snow called their attention to the fact that "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7) on the fourteenth day of the first month of the ceremonial year at 3:00 p.m. That is, Jesus died as our "passover" "on the same day, and at the same hour" as when the Passover lamb died. Snow observed that in this type-antitype fulfillment of the Passover lamb, "time was most strictly regarded."⁵

After the cross Jesus fulfilled the "firstfruits" ceremony by coming back from the dead as the "firstfruits" of those who have fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:23). He did so on the very Sunday when the first barley fruits were waved before the Lord. And as for Pentecost, "the anniver-

sary of the Lord's descent on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law," the Holy Spirit fell on the apostles on that very day, to enable them to carry out the great gospel commission. "Thus we see," Snow continued, in a "solemn and dignified" manner,⁶ "that those types that pointed to events connected with our Lord's first coming were fulfilled exactly at the time of their observance." Therefore, he reasoned, "those which remain unfulfilled will be fulfilled with an equally strict regard to time."

"Deepest solemnity pervaded

the entire encampment."

Snow referred especially to the Day of Atonement (Lev. 9:7, 22-24; 16; 23:26-32), which God had ordained to be celebrated on the tenth day of the seventh month. On this designated day the high priest went into the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat, after which "on the same day he came out and blessed the waiting congregation of Israel."

In 1844, according to the extremely careful reckoning of the caraites Jews, the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement, was to fall on Tuesday, October 22.

Snow thus led his large congregation to this triumphant conclusion: "Our blessed Lord will therefore come, to the astonishment of all them that dwell upon the earth, and to the salvation of those who truly look for Him, on the tenth day of the seventh month . . . [in] the present year, 1844."

James White long remembered that as Snow completed his Bible study, "the deepest solemnity pervaded the entire encampment."⁷ A conviction gripped almost everyone, that "in all probability the speaker was correct, and that in a few short weeks human probation would close forever."⁸

Still, these Millerite Adventists had to be certain of this "new light." They unanimously asked Snow to repeat his message the next day so they could evaluate it by the Bible more precisely.

And he obliged them, speaking "with still greater clearness and force."⁹

As the camp meeting closed, Bates recalled some time later, "the granite hills of New Hampshire rang with the mighty cry, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him!* As the stages and railroad cars rolled away through the different states, cities, and villages of New England, the rumbling of the cry was still distinctly heard. Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Christ is coming on the tenth day of the seventh month! Time is short, get ready! Get ready!"¹⁰

The response was deeply spiritual, earnest, and joyous, with victory, reconciliation, and hope. "It produced everywhere the most deep searching of heart and humiliation of soul before the God of high heaven," reported the *Midnight Cry* for October 31, shortly after the Great Disappointment. "It caused a weaning of affections from the things of this world—a healing of controversies and animosities—a confession of wrongs—a breaking down before God, and penitent, brokenhearted supplications to Him for pardon and acceptance. It caused self-abasement and prostration of soul, such as we never before witnessed."¹¹

The *Midnight Cry* editors went on to say, "It seemed not to be the work of men. We could but exclaim, 'What were we, that we should resist God!'"

When Jesus did not return as expected, many disappointed Adventists believed He would nonetheless come very soon in view of the midnight cry message. "We think the parable of the ten virgins clearly tells us where we are," said one of their papers, the *Voice of Truth*, on November 7. "The proclamation of the tenth day of the seventh month, we believe, was the midnight cry, when all, not a part, of the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. This work continued until the tenth day passed."¹²

With similar conviction, Enoch Jacobs changed the name of the *Western Midnight Cry* to *The Day-Star*, expressing his conviction that Jesus, the Day Star, would very soon shine forth now that the *Midnight Cry* was in the past.

The "Midnight Cry" Vision

Understandably but tragically, most of the Adventists soon gave up their conviction that the Midnight Cry, as they knew it, was of God.

By December 1844 even Ellen Harmon and most of her Adventist friends in Portland, Maine, had surren-

"This message will close

dered their conviction that the Midnight Cry had been fulfilled. Like many

others, they were beginning to look for a future fulfillment. "At the time I had the vision of the Midnight Cry I had given it up in the past and thought it future."¹³

Notice that she called her first vision "the vision of the Midnight Cry." Most Adventists are familiar with her words about the "straight and narrow path" on which she saw "the Advent people" "traveling to the city." Less noticed, however, are her words "They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry."¹⁴

Not until two months later would White receive (in February 1845) her "Bridegroom vision." That vision would show, on the basis of Daniel 7:9-14 and Luke 12:35-37, that the Bridegroom did indeed "come" in 1844. But it would also show that the bride was the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9, 10), not the church, and that the wedding was in heaven, not on earth, and that Jesus "came" not to earth, but to the Ancient of Days.

