

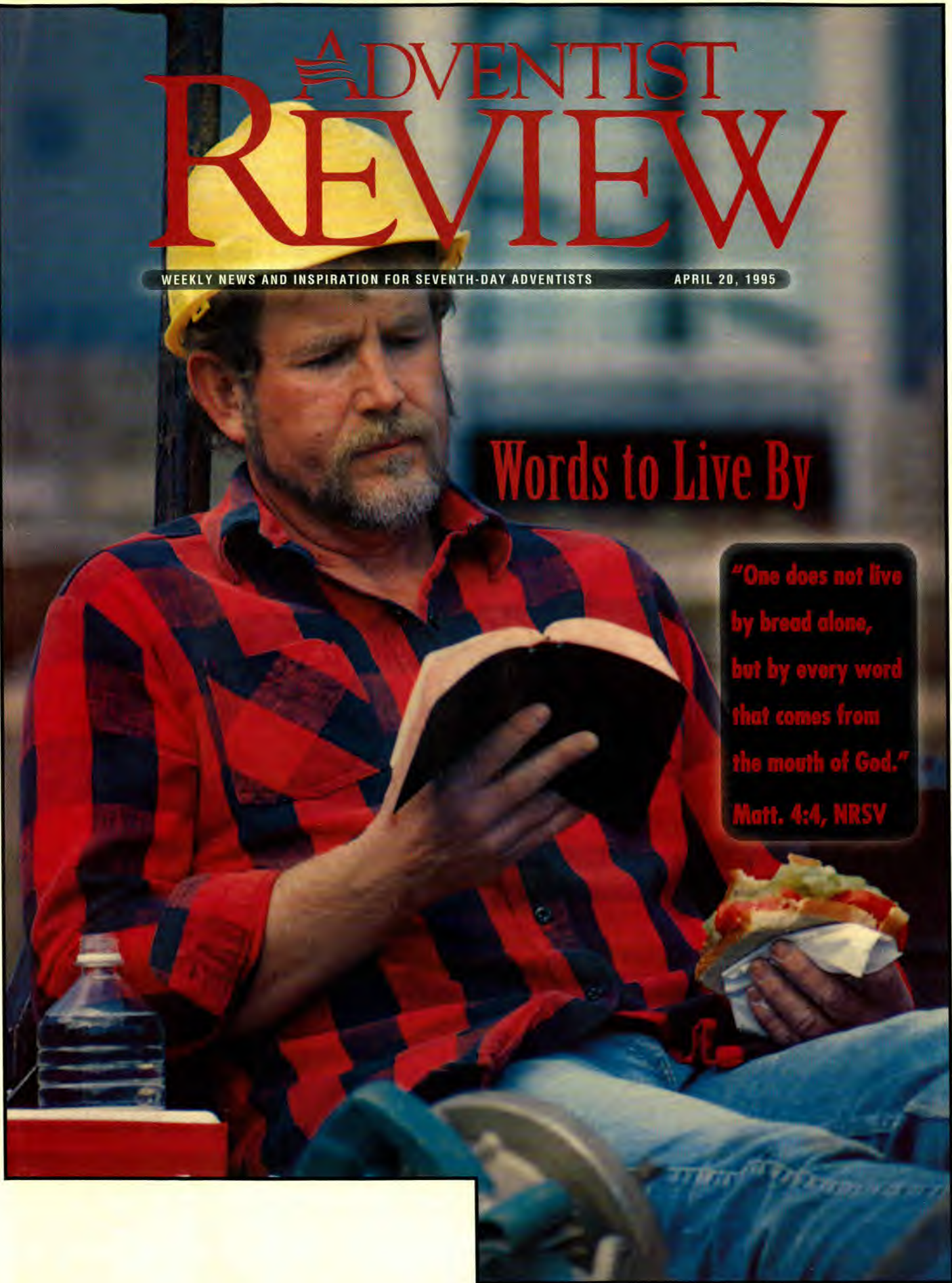
ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

APRIL 20, 1995

Words to Live By

**"One does not live
by bread alone,
but by every word
that comes from
the mouth of God."
Matt. 4:4, NRSV**



Irresponsible Rumors

Thank you for your courageous discussions in the *Review* regarding the present diversity within Adventism.

Those of us who labor in a pastoral setting and have heard some people level untrue rumors and accusations against us personally as well as our congregations appreciate your speaking out. You are absolutely right. This irresponsible tearing down of people and congregations is not funny, and it never was. From visiting with former members I can testify that unchecked gossip is one of the reasons we have lost so many people through the years, and now it is only helping fracture the church that remains.

There is much we can do at the local level to stand up against such un-Christlike behavior, but we need and are appreciative of help from the organizations above. Thank you.

*Steven Hadley, Pastor
Tucson, Arizona*

North America's Request

In response to "NAD's President Speaks on Women's Ordination" (Feb. NAD issue), I wonder why this most important issue has never been taken to the "grass roots" for discussion and vote. Upholding unity in the world church seems to be a major thrust of the article, but is there unity in the NAD membership over this issue?

*Ethel R. Nelson, M.D.
Dunlap, Tennessee*

The real issue is competency. Why not tell us what principles the church is looking for in pastors and then determine if women line up? It would make so much more sense. And it would give women the affirmation they need to have a successful ministry. If this was done, women's ordination would be much easier to accept. Few would argue that a woman who embodied every principle of a good pastor should be denied the right of ordination simply for the one fact that she was female.

Shouldn't the competency of men in

the pastorate be just as much an issue to Seventh-day Adventists as women's ordination? Is every man who is ordained

Deluge!

While California experienced weeks of heavy rain, the *Adventist Review* was flooded with letters on a variety of topics.

"Words I Live By" (Feb. 9) brought the heaviest mail. We've printed three pages of responses on pages 13-15 of this issue.