By that time, February 1845, unknown to young Ellen, Joseph Turner and Apollos Hale, Millerite editors, had already published the same conclusion based on the same texts. The Millerite emphasis on the Midnight Cry was a key that led to Bible passages that helped explain the Disappointment.

But as James White emphasized later,¹⁵ his future wife's first vision, in December 1844, came as a surprise both to herself and to her friends. It taught her that the Midnight Cry message

about the coming of the Bridegroom on October 22 was not a mistake! It was of God. It was true light after all.

Subsequently she wrote, "Our position looks very clear. We know we have the truth, the midnight cry is behind us";¹⁶ and after she had the February vision and still other visions later, she could observe that Jesus entered the Most Holy Place "when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month, 1844."¹⁷ Later

with power and strength

far exceeding the midnight cry."

Great Controversy.¹⁸

The Midnight Cry vision, her first vision, went on to observe that some erstwhile believers "rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below."

But note the happy part: The "light behind them," the light of the Midnight Cry, "shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet, so that they might not stumble."¹⁹ It is a blessing even today to review the Midnight Cry, remembering that it was of God that the Millerite Adventists preached the coming of Christ on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844.

Note also Ellen White's happy prediction for the near future: "I saw that this message will close with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry."²⁰

"Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place. . . . By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. . . . Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."²¹

The joyful solemnity and transforming power produced by the Midnight

Cry are in the past. Seventh-day Adventists rightly look back to them with gratitude, wonder, and appropriate nostalgia. But we can arouse ourselves from nostalgia and look to the future with even greater gratitude and wonder. For the three angels' messages, our message, is to close "with power and strength far transcending" that of the Midnight Cry.

May we see it soon.

¹ Early Writings, p. 278.

² Joseph Bates expressly makes this comparison in *Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps* (New Bedford, Mass.: 1847), p. 30.

³ See, for example, Hiram Edson, unpublished, undated manuscript, p. 8: "Having the true cry, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, on the tenth day of the seventh month."

⁴ Bates, pp. 30, 31.

⁵ Snow published his message in his *True Midnight Cry*, Aug. 22, 1844; italics in quotations here and below are Snow's. Cf. James White, *Life Incidents* (Battle Creek, Mich.: 1868), pp. 160-163.

⁶ James White, p. 160.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸ James White, p. 163.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹⁰ Bates, pp. 30, 31.

¹¹ Cf. Sylvester Bliss, Apollos Hale, and Joshua V. Himes in *Advent Herald and Signs of the Times Reporter*, Oct. 6, 1844, p. 85.

¹² Quoted in *Review and Herald*, June 9, 1851, p. 100.

¹³ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, pp. 95, 96; cf. Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years* (Hagerstown, Maryland: 1985), p. 61.

¹⁴ *Early Writings*, p. 14. (Italics supplied.)

¹⁵ James White, *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 22; cf. A. L. White, p. 61.

¹⁶ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 200; letter to Brother and Sister Hastings, March 24-30, 1849.

¹⁷ *Early Writings*, pp. 42, 43.

¹⁸ See *The Great Controversy*, pp. 398-400.

¹⁹ Arthur L. White, *The Early Years*, pp. 56, 57.

²⁰ *Early Writings*, p. 278.

²¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 612; cf. *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 430.



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It to the World, the story of Seventh-day Adventism; God Cares, the message of Daniel and Revelation; and this year, Magnificent Disappointment, the meaning of 1844 for today.

Held Hostage?



By Calvin B. Rock

My wife and I are divorced. But neither one of us committed adultery. I would like to get married again, and I'm keeping company with a fine Christian lady. Some members tell me I am wrong for courting. Am I? My feelings are quite natural why would God hold me hostage like this?

Your feelings and needs are complex, but the answer is clear: the only acceptable biblical grounds for remarriage is adultery. And since that is not the issue in your case, you are not eligible to remarry (Matt. 19:9).

Courtship, which implies romance, complicates the matter by nurturing feelings you cannot satisfy with God's blessing.

"Hostage" is not a word I would use for the perpetual bond that God requires and to which we pledge when we promise "till death do us part." But if you wish to use it, remember that God didn't place you in your present situation. You and/or your spouse have broken the sacred vow that you made to each other, to the body of believers, and to God.

Is God unfair to require people to remain single and nonromantically involved if they were divorced for causes other than adultery? Someone so affected may certainly be tempted to think so. However, when one contemplates the effects a less-than-lifetime level of commitment would have upon the already weakened marriage institution, the scriptural rule is quite defensible.

Again, no one should minimize your plight. But you must remember that God's foremost wish is always for reconciliation, not the permanent dissolution of our vows.

Life without romance is painful not only for the one involved but to the loving Creator who created us to be sociable

creatures. But His love, while understanding, is not compromising. He will not countenance the indulgence of our individual desires, be they ever so "natural," to the detriment of the family—the most foundational of all human institutions.

What about acupuncture? Is it satanic? Or is it a blessing Christians can use with confidence?

The Adventist Church has no official ruling on acupuncture. Therefore, its merits must be discussed on the basis of one's understanding of its character and consequences.

There are different styles of acupuncture. Chinese acupuncture, the most prominent style, utilizes two procedures—sham acupuncture (needles

tions (nausea and vomiting), and immune system activity—as well as treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction.

Acupuncture is also used as an anesthetic in certain types of operations.

The number of Americans who use acupuncture is relatively small (9 to 12 million treatments a year, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration). And there are approximately 3,000 medical doctors and osteopaths and 7,000 nonphysician clinicians who practice it.

While the U.S. Department of Education requires that acupuncture schools be accredited, not all health insurance companies cover acupuncture treatments. Further skepticism regarding its validity is expressed in the Food and Drug Administration's designation of the acupuncturist's needles as "investigative devices."

One reason that many Westerners oppose acupuncture is that there has been little scientific research or data to back its claims. Another reason is the tie that some make between acupuncture and the occult.

My personal view is that since our bodies are fearfully and wonderfully made, we are justified in looking beyond traditional Western medicine for answers. Chiropractors and acupuncturists, who focus upon the skeletal frame and pressure points of the body, are obviously not suited to care for every kind of illness. But I believe that there are areas for which nonprescription (i.e., non-drug-related) remedies may be as beneficial as those of traditional medicine.

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*God's foremost wish is
always for reconciliation.*

inserted in random points of the body), and the standard method of attaching needles to one or more of what acupuncturists call the 14 body meridians.

Chinese medicine regards disease as an excess or deficiency of *qi* (pronounced chee), or vital life force, in the affected body part and identifies almost 2,000 points at which the meridians can be tapped. Acupuncture claims to balance what its practitioners call the opposing forces of *yin* and *yang* through stabilizing one's *qi*.

The main benefits claimed by acupuncturists and their patients are relief from pain (although often temporary), healthy effects upon blood sugar, cholesterol levels, gastrointestinal func-

The “Splendor” of the Pope

A recent papal letter equates papal authority with the law of God.

BY NOEL CLAPHAM

The encyclical *Veritatus Splendor* (*The Splendor of Truth*) is a recent letter from the pope, written after six years of preparation in the Holy See in Rome and addressed to Roman Catholic bishops throughout the world.

In esoteric language it sets out what it considers the bases for a truly moral, righteous life. Much of it deals with generalities and the philosophical foundations for certain types of behavior.

There is frequent reference to the church's magisterium—the authority that Jesus is supposed to have given to the apostle Peter to decide on matters of church dogma and morality. The magisterium is equated with the commandments of God.

Much is made of the occasion when the rich young ruler came to Jesus and asked Him about the way to eternal life. Jesus said, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matt. 19:17). Thus the stated purpose of this letter is to achieve “a better understanding of moral demands in the area of human sexuality, the family, social, economic, and political life.”

It is only toward the end of the letter, just before the final panegyric (praise) to Mary, the mother of Jesus, that the encyclical speaks in practical terms of the problems being encountered in society and that this document seeks to combat.

Reference is made to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which, among other things, enjoins fairness and justice in all financial dealings. In politics the encyclical demands truthfulness, openness in public administration, respect for the views of political adversaries, and impartiality, especially in the way courts are conducted. Who would disagree?

Orthodoxy in Sexuality

While these goals are entirely laudatory, the true spirit of *Veritatus Splendor* is found in what it does *not* say. Catholic men and women, in many walks of life, have been hoping that in due time the Vatican might announce a modification of its orthodox position on such sexual affairs as birth control.

Pope John Paul II has, in effect, affirmed a more stringent application of Catholic orthodoxy in the realm of sexuality as the panacea for many sexual ills and malpractices in sexual and family life.

A Catholic archbishop from Bombay, India, Thomas Roberts, has respectfully approached the pope, pleading for greater understanding of the plight of indigenous people. He says, “The typical male villager of India already has more children than he can feed and not even a light to comfort him at night—nothing except the love of his wife. Is it reasonable to ask such a man to exercise sexual restraint?”



There are almost innumerable practical considerations in which it is inhuman to deny married couples the right to use birth control methods without guilt. What of a woman who has already given birth to genetically defective children? May she not be justified in using artificial methods of contraception against impregnation?