The request from North America to the General Conference for each division to decide for itself the issue of ordination of women continues to bring many letters. Most writers want to focus on the ordination of women *per se*, and some faulted the presentation made to the Annual Council by North American Division president A. C. McClure (see Feb. NAD issue) because he did not give Bible or Spirit of Prophecy support for women's ordination. However, as Elder McClure made clear, North America's request does not seek to open up this question, but instead addresses what is permissible for each division. The *Adventist Review* will feature major articles on this issue in the May NAD edition.

If you were one of the hundreds who wrote us in recent weeks and your letter didn't get published, please understand that competition for space is unusually keen.

fully qualified for the pastorate? Nobody seems to be concerned with that. As long as they are male, everything is fine. But ordain one competent woman, and we will debate it for years.

*Will Johns
Chattanooga, Tennessee*

The ordination of women is not just cultural for many people; it is also the-

ological. If the theological aspects can be settled to the satisfaction of the world church and in session be accepted by vote, the issue for some is resolved at least denominationally if not personally. However, if one division adopts the congregationalist philosophy of doing what is right in their own eyes, we open the door to disunity, even disintegration. Other parts of the world field, even local organizations and churches, may follow the precedent with other issues.

What is proposed also destroys the present worldwide authority of the ministry, reducing it to a parochial, discriminatory office with only regional jurisdiction. Let us think carefully and act cautiously about anything that may weaken the world church and bring division among God's people.

*R. W. Taylor, Pastor
Queensland, Australia*

I can't believe that the church is arguing about such a little issue. We should be worrying about bringing people to Christ instead of having a silly title attached to our name. I am shocked that the church has been divided about this issue. All this is about is social status and political power.

*Pam Zabudsky, Student
Pacific Union College
Angwin, California*

What towering figures in the Bible excel the greatness and nobility of Abigail, Anna, Deborah, Dorcas, Esther, Hannah, Jael, Jochebed, Lydia, Priscilla, Rachel, Ruth, Rahab, and all the other women who are indelibly a part of its history?

Our remnant church needs all the help it can get from dedicated people. We must be emboldened by the desire to get the Word out to the world as quickly as possible. Women can contribute mightily to making stronger the shields of faith to present and future Seventh-day Adventists.

*John Gast
Fort Walton Beach, Florida*

ADVENTIST REVIEW

APRIL 20, 1995

DEPARTMENTS

- 2 Letters
- 6 Newsbreak
- 16 Faith Alive!
- 19 Children's Corner
- 22 Bulletin Board
- 23 Reflections

EDITORIALS

- 4 The Expulsive Power of a New Affection
- 5 Sound Advice

NEXT WEEK

Reader's Guide to the General Conference Session—It's a celebration of what it means to be a member of God's family. It's also a time when the church takes care of business.

ARTICLES

STORY

8 Pastels, Symbols, and God's Life Raft

Isn't it odd that we put so much trust in a vehicle that, from a worldly standpoint, seems so unreliable? *by Bill Ashlock*

DEVOTIONAL

10 Hope for the Family

If we can't have hope in the family, we can't have it anywhere else. The fortunes of our church and society depend on living purposefully as a family. *by James M. Huzzey*

COVER STORY

13 Words I Live By

Readers share their favorite texts. *a compilation*

TURNING POINT

17 From Prisoner to Evangelist

The strangest things happen when we turn our lives over to God. Far from being boring, the possibilities are endless.

by R. S. Norman

WORLD REPORT

20 PlusLine HelpDesk

Let's have a resource center that keeps track of all the ministry-related resources available on every possible subject. Let's make it available 24 hours a day. And let's make it free!

by Rich DuBose



10 Making it count



21 Looking for a home

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Vol. 172, No. 16.



The Expulsive Power of a New Affection

Something is astir in the North American Division. Could the Lord be sending us a message for this time?

Consider the following straws in the wind:

■ The commemoration of the Millerite hope—"The Great Appointment"—drew more than 2,000 people to William Miller's farm in Low Hampton, New York, last October 22. Throughout the three days of meetings, and especially on the Sabbath, the 150th anniversary of the failed date for Jesus' return, the mood was extraordinary. No word of discouragement or criticism—all rejoiced together, one in a spirit of primitive godliness.

Some 60,000 others watched the afternoon meeting by satellite transmission to local churches. From across North America the telephone calls and letters poured in, as many people expressed the joy and uplift they had experienced—they felt as if they had been present and had been renewed.

■ Mission rallies are drawing large, enthusiastic crowds. Gary and Rae Patterson, who direct the new General Conference Office of Mission Awareness, spend most weekends on the road leading out in these gatherings. Adventists of all ages sit for hours throughout the Sabbath, they report, enthralled at the news of what God is doing among His believers around the world.

And as with the October 22 event, not one negative or sour note can be heard. Grizzled veterans of the faith have tears rolling down their faces; young people who came reluctantly at their parents' request go away thrilled and amazed.

■ The Hands Across the World weekends are bringing spectacular results. These gatherings, which are

being conducted in each of the nine unions that make up the North American Division, also focus on Global Mission. Those who attend are challenged with the goal of raising up 2,000 new congregations by the year 2000.

The Columbia Union hosted the most recent Hands Across the World event at Blue Mountain Academy. Although the school is far from any Adventist center, 50 busloads of people and hundreds of cars came in, swelling the crowd to more than 5,000 people.

■ NET '95, the division-wide evangelistic campaign via satellite downlink, has had remarkable results. Despite the doubts of many that the public would come out to see a preacher on a large television screen, scores of thousands have attended.

We saw the power of NET '95 right here at church headquarters. More than 500 people followed the campaign in the General Conference auditorium, and already 41 have requested baptism.

Any one of the above happenings is significant; together they suggest that something important is going on in North America. Could the Lord have a message for us?

Very likely. And it is this: when we get back to the basic beliefs and mission the Lord has given us, good things will happen. Then the problems and arguments and disputes that so often consume our time and energies will disappear.

Recently Walter R. L. Scragg, president of Adventist World Radio, gave a report on the work of this important outreach of the church. After detailing the global expansion of Adventist World Radio, he noted that he was approaching retirement. Then he said, "The past five years have been the most rewarding of my entire ministry. My work has been entirely involved in the

mission of the church. Previously I served for 15 years as a division president, but those years were as nothing compared with these past five. I felt as though I had gone back to the beginning of my ministerial career, when I graduated from college without theological questions and intent only on the mission of the church."