Or take this situation: a husband has become infected by AIDS through a blood transfusion. Does this mean the physical side of his marriage must be terminated? Or should not the couple protect the wife by the use of contraceptives?

It has been estimated that worldwide more than 5 million people are infected with the AIDS virus and that by the year 2000 more than 10 million children will be without their parents because of AIDS. Is it wrong to distribute condoms in Africa, India, or China?



It has been argued that there are so-called natural rhythmic methods of birth control not involving the use of contraceptive devices. But as Brenda Maddox observed in her little book *The Pope and Contraception*: "If it is morally permissible to try to outwit God's creative plan by using a calendar and thermometer, how could it be wrong to use rubber or cream—for the same purpose?"

Appeal to Magisterium

Great Britain's Prince Philip and others have noted that while the resources of the planet are limited, the population is increasing as a result of a declining infant mortality and improvements in medical science. This may well bring us to a point where pockets of famine will be caused because of the lack of birth control. The papal policy might cynically be interpreted as a means of increasing the numerical power of the

visible church by rendering the impossibility of spacing children.

Faced with all the reasons that the Catholic Church should abandon its opposition to contraception, Bishop George Pell (on a recent *Four Corners* program) appealed to the *magisterium* as the ultimate defense.

Jesus spoke to Peter, saying, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Matthew, who recorded this incident, wrote in Greek, making a clear distinction between Peter, a rolling stone, unstable; and a large stone not readily moved. Since Matthew observed the incident sufficiently to narrate it in his Gospel, might not Christ have made the same distinction when He spoke it, probably in Aramaic?

Neither Peter nor his colleagues accepted the view that Peter was being singled out for leadership. Indeed, the disciples consequently argued fiercely among themselves as to who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Rather than Peter, James the Just, a brother of Jesus, became the formal leader of the infant church. The apostle Paul on at least one occasion openly resisted the views of Peter.

Many centuries were to elapse before the popes made this passage a support for the *magisterium*. Certainly Chrysostom, Augustine, and other church founders did not regard it so. When Jesus spoke of the keys of the kingdom, He was telling His followers that they were to be the instruments of salvation, teaching others the key of faith, requiring only those things that heaven requires and none other.

Holding fast to the Catholic dogma on such an issue as contraception can be self-defeating. The Reverend Bernard Heering of Germany says that only 12 percent of Catholics in his country under the age of 50, and only 25 percent of those over 50, were prepared to listen

to papal instruction on sexual morality.


It has been claimed that *Veritatus Splendor* actually doesn't have a great deal to say about sex. It is clear, however, that the response of Pope John Paul II to the sexual problems of modern society is to reaffirm aggressively

the historic Catholic teaching and that the greater part of the encyclical, in its philosophical development, is directed to this end. He declares that church institutions should weed out dissidents and that the only remedy for homosexuality, extramarital sex, abortion, and other social problems is an absolute application of the

magisterium—or papal authority.

In *Veritatus Splendor*, having equated the *magisterium* with the law of God, Pope John Paul II seeks to establish an orthodox position by attacking so-called present-day "moral theology"—the concept of personal freedom and personal conscience. He, in effect, is taking the view that it is better to accept martyrdom by dying of AIDS than to breach what he sees as the negative commandments of God.

Protestants, of course, would see the claim of the *magisterium* being equal to the command of God as false.

According to the encyclical, Jesus enjoined obedience to the law as a vehicle of perfection, and salvation of individuals as dependent on this process. We would rather see obedience as the response of a loving, converted heart. 

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The Child Preachers

BY BRIAN JONES

About 150 years ago Christians all over the world discovered in their Bibles that Jesus would soon come back. Many of them began to preach about what they had learned.

Ministers in Sweden began preaching about Jesus' return, but church leaders ordered them to stop. Many ministers did not stop and were put in jail.

But God wanted the people to get ready for the Second Coming—so He

called Swedish children to give the same message.

God first chose a 5-year-old girl. One day she sang a beautiful song about the second coming of Jesus. After singing, she preached powerfully, explaining God's judgment. Her family and neighbors stood amazed. Many had never cared about God; now they gave their hearts to Jesus, calling out for salvation.

Soon other children began to preach.

After hearing these children, people stopped doing bad things like fighting, stealing, and getting drunk.

But some church leaders had the children arrested and beaten. Two boys were among those arrested. No matter how unkindly their jailers treated them, they continued to sing hymns. In jail the boys courageously preached the words that God gave them. A godly person pleaded with the king of Sweden to free the children. The king heard and ordered the jailers to let the children go and preach. The Lord took care of His children, and His Word.

God still needs children to tell others about Jesus' coming. You could be one of those children. But you must stay close to God, read His Word, pray for others, and share Jesus with them.

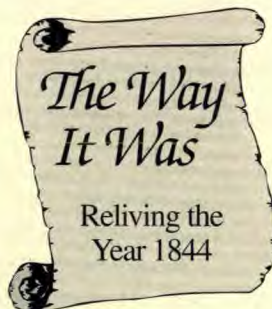
This story is adapted from J. N. Loughborough's *Great Second Advent Movement*, 1905 ed., pp. 140-145.

The Countdown Begins

Joseph Bates and James White were among those excited Adventists who returned to their respective homes from the Exeter, New Hampshire, camp meeting, thrilled at the prospect of Jesus' return in just a few weeks. Bates later would recall, "Who does not still remember how this message flew as it were upon the wings of the wind—men and women moving on all the cardinal points of the compass . . . freighted with bundles of books and papers, wherever they went distributing them almost as profusely as the flying leaves of autumn."¹

On the following Sunday Bates attended the Advent meeting in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and recounted the things he had seen and heard at the Exeter camp meeting. Bates recalled, "Never do I remember of having such freedom and flow of words, in all my religious experience. . . . Arrangements were quickly made . . . to spread the glad tidings all around."²

James White had a similar response when speaking at Orlington, Maine, shortly after returning home from Exeter. He later recalled, ". . . stated my convictions that Christ would come on the tenth day of the seventh Jewish



month of that year. . . . As in the days of Christ's first apostles, all were pricked in the heart, and the inquiry of all seemed to be what they should do to be saved."³

The thrust of other meetings was to present the biblical evidence supporting the new view of when Christ would return. "To this," White recalled, "were added practical sermons and solemn exhortations, setting forth the necessity of giving

up the world, and consecrating all to the Lord. . . . Before that meeting closed, hundreds testified with tears of joy that they had sought the Lord and found Him, and had tasted the sweets of sins forgiven."⁴

White remembered, "The parting was most solemn. That was the last camp meeting the brethren expected to attend on these mortal shores. And as brother shook the hand of brother, each pointed the other to the final gathering on the immortal shores at the grand encampment of the saints in the New Jerusalem. Tears flowed profusely, and strong men wept aloud."⁵

¹ Joseph Bates, *Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps* (1847), p. 31.

² Joseph Bates, *The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates* (1868), pp. 298, 299.

³ James White, *Life Incidents* (1868), pp. 166, 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 167, 168.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

By James R. Nix, associate director, Ellen G. White Estate.

The Nondelegate's Guide to the GC Session

Come and go as you please. And leave the work to those who have to be there.

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ

It's an honor to be a delegate and have someone pay your expenses to the General Conference session.

But only a fraction of the people reading this will be among those representing their local church, conference, union, or division at the General Conference session in Utrecht, the Netherlands, next summer. Not because you don't deserve to be there, but because it's impractical to ask everyone who loves the church to represent it at a general session.

But just because you aren't being "paid" to go doesn't mean that you can't go and soak up the inspiration that comes from seeing Adventists from around the world assembled in one place, united in purpose, worshipping one God.

In fact, as a nondelegate you can have all the pageantry of the event without the pressure. Here's how:

Start Early

The session officially begins with registration on Thursday morning, June 29. Go ahead and skip it.

Stephen Chavez is an assistant editor of the Adventist Review.

Nondelegates don't have to worry about things like that.

But if you want to be present for the first official session at 3:00 that afternoon, better start working on your plans for travel and lodging now. You can make any or all of your plans using your own travel agent.

For information about everything from travel to lodging to ground transportation, call Travel Lite Company at (800) 327-8338. You'll receive a brochure describing all the options for housing and their cost.

A word to the wise: the sooner you act, the more likely it is that you'll find travel accommodations that meet your budget and your desire to be located as close as possible

to the session site.

Why Bother?

The General Conference session is an event that is perhaps as close to heaven as we'll get here on earth.

There's the fellowship. If you've been an Adventist for any length of time, you're sure to meet friends, former schoolmates, teachers, and pastors, and people who know people you know. That you belong to the "family of God" will be reinforced again and again as

you anticipate that heavenly fellowship where "we'll never part again!"

There's the inspiration. The Adventist Church's most dynamic and inspirational speakers—from this country and around the world—will make presentations every day. Talented musicians of all ages will honor God with their talents and gifts. And throughout the 10-day conference you'll see groups, small and large, join in circles of prayer—both planned and unplanned—where God's promises for guidance are claimed for our church and its members.