In Scragg's experience and in the four examples above, I believe we find the answer to the malaise of much of the church. For while God is doing wonders among us, writing a new book of Acts, many Adventists are making shipwreck of their faith on the shoals of theological wrangling and severe criticism.

God would have us cast out evil by replacing it with good. That is a principle we find in both the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen White. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21, NIV; cf. Matt. 12:43, 45). "'Something better' is the watchword of education, the law of all true living. Whatever Christ asks us to renounce, He offers in its stead something better" (*Education*, p. 296).

Many years ago Thomas Chalmers preached a sermon that became a model for generations of young ministers. Titled "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection," it described how the love of Christ is able to capture our hearts and drive out all the love of the world that we once held so dear.

Adventists today need the expulsive power of a new affection. We need to get back to our basic message and mission—and that means Jesus, because He is at their heart. And in the light of His presence, all our argument, anger, and criticism will indeed grow strangely dim.

WILLIAM G. JOHANSSON



Sound Advice

Just as I was about to grab my lunch tray and race out of the General Conference cafeteria, I heard it. Something in the background was familiar—a sonorous melody, a simple, resonating pattern. My body recognized it before my ear did.

Mentally turning down the din of voices around me, I waited to be sure. As I listened, a long-neglected beauty overtook me. In seconds it transported and stilled me. It was a sound out of my childhood.

Sitting back, I allowed myself to remember. As I let the past ease into my consciousness, the present began to melt down to size.

Only a moment before, the present had been crowding me like a threatening giant. Now the giant's demeanor softened as though I were holding a small flame close to a wax figure. As I soaked in the sound, my anxious worry over many things began to subside.

Contending With the Giant

The giant had waited impatiently for me that morning. I was returning to the office after being away for three working days.

The good news was that I had more strength to resist the giant's tackle; I was rested. The bad news was that I couldn't ignore it. The giant shook a finger and pointed at my calendar: deadlines don't wait; *tempus fugit!*

Ever since last Wednesday the stacks of letters and manuscripts on my desk had grown taller and more precarious. They leered at me darkly. An editorial was due, and I didn't have a clue what I would write.

Old coping mechanisms sprang into action—including lunch on the run. My feet weren't moving, but my mind was doing the Indy 500.

And then out of nowhere came the balm from Gilead. In the full sun of noonday a few bars of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* drifted my way.

Beautiful as the sonata is, I realized that the sounds themselves were only half it. The other half was memory. As the melody rose and fell, I remembered sunlight slanting across a practice room. I remembered simple, uncomplicated days. I remembered being young and first stepping into the resplendent world of classical music.

Inner Sanctuaries

The lunchtime interlude reminded me of a fascinating radio program. An interviewer stumbled on to the idea of asking people to recall comforting sounds from their childhood.

I was captivated as I listened to their stories and heard sounds re-created to go with them. It was like gaining a private audience with their souls.

As they spoke their voices mellowed and became rich with emotion. One by one they told of a father jingling his pocket coins; the Pemaquid bell clanging during a summer storm off the coast of Maine; favorite hymns seeping out of a country church into the spring air; a train whistling in the night while hurtling on toward Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

One young woman recalled her favorite uncle reading stories aloud as she nestled against him on the floor. As he read he also ate an apple. For her there was no sweeter memory, nothing that made her feel more safe and happy than to hear his "chomp, chomp, chew, swallow" punctuating a good story.

Listen Again for the First Time

Many of us dismiss the past as a dead

letter. We see the past as a record, not a resource. We pride ourselves on "living in the present," when we are being eaten alive by it. Or, impatient with both past and present, we try to escape into the future.

Actually, the past may be an untapped treasure-house. Good things that happened long ago need not be lost. They can bless us not just once, but again and again.

We can call good memories back. We can bathe in their healing waters. Not only can they soothe and restore us; they can also teach us about God. There's power for good in sounds remembered. I think Bible writers knew this truth.

Today, try reading the Bible with your ears. Enter the echo chamber of your soul. Listen again to the God of comforting sounds:

"As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you."¹

"The Lord is my shepherd. . . . He leadeth me beside the still waters."²

"For, lo, the winter is past, . . . the time of the singing of birds is come."³

"After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper."⁴

"You will go out in joy. . . and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."⁵

"His voice was like the sound of rushing waters."⁶

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard . . . I fell down to worship"⁷

¹ Isa. 66:13, NIV.

² Ps. 23:1, 2.

³ S. of Sol. 2:11, 12.

⁴ 1 Kings 19:12, NIV.

⁵ Isa. 55:12, NIV.

⁶ Rev. 1:15, NIV.

⁷ Rev. 22:8.

Spring Meeting Adopts New Policies

More than 120 church leaders from around the world gathered at the Adventist Church's world headquarters for the General Conference Executive Committee's Spring Meeting on April 4 and 5.

This Spring Meeting was the last GC Executive Committee before the upcoming GC session, and culminated nine days of meetings among leaders—including more than 75 committees, boards, and caucuses.

While this meeting handles primarily financial matters, including the audited statements of the previous year, other items also come before the members. Highlights of this year's meeting included:



GC secretary G. Ralph Thompson interprets policy issues for committee members.

- Recommendations for new "model" constitutions and bylaws for union and local conferences and missions.

treasurers on the financial health of the church.

- Reports from GC

- A report on the preliminary findings from the Adventist Family Survey.

- A call for earnest prayer before, during, and after the upcoming General Conference session. The GC session's first day, June 29, will be a worldwide Day of Prayer.

"Model" Constitutions and Bylaws Recommended

Of all the items that came before the committee members, none generated more discussion than the new "model" constitutions, bylaws, and operating policies for union and local conferences and missions. The proposed "models" came as part of the numerous recommendations from the GC's Commission on World Church Organization.

After discussion, the "models" passed with only minor rewording of a few items. These now go to the unions, conferences, and missions for acceptance as their constitution and bylaws. They do not have to go to the GC session for approval, as they are part of the GC Working Policy.

By Carlos Medley, Adventist Review news editor.

The "models" for each level of church organization now contain "essential" parts that the commission felt necessary to preserve the organizational unity of the world church. Such elements form the whole of the constitution for each level, but only part of the bylaws. Those elements considered "essential" include such items as the election of officers, terms of office, the relationship between the entity and the other church levels, composition of the executive committee, and constituency meetings.

Since these items are "essentials," they cannot be amended by the local entity, except to reflect any changes made to the "model" by the General Conference Executive Committee at an Annual Council. The rest of the bylaws, however, can be amended, allowing for differences in the various areas of the world.

The "models" also provide stronger linkage between the various levels of the church's structure. For example, executive officers of higher organizations are now ex officio members of the executive committees of lower organizations, although the number of their votes cannot be more than 10 percent at any committee.

Another linkage item allows the executive committee of a higher organization to bypass the local executive committee and call a special constituency meeting of a union, conference, or mission.

In responding to questions regarding this provision, GC president Robert S. Folkenberg spoke of the philosophy behind this action. "Society today is very quick at every level, beginning with the individual, to feel very comfortable with asserting, identifying, and protecting its own role, function, and rights, and [some church entities] . . . are equally reluctant to accept anything more than an advisory relationship with sister organizations."

"This clearly says that a conference's right to exist is not self-generating . . . which would be almost like a Christian version of ecclesiological evolution. . . . Its authority to exist is granted, with privileges and responsibilities, by its sister conferences."

Folkenberg said that "the last word in authority" in a union territory is "not the union executive committee, but the union constituency." The president also said that the Commission on World Church Organization grappled with the question for years: "How does the world sisterhood of unions guide a union conference that needs to have an issue addressed? How does it do that without it appearing to be what it isn't—that is, a top-down, centralized, sinister plan of power-grabbing authority? How do you do that?"



Inter-American Division secretary Agustin Galicia (left) and Euro-Asia Division treasurer Juan Prestol make comments from the floor.

Folkenberg said the commission felt the answer is to appeal to the union's executive committee first—the normal process already in place. And then, if needed, the new “model” would allow the higher organization to call a constituency meeting and take their case directly to the constituency—bypassing the executive committee.

“There may exist circumstances in which the conduct of the union executive committee impedes what may well be the will of the union constituency. That's what this is saying,” commented Folkenberg.

In the section dealing with the relationship between executive officers, the new “model” says that the secretary and treasurer will now “report” (be held accountable) to the executive committee of an entity “after consultation with the president.”

In response to this item, Folkenberg explained that this would help in those cases in which officers see no need to consult with each other and sometimes take items to their executive committees without the prior knowledge of the other officers. “Each officer is accountable and reports to the executive body and takes direction from the executive body,” said Folkenberg. “But each officer does this in consultation with his fellow executive officers.”

He said that those cases in which the “triumvirate never meets,” or where “absolute power” lies within a single authority, are both “inappropriate.”

Financial Health Presented

Both tithe and world mission offerings for 1994 increased over the previous year, but so did the needs of an ever-expanding world church.

Giving to world mission increased considerably, though nearly all the increase was in “restricted” mission donations that flow through the GC to special projects around the world. Restricted mission offerings for 1994 reached \$30.2 million, up from \$26.0 million.

Yet the overall tithe and offering and investments' income did not reach the expected budgeted needs of the church. As a result, the GC gave away \$4.7 million more than came in during 1994, forcing church leaders to reduce the church's reserves to \$50,712,704.

According to GC undertreasurer Don Robinson, part of the difficulty that leaders face is that they must budget far in advance and appropriate money to church organizations *before* the GC receives its portion of the tithe and offerings. When the income does not reach the expected amount, the money already has been given away, and a “loss” occurs. The money is not truly “lost,” as it has funded ministries around the world—but it usually calls for cuts in following years.

Another factor contributing to 1994's operating loss was that income from investments was more than \$1 million under budget. Robert Osborn, an associate GC treasurer, says that “1994



GC treasurer Don F. Gilbert reports on church finances.

was a very difficult year in the domestic and international money markets. Domestic markets were somewhat negative and international markets had a drastic downturn.”

Another major factor contributing to the loss was the unrestricted World

Mission Fund, which had a slight increase, but was more than \$5 million below what the budget projected. During 1994 the GC's treasurers saw the coming squeeze on funds and revised the 1995 budget by reducing expenses and appropriations by \$7 million—from \$137 million for 1994 to \$130 million this year.

Robinson reported that the in-house operations of the General Conference in 1994 were \$775,765 under its operating cap. The cap is calculated at 4.85 percent of the gross tithe received from the divisions.

Family Survey Initial Results Reported

Committee members heard preliminary results of the first worldwide study on the Adventist family. The research gleaned from surveys of nearly 8,000 randomly selected Adventists around the world was commissioned by the General Conference Church Ministries Department's Office of Family Ministries.

The study focused on areas such as marriage relationships; parent-child relationships; religious practices; attitudes toward various family-related issues such as homosexuality, divorce, abortion, and personal at-risk experiences like depression, marital conflict, and abuse.

Considerable variation in opinion in the initial results exists regarding divorce and remarriage, abortion, and homosexuality. Strong disapproval of sexual practice outside of marriage was indicated. There is considerable support for the notion that sex education does not contribute to promiscuity, and very strong support for the deliberate planning of families through the use of birth control.

Though data continues to be collected and analyzed, Karen Flowers, codirector of GC Family Ministries, says the study's preliminary findings challenge the church “to be sensitive to cultural differences and to understand that Adventist families reflect their dominant cultural context. Family Ministries is challenged to facilitate a balanced program of preventive, educational, and clinical approaches.”