Daily sessions will begin with a musical prelude at 7:30 a.m., which will be followed by a morning devotional. After a 90-minute business session, a one-hour meeting featuring the best of Adventist biblical preaching will precede the two-hour lunch break.

There's the process. From 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. different policies will be discussed and voted from the floor of the Jaarbeurs Convention Center. This is where the leadership and policies that will guide the church into the twenty-first century will be decided. And while you won't be able to vote on any of the issues up for debate, you will have a front-row seat to the entire process. (And when the discussion about whether the *Church Manual* change on page 137 should read "by" instead of "for," you can slip out for a walk, a nap, or a little shopping at one of the nearby shopping areas.)

Each evening will feature a program of music and progress reports from the different world divisions beginning at 6:45 and ending at 9:00.

The Last Word

The distance between the United States and Holland will make it a little more difficult for some people to attend the GC session next year. But having it in Europe will give thousands of Adventists there the opportunity to experience it who would never be able to afford a trip to the United States.

If you can attend (and combine your trip to the Netherlands with some other sightseeing on the continent), your experience will give you greater confidence in the church's reason to exist and its glorious destiny.



■ OREGON

Accepting the Challenge

Creativity and old-fashioned hard work combine to bring Adventism to the Portland metropolitan area.

BY WALTER D. BLEHM

In 1806 Lewis and Clark became the first Europeans known to visit the Portland area. Commissioned by Thomas Jefferson to search for the Northwest Passage, they discovered instead—among other things—the Columbia River. They noted especially the lush, green valley where the Willamette River joins the Columbia just 90 miles from the Pacific Ocean.

Within a few years the Hudson Bay Company made the area the fur trading

Vancouver, Washington, forms a metropolitan area of 1.5 million people. The city's proximity to the Far East has made it a hub of international trade. Its setting amid the forests and volcanoes of the Cascade range creates a spectacularly beautiful city with abundant recreation. In national polls Portland consistently rates as one of the most "livable" cities in the United States.

As the city thrived, so has the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Portland area. Today there are 38 churches with nearly 13,000 members. This gives Portland the largest *per capita* population of Adventists of any major U.S. city. Its size alone makes the church a recognizable entity throughout the area.

The church in Portland is a growing church. Last year each of the 38 churches had some level of membership or attendance growth that has led to a five-year combined growth rate of about 5 percent.

Strong Historical Roots

What has made the Adventist Church in Portland such a strong presence? The answer to this question is found nearly a century ago in a foundation laid of evangelism, community service, and Christian education.

Early evangelistic meetings had already started three churches in the area when J. N. Loughborough and Ellen White arrived in 1878 for a series of meetings. Within eight years the first elementary school was opened. Today the church operates five elementary schools, two junior academies, two

academies, and Walla Walla College's School of Nursing.

The most significant event in the development of the Adventist Church in Portland occurred with the arrival of Dr. Louis Belknap in the 1890s. While en route to Portland, this protégé of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg was robbed of his possessions on a dock in San Francisco. Reaching Portland with only five cents in his pocket, he shared with local Adventists his tightly held dream of starting a sanitarium similar to the one in Battle Creek. With their support, Dr. Belknap started a six-patient medical clinic.

Former Oregon Conference president and recent Portland Adventist Medical Center governing board vice chairman Don Jacobsen views the hospital as an invaluable asset to the church in Portland. "On a daily basis the hospital ministers to individuals during what is often their hour of greatest need," says Jacobsen. "This alone helps us carry on the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. But the hospital does much more. Each year we have former hospital patients and their families among those baptized in our churches. The hospital's strong, positive reputation in the city translates into increased credibility for the church as a whole."

Adventist hospitals such as Portland Adventist Medical Center touch and change lives in a manner unlike any other entity of the church. They augment the Adventist presence in a community in many ways. They support local congregations and church-operated schools, and provide career opportunities to those who desire a life of caring service.

Community Commitment

Another aspect of the Portland success story is the way the many area



Picturesque Portland, Oregon, is consistently rated in national polls as one of the most "livable" U.S. cities.

center for the Pacific Northwest. Soon settlers by the thousands began coming by wagon train along the Oregon Trail, which terminated in Oregon City, now a Portland suburb.

A penny decided the name of the new settlement. Francis Pettygrove, a native of Portland, Maine, won a coin toss against Asa Lovejoy, a Bostonian, who hoped to name the new settlement after his hometown.

Today Portland, combined with

Walter D. Blehm is director of constituent relations, Adventist Health System/West.

churches work together for the common good. Case in point: Portland Adventist Community Services (PACS) Center. It supplies food, clothing, and medical care to 26,000 individuals and families each year. It is a cooperative effort between area churches and Portland Adventist Medical Center.