The *Adventist Review* will cover other actions from the 1995 Spring Meeting, including the introduction of a worldwide communication strategy and global prayer initiative, in the May 11 issue.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Apr. 22 | Christian Education Day |
| Apr. 29 | Hands Across the World—
General Conference Session Offering |
| May 4 | National Day of Prayer |

Pastels, Symbols, and God's Life Raft

*Salvation's gracious provisions
more than compensate for sin's ugly realities.*

BY BILL ASHLOCK

Dawn came too early. Weeks filled with days of long hours, too many meetings, and too much time away from my family had taken its toll. A late dinner and a conference miles from home, filled the night just ending. But I was determined. I was going to spend some time on the beach, if only for an hour.

From my hotel it was a 10-minute drive to the beach in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The air was cool for late August. The beach was clean and deserted. Running shoes laced and ready, I carefully stretched to protect my aging body. The adventure was on!

The sand was soft to the touch, the surface of the warm ocean almost crystal smooth. The early-morning sun peeked over the horizon. The skies bathed the beach in pastels of pink, green, blue, and yellow.

As the sand began taking its toll on my legs, a dark object became the center of my frame of vision. Pushing on, I approached to examine it. I soon realized it was the remnants of an abandoned raft—perhaps from Cuba.

I saw a mere shell, a rough wood keel, a minimum number of ribs, bolted and lashed together. Burlap-wrapped truck tire inner tubes and chunks of white styrofoam provided buoyancy. This “vessel” meant a child’s fun or a captive’s dream, but through it God spoke to me that morning.

Life's Adventure

In my mind I drifted back to my childhood. I have vivid memories of the mission field. I considered myself lucky. I had parents who stayed together, other adults who cared about me, and teachers who gave of themselves. True, we didn’t have much money (we didn’t go on a real vacation till I was in the fifth or sixth grade), yet I thought I had it all! My parents were “cool,” my brothers weren’t too much of an embarrassment—what more could life offer?

Yet still, as a child I struggled to be acceptable to God. I heard about the peace Jesus offered one and all, but I didn’t feel it. Everyone I knew seemed to indicate that this grace required a method of behavior, a code of conduct. I

thought I knew what it meant to be a Christian, but the more I strived to live up to the standard, the more empty I felt.

As I formed opinions on social issues—equality of all people regardless of gender (male or female), race (Yellow, Red, Black, White), or culture (traditional western, the myriad of Eastern cultures, etc.)—I realized that some of the very people and institutions dedicated to sharing Jesus Christ held opinions that were bigoted, angry, and without love. My confusion about what it meant to be a Christian deepened.

(I’m not angry about my experiences or those who influenced my childhood. I believe that each teacher, friend, and parent did his or her best, but over time the issues seemed more complex.)

Charlene Spretnak described my puzzle this way: “In the industrialized world, spiritual teachings have been pushed so far beyond the pale of relevance that a large portion of society does not know how or where they might approach them, even for exploratory purposes. . . . A simple move into institutional relations would be problematic for many people not only because it seems to be a world remote from the demands of modern life, but also because the men in control of its influence have often legitimated oppression, militarism, and the exploitation of the earth.”¹

The quest to know and understand my relationship with God took a long, slow path. The framework was flimsy, and at one time I didn’t think my faith would support me. But I wanted freedom to know God, wherever or in whatever way I could find Him.

Putting the Pieces Together

As I walked around the remains of that raft in the early-morning light, I felt showered in God’s peace. My thoughts wandered back to Eden, thinking this must be just a little of what Adam and Eve felt like in the garden.

But then I remembered that the story of Eden is the story of sin’s entrance into the world. God said that sin would cause death. Satan asserted that rebellion caused transformation.

Can we truly be rebellious and be transformed? God says no! The world through Satan says yes. And while we

reject Satan's claims out of hand, the temptation now is as great as when the serpent tempted Eve to somehow transform ourselves with our own efforts.

The world's great religious traditions divide on this key point. But the Bible is clear on the issue: we can try to achieve salvation through self-realization, inner perfection, or salvation by works (New Age, Buddhism, Adventist legalism), but the effect remains the same as when Satan offered Eve a "salvation" that was separate from the one God ordained.

The Reality of Sin

But we mustn't be lulled into a false sense of comfort through false prayer, false meditation, or false worship. We can't do it on our own. Genesis records that fact. When we sin—and we all are sinners—we die and are dead. That's the problem I wrestled with, but what to do about it?

There are many illustrations of the effects of sin, but in an age of sanitized everything, the sacrifice of innocent animals has become the most vivid to me.

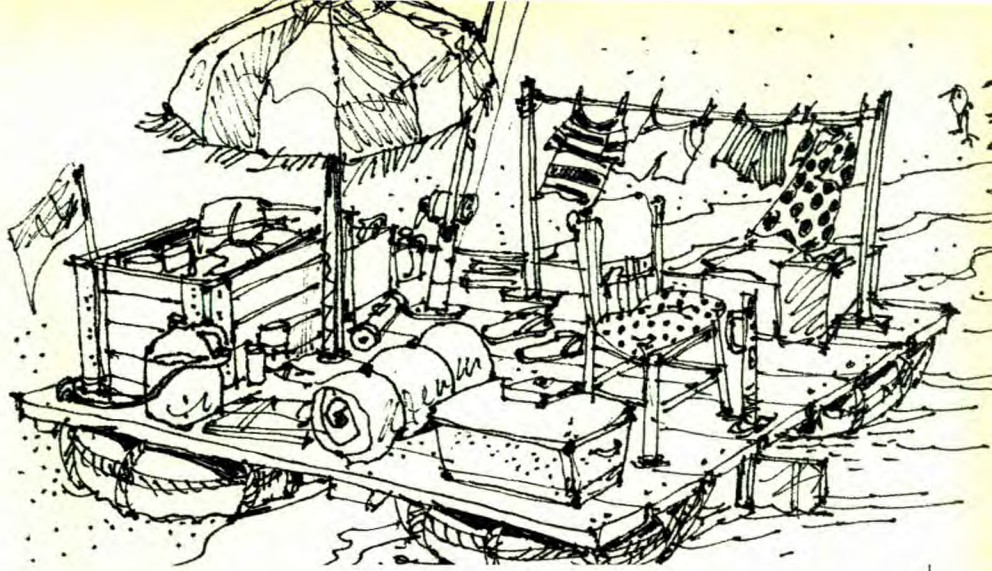
Imagine a child watching an innocent animal getting its throat cut; watching the fresh, warm blood running down; watching life's sparkle in the large soft eyes of the young animal slowly becoming dimmer and dimmer, until life vanishes. Imagine the pain, the shattered stillness, the quietness of death—all because of sin.

Imagine the electricity in a crowd when John the Baptist announced, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"²

People knew what this meant. The price of sin was death. The way to atone for sin was through sacrifice. And Jesus was the sacrifice that would pay for sin. What a revolutionary message!

The apostle Paul was very clear in Romans 5:18: "Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life! One man said no to God and put many people in the wrong; one man said yes to God and put many in the right."³

But how do we take hold of this sacrifice for ourselves? How do we get on



God's raft and make the journey? Is it even seaworthy?

Many people don't believe God's boat is seaworthy. Two extremes often appear.

One suggests that we need to earn our seat on the boat. Trying to earn our salvation, believing that the good we do will give us a seat on God's boat, suggesting that we can improve on God's sacrifice, are blunt statements that God's boat isn't going to make it without our help. Such arrogance!

Yet I find myself falling into this trap on a regular basis.

The other extreme isn't any better. It's the suggestion that we can have the benefits of Christ's sacrifice without any change in our behavior.

But if the sacrifice doesn't change us, doesn't cause us to get in to God's boat and leave the shore, what do we get? Only an excuse to feel good about where we are, in spite of all the pain and despair that comes with the realization that there is no hope within ourselves.

Is salvation earned in any other way? "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."⁴ Accepting that I can't earn salvation is one of the biggest acts of faith I know of.

Staying Power

But how do I stay on the boat? How do I escape from where I am to experience God's freedom and love? Paul's reply: "So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offer-

ing. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out."⁵

It's so simple. Spending time with God, listening to Him, making Him our priority of life—during the Mondays and Tuesdays of life, during the casual lunches and the formal dinners. Embracing what God does for us is the best thing we can do to respond to His offer.

I've come to admire those brave individuals who leave their homeland in search of a better life for them and their families. In vessels that appear marginally seaworthy, they rest their future on the hope that their vessel will take them to a new life.

To some, trusting God's salvation and being transformed entirely by faith is the height of presumption. But God is the only one I can truly believe in. I've gotten on God's raft. I invite you to join me on my journey!

¹ Charlene Spretnak, *States of Grace* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1991).

² John 1:29, NIV.

³ Rom. 5:18, *Message*.

⁴ Rom. 3:22, NIV.

⁵ Rom. 12:1, 2, *Message*.



Bill Ashlock is a Global Product Manager for Citibank in New York City. He, his wife, and two daughters live in Wyckoff, New Jersey.

Hope for the Family

What happens here affects everything.

BY JAMES M. HUZZEY

HOPE

Without a sure future, today is meaningless. Without hope, we have nothing. Without hope, life is devoid of promise.

When one of our daughters was 18 years old, she went through a stage in which she had a frustrating lack of ideas of what she wanted for her future. This happy and positive girl became restless, morose, and rebellious. For several months she wasn't nice to know or to have around the home.

Then suddenly, almost overnight, she discovered her vision of the future—what she wanted to be and to do. Now she had something to work toward—hope for her life. And overnight she again became the pleasant,

intelligent, purposeful person whom we had always known.

Hope—It's Our Life!

The Christian message is first and foremost one of hope. Sadly, too many, even in our church, have not understood, let alone begun to experience, that reality. We see the predicament of a youthful generation that has largely lost its vision for the future, and with it hope. Others more serious about life and beginning to understand their own needs are searching for hope. Many older members, and sadly, some who put much effort into the development or perfecting of their Christian characters, seem nonetheless to have missed the joy that comes with hope. Yet that is the Christian message.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope" (Rom. 15:13).*

Again Paul said, "These three remain: faith, hope and love" (1 Cor. 13:13). In other words, when everything is boiled down to its essence, when we come to the bare bones of Christian belief, when it's all said and done, there remain faith, hope, and love. When we lose hope, we lose everything.

The State of the Home

This article brings us to the

last of the series on the great Christian theme of hope.¹ Many people today seriously maintain that there is no hope for the family, that it has no future, that it has outlived its usefulness and is an outdated relic of the past. In Britain more than 40 percent of marriages end in divorce. Yet that is not the full story, because 40 percent of couples live together without marriage, and their failures are never recorded. One in five children is now born outside the traditional family, and it is estimated that half of today's children will at some stage live outside a family with a mother and father.

Even within the church in Europe, 23 percent of good and loyal Adventists who were once married are now separated, divorced, or remarried. But the problem is not only measured in families broken because of divorce; it is also found in homes in which unhappiness, separation, and despair are hidden, because many Adventists do not admit to these problems. Some families seem incapable of getting it right, yet are unable, because of their beliefs, to get out—families with no hope.

For the following reasons, hopeless families constitute a factor with serious implications for the spiritual growth and future of the church:

1. Because their members despair of finding Christian joy



and happiness, they either give up their faith completely or become legalistic and fanatical.

2. Young people in that setting grow up emotionally immature and insecure. Looking at their "Christian family," they dismiss the values of the church as ineffective at best, hypocritical at worst.

3. A spirit of frustration and bitterness enters the experience of the whole church, causing division and lack of growth. Show me a bitter and aggressive member, and I will show you someone in an unhappy family.

4. There is a failure to understand the true meaning and value of love, and therefore of all Christian virtues. The absence of love is the beginning of legalism and formalism.

5. Broken families lead to cynicism about relationships. "I cannot trust my family, therefore I cannot trust anyone, let alone trust God." Such families produce children who cannot trust enough to share their life with one another and who choose to live together without ties.