The successes of the past have led the PACS Center to explore new ways to benefit the community. In the fall of 1993 it introduced "PhoneFriend." Designed for latchkey kids, this pro-



A sign outside the Portland Adventist Community Services (PACS) Center shows the wide influence it has among different ethnic groups.

gram offers a phone line staffed by volunteers to which children home alone can call for advice, help, or just a chat with a friendly voice.

Another example of area churches and Portland Adventist Medical Center working together was the brainstorm of Pastor John Kendall of the Rockwood church, in Portland's east side. His dream was to create a musical program depicting the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. "The Witness" was cosponsored by Portland Adventist Medical Center and performed during the Easter season at a local high school in 1991. In 1992 the three-hour program was performed at the 2,000-seat Portland Civic Auditorium.

Challenges Ahead

The Adventist Church in Portland faces two major challenges. First is maintaining the growth momentum; the second is to keep a large and diverse

Adventist community focused on the gospel.

The Pacific Northwest has the lowest *per capita* church attendance of any region in the nation. In recent years the economy has been strong; many Portlanders feel they live in the best, most beautiful city in the world, and seem to feel no spiritual void in their lives. This level of self-sufficiency has threatened church growth.

There have been encouraging signs, however. In the fall of 1992 the Billy Graham Crusade came to Portland and achieved a nightly attendance of 40,000. This success in the general Christian community has reinforced Adventist dedication to creatively promoting evangelism.

Oregon Conference pastors and support staff believe that not all evangelism happens in large-scale meetings. Area churches are encouraged to focus on small group Bible study. Jacobsen says, "The groups not only help us to spread the gospel to our community, they help revitalize our current members."



"The Witness," a pageant about Christ's life, death, and resurrection, draws hundreds to Easter season performances.

The second challenge is keeping a large Adventist community focused. Any large, established Adventist community exhibits fairly diverse opinions regarding numerous church issues. And Portland is no exception. "This can be viewed as a problem or as an opportunity," states Jacobsen. "We view the diversity among our members as a positive force that will allow us to better minister to the diverse community in which we live. Our goal is to facilitate each church's individuality while guiding all the churches toward the common goal of spreading the gospel to our city."

Changing Health Care Environment

Probably the greatest challenge to the church in Portland is how to maintain

Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church 90th Anniversary Celebration - September 30 - October 2, 1994

Friday Evening
September 30, 1994 7:30 pm

Presenting - St. Ellen

Produced and directed by

Francisco de Araujo

Some have relished putting Ellen White on trial for her life against all her claims that she was God's Messenger for these times.

History has proven that during times of persecution, it is easier to cast stones than to search out truth. In all the uproar connected with this celebrated case, few have taken time to remember the simple pure evidences which convinced us in the first place of Ellen White's extraordinary gifts. Indeed, all the accusations and rumors simply fade away against the pure facts of her testimony and the testimony of those who knew her.

Her antagonists, in jest, have mockingly called Ellen White, "the Adventist Patron Saint". This dramatization is to bring attention to this ridiculous charge and refute it. Adventist claim no saints, past or present.

Sabbath
October 1, 1994
9:30 am

Don't miss this special Sabbath Celebration. Our honored guests will include **Elder L. R. Mansell** and **W.J. Keith**, former pastors, and **M.E. Dawson**, former music director. Lesson study will be with **Dr. Gordon Hyde**.

11:00 am

Join us for a historical review with **Elder Neal Wilson** and our keynote speaker **Elder Lenard Jaecks**, former pastor. Also many surprise guests will be recognized. Music by **New England Youth Ensemble** and **Takoma Park Church Choir**.

Luncheon to follow church service. All are invited!

Historical Tour
Sabbath Afternoon

Join **Elder Trevor Delafield** on a guided tour featuring places of historical interest and importance in Adventist history in the Takoma Park and Washington, D.C. area. Items of historical interest will be on display over the weekend.

Homecoming Banquet
Saturday Evening - 8:00 pm
Make your reservations now for this special banquet hosted by the New Horizon Committee and church members especially for all former pastors and members. Tickets are limited so we encourage you to RSVP early for this memorable evening featuring many special guests.

Takoma Fest
Sunday, Oct. 2, 10 am - 6 pm
Sponsored by the city of Takoma Park. The church will have a booth depicting "90 Years of Ministry".

their connection with the church's most visible entity, Portland Adventist Medical Center. Health care in the 1990s is greatly different from health care a century ago, when the hospital was founded. Surgeries that once required weeks of hospitalization now take just a few days or hours. A growing number of patients are treated in physicians' offices and never even enter the hospital's doors. Beulah Stevens, the chaplain director at Portland Adventist, sees this as a formidable challenge. "Today's patients are in the hospital for such a short time, there is often little exposure to issues relating to their spiritual health," she notes.