6. A spirit develops that says: *Live for today; take happiness when and where you can; don't worry about tomorrow, let alone eternity.*

No wonder Ellen White could say, "Our work for Christ is to begin with the family in the home. . . . By many this home field has been shamefully neglected, and it is time . . . that this state of evil may be corrected."²

Restoring Hope

How can we as individuals and as a church help to restore hope?

The answer is not simply to increase the number of seminars and family programs we conduct. These are good, but they are not our primary need. Real hope comes not from what the church does, but from what we are. The church should be a model that shows that the family can be suc-

cessful, that there is hope.

Another of our daughters came home one evening in tears. When we were eventually able to calm her down, she told us that the parents of her best friend had just separated.

But her tears were not just for her friend. "Suddenly I realized," she said, "that I am the only one in the whole of our class whose family is still together." She spoke with fear for her own future, but was comforted that in us she could see that a good family was possible.

Young people today are losing confidence in family and marriage, and they need to see a model that provides proof that there *is* hope.

How can the church provide a model of a good family?

1. *By Becoming a Family*

The Bible talks about many kinds of family. The widow with her son, the mother and her two daughters-in-law, the prophet and his harlot wife, two sisters and a brother whom Jesus loved, even men and women who chose to be single. Everyone in some way is part of a family. The reality is that family comes in different shapes and sizes, for family is about those special relationships with people who are important in our lives.

We should remember that Christianity is also about relationships and their restoration. The good news of the gospel is that God has provided a way for healing relationships. When that healing is seen through the church, the family of God, then there is hope for me and my family.

2. *By Offering Reconciliation*

Joseph, appointed to a high position in Egypt, could have given up on his family—and could you have blamed him? He had good reason to say: "They always were jealous of me. They picked on me because I was smaller and different. They didn't understand me. Father must have known what was going on, but didn't do any-

thing. Why do I need them?"

However, Genesis 41:51 tells us that "Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh ["to forget"] and said, 'It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household'" (Gen. 41:51).

Have you ever felt like that? Of course, we couldn't admit it even if it was true. But too many today have wanted to forget and walk away from their family. That was not God's plan for Joseph or for us, and God brought reconciliation between the young governor and his family. I like the tender expression of concern Joseph showed when he was sending his brothers back to fetch his father and the rest of the family. He supplied food for the journey and gifts for his father, and as he sent them off he said gently, "Don't quarrel on the way" (Gen. 45:24). Now he was fully reconciled with those he had tried to forget.

The church should not be a place of controversy and petty quarrels. If we will show God's gift of reconciliation in our lives and experience, we will give hope that reconciliation is also possible in our families.

3. *By Showing the Meaning of Love*

Love is one of the most misunderstood and carelessly used words in the English language. Too often we appear to teach that God loves us only when we act in a certain way, dress in a certain style, or believe what He wants us to believe. Alternatively, we portray love as an emotion that depends on our moods. But John tells us: "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16). True love always puts the other person first, and the church should be a living expression of that love.

A while ago one of our daughters brought a young man to church for the first time. We wanted him to enjoy the worship, and were concerned at the

"Suddenly I realized," she said, "that I am the only one in the whole of our class whose family is still together."

impressions he would have. I was anxiously hoping that the service would be good, the sermon positive, and no one would say anything out of place. You know the feeling?

During a potluck meal following the service, I asked him how he had enjoyed church. He thought for a minute, then replied, "Well, one thing I did notice—there is an awful lot of love in the church." I don't know what you think, but for me nothing nicer could have been said about my church.

If people see real love in action in the church, then there is hope that it can also work in the family.

4. *By Showing Forgiveness and Acceptance*

I wish more of us understood the Christian message that even in failure there is hope. Earlier we noticed surveys showing that 30 percent of Adventist marriages end in brokenness. That is disappointing and a cause for concern. But do not despair. Looking more carefully, we find that in that brokenness

there is an increase in assurance of eternal life and commitment to the church. Hope in Jesus' soon coming for those divorced and remarried increases significantly—from 72 percent to 85 percent. God does not condemn us for failure, even in marriage, but uses those experiences to strengthen us.

Many years ago two young people whom I knew well walked out on their respective partners and set up a home together. I was upset and disappointed in them and the example they were setting for others. To my shame, I did not contact them or try to help until many years later, when I met them again. They told me of the pain they had experienced in rejection and abandonment by their Christian friends. They knew they had done wrong and wanted to put it right in the best possible way. Thankfully, despite their own failures, they were not rejected by God, and were finally restored. Our church should reflect that kind of forgiveness in our relationships to one another, for even in failure there is hope.

A church truly concerned about people and relationships shows there is hope for the family. A church that experiences and offers reconciliation gives hope for the family. A church in which love is truly understood and expressed brings hope for the family. A church that accepts failure and forgives tells people maybe there is hope even for their family.

"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people" (Rev. 21:3). Yes, in God there is hope for the family. ☞

Series concluded

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

¹ For the other articles, see Mar. 9, p. 8; Mar. 16, p. 8; Mar. 23, p. 8; and Mar. 30, p. 14.

² *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 429, 430.



James M. Huzzey is church ministries director of the Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists.

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William G. Johnsson has served as editor of the *Adventist Review* since 1982. In these years, he has watched his church struggle through times of both intense debate and debilitating apathy. But the hardest challenges, and the brightest hopes, may lie just ahead as Adventism confronts the factors that threaten it with fragmentation.

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Words I Live By

Readers share their favorite Bible texts

Our invitation in the February 9, 1995, issue for readers to share passages of Scripture that profoundly influence their lives brought about 70 responses. Here is a selection.



“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28, NIV).

Throughout my life I have faced situations often difficult to bear. At times I have wondered where God is. But this verse reminds me that God is in control of my life. I am now a sophomore academy student with challenges to face in many different areas. However, I know I can trust Him to make each situation right. His timing is perfect even when we don't understand.

*Christina Waller
Lacombe, Alberta*



“In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3:6, NKJV).

This text is a source of encouragement to me and provides peace of mind, confidence for the future in my service for the Lord, and preparation to meet Jesus when He returns. As I daily learn from the voice of the Holy Spirit what the Lord expects of me and I consecrate myself to Him, I have confidence in His leading.

*Harold G. Josephs
Australia*



“Fear not. . . . For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name. . . . For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused. . . . For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee” (Isa. 54:4-7).

Several years ago I found myself feeling quite destitute after my husband left me and our 2-year-old son. One evening I was reading my Bible. I came across these verses.

After reading these words, I determined to lean on the Lord just as I would a husband. Sometimes I ran into some pretty tough situations. But as I turned each situation over to my Maker, difficulties vanished. There was a clear path to follow.

*Holly Roy
Blanchard, Michigan*



“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

This verse is reassuring. I cling to the promise that is offered to my children and to myself and to everyone who will believe on our Saviour.

Elder H.M.S. Richards, Sr., said, “There'll be a whole lot of people in heaven who don't understand the seven trumpets.” But this verse is understandable. It is such a comfort and encouragement.

*Mrs. Christian Cooper
Loma Linda, California*



After my husband's death I was fearful of being alone, and making decisions caused near panic. The Lord led me to this verse, which has given me so much peace and assurance. These are now words I live by:

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isa. 41:10, NIV).

Mrs. Lucelle Shults
Missoula, Montana



For two aching years I wrestled with depression as palpable as a person. Neither medical nor psychological treatments seemed to have any effect. At times I wallowed in self-pity and despair; at other times I railed against God for allowing me to suffer so. Finally my church family gathered around me and gave me this verse:

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

When that verse became my soul's utter prayer, God healed me and since then has granted me 20 years of happiness.

Helene Hubbard
Hawkinsville, Georgia



"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

After a protracted cardiac and pulmonary illness my wife passed away

more than a year ago. She was a loving and caring person, and our marriage was good for 53 years. During a time of shock and grief, the Holy Spirit forcibly brought to my mind this verse, by which I have been living since.

Jim A. McClenaghan
Fresno, California



My sister, Eda Medford, fell asleep in Jesus on January 23. While she was sick, I prayed that God would heal her. One Friday night I prayed for a miracle. I told God that I wanted to stand before the church on Sabbath and praise Him for her healing. A still, small voice said, "Can you praise Me only when I give you a miracle?"

This set me to thinking, and on Sabbath I stood before the church and told them of my prayer and the answer. Then I praised God for His love and the blessed hope of His second coming, when I would see my sister again.

I now end my letters with these words I live by:

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"
(Titus 2:13).

Esther Jones
Ada, Ohio



"I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20, NKJV).

I am a pastor of more than 17 years who has recently experienced the breakup of my home. The major contribution I made to this tragedy was working far too many hours for too many years. In spite of my failings, which are many, Jesus promises to be with me always! No matter what, He is with me. That makes living possible.

Vialo Weis
Shattuck, Oklahoma



"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
(Rev. 21:4).

I lost a baby girl at childbirth 31 years ago, and this text gives me the hope that one day soon I'll see my daughter and will be able to hold and raise her in a perfect world. All my tears and heartaches from the loss will be wiped away.

Rita Evans
Fort Collins, Colorado



"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now

live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

This text was chosen at my baptism. Years before, in my teens when I first heard the Adventist message, I decided I did not want to get baptized and turned back. Through much prayer I was baptized at age 33 and chose these words to be read to me. If Christ so loved me that He died for me, I must be true and faithful to Him. And by God's grace I will.

Elaine Wharton
London, England



Thirty years ago I became discouraged—there was no spiritual growth. I was a good Pharisee—and a lost sheep. Do's and don'ts had not endeared me to a Father who was "making a list, and checking it twice."

Then I read an article in the *Review* about righteousness by faith. I began studying the Bible to know a kind, loving Father. A beautiful love/trust relationship developed, and these words became principles I live by:

"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"

(Micah 6:8, NIV).

Mable Merizan
WaKeeney, Kansas



My favorite verse in the Bible is this precious promise:

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world—our faith" (1 John 5:4, NKJV).

Where's my tambourine? This is my song of deliverance! Every time I read it I see the great news of the gospel, and it encourages me to hold on to my Saviour in faith, like a branch holds on to a vine (John 15:5).

This promise also feeds my faith. I can almost hear Jesus saying: "You can do it. See, I'm right here with you!" So I hold on to His mighty arm in faith—for victory!

Sue Gilmore
Whitmore, Michigan



"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hand" (Isa. 49:15, 16).

I was abandoned by my mother at age 5 months. My dad worked for 14 hours a day. No relatives lived in New York City to take care of me. Who watched over me, changing diapers, giving bottles, etc.? A neighbor.

God took care of me as a baby and throughout my life. I have been happily

married for 45 years and have three daughters and seven grandchildren.

Sarah Murphy
Simi Valley, California



"Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:21, 22, NKJV).

These words helped me hold on to the Sabbath truth until I found the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Although I was alone at first, this promise assured me of salvation. So I applied what I learned to my life until our Lord introduced me to His remnant church. The real value comes when I apply God's words in my daily life.

Lt. Col. Jeffrey A. Westberg, USAF
Hurlburt Field, Florida



"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

This is the first Bible text I learned after becoming a Seventh-day Adventist in 1928. It still keeps me strong in the faith. I repeat it when I need strength, and it helps.

Lucy Smith
White Stone, Virginia





CALVIN B. ROCK

What's the Difference?

Ethically speaking, please explain how God the Father can accept Jesus as our substitute and example if, as Ellen White wrote, He did not have our evil propensities. His being born "unlike" us in this critical regard disqualifies Him from such designation, don't you agree?

I'm not certain which of Mrs. White's many references on this topic you have in mind. Two that come to my mind are: "Because of sin his (Adam's) posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten of God. . . . He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity."

And this: "Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the Second Adam" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, vol. 5, p. 1128).

What must be understood is that Jesus did not come to be a second "you and me," He came to be the second *Adam*. Thus His saving ministry is ethically justified, first of all, by the fact that He was greatly *disadvantaged* in comparison to the first Adam.

The first Adam was not hungry when he was tempted; Jesus often was. The first Adam was clothed