Although the pace of new technology has made it possible to place an Adventist in every staff position, Portland Adventist's reputation as a Christian institution has been the principal reason many staff members have specifically chosen to

work there. Simply put, they appreciate the spiritual atmosphere.

With this in mind, president Larry Dodds actively solicited staff involvement when updating the hospital's mission statement and communicating the mission to every employee. Today, a framed copy of the mission statement hangs in every hospital department and is signed by the staff.

"The open communication regarding our mission has been beneficial to both Adventist and non-Adventist employees," says Dodds. "They see that the spiritual environment and support of the patient are essential. That's why we're here."

Although the Adventist Church in Portland has had many successes in the past, it is not complacent. There's a strong commitment from churches, schools, and the hospital to continue working together to carry out the ministry of Christ in this picturesque city.

Lesson Helps for Next Quarter

◆ Messengers on Golden Wings ◆



Sabbath School
Lesson Helps
for fourth quarter
1994.

In *Messengers on Golden Wings*, Brian Jones explains the importance and meaning of the three angels' messages—God's last invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He also provides encouragement, inspiration, and guidance on how to prepare for the Lamb's cosmic wedding reception and how to work effectively with heaven in bearing the genuine gospel invitation to the world.

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Pursuing the Utilitarian Jesus

Three of the four Gospels discuss Jesus' efforts to minister in Nazareth, His hometown (Luke 4:16-30; Matt. 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6). Already by the time of His first visit, "His fame was spread abroad" as the result of His teaching and miraculous deeds. His miracles were reported everywhere, and the hometown leaders should have been crowing with pride as they prepared a heady homecoming for their most famed citizen.

The narratives in Matthew and Mark report on Jesus' second attempt to minister and His subsequent rejection. But Luke gives us the story of His first return visit to Nazareth.

Nazareth was no first-rate community. In fact, it was definitely downbeat as towns go (John 1:46). Few modern readers are aware that on a nearby slope, scarcely three miles distant, stood an upscale town, Sepphoris, obscure to us now because it goes unmentioned in the Gospels. In Jesus' day it was a developing intellectual center graced by honored rabbinical leaders. Quite likely the residents of Sepphoris saw in Nazareth a dingy village populated by moral and social inferiors.

Luke provides a fascinating account of Jesus' return to Nazareth. Having lived some 30 years in the small community, He knew and was known by everyone in the synagogue. Asking for the scroll of Isaiah, He stood to read what we know now as chapter 61:1-3. The passage was recognized by all in the room as Messianic.

Closing the scroll, Jesus took the speaker's seat to comment, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21, RSV). It was an electrifying claim, for in applying it to His own ministry He was declaring Himself the Messiah.

And the response? His hearers sat charmed by the "gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (verse 22, RSV). But they could not take Him seriously.

Why not? They knew Jesus too well. As humans we depreciate the familiar while we prize the new. What is familiar is robbed of mystery, but mystery must forever remain a part of any genuine understanding of God. By



*Some people
want a miracle
without investing
any faith.*

it we acknowledge the differentness between God and us.


So the citizens of Nazareth asked, "Is this not Joseph's Son?" What is so special about Him? In half-doubt they expected a miracle in Nazareth so they could see for themselves as well as enjoy the benefits. The Gentiles of Capernaum might believe in Jesus without demanding a command performance, but not those in Nazareth.

What's in It for Me?

While not acknowledging His claim as Messiah, Nazareth's calculating citizens hoped that perhaps Jesus could yet become a benefactor. With this goal they exhibited a perennial human tendency to reduce faith to utility—to be religious for what it may be able to do for them. But utility as a commanding motive generates a shallow, self-serving religion.

The 5,000 Jesus fed by the Sea of Galilee passed from hearers to recruits when they thought Jesus would supply their physical needs. When Jesus made it clear He would not be used as a mere supplier of goods and services, they lost interest (John 6:25-66). If today we serve God simply in the hope of future reward, our faith is subverted. We pursue a utilitarian Jesus.

But Jesus was clear. His ministry would follow heavenly standards, not earthly. Nazareth could expect signal blessings only in conjunction with faith. Their reaction was immediate: they made an attempt on Jesus' life despite the Sabbath hours. Nazareth never received what could have been.

We may profit from Nazareth's mistake. Ultimately, what counts is whether we fully trust God. And God provides all the evidence we can reasonably ask in making that decision. 



George W. Reid, Th.D., is director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference.

BY GEORGE W. REID



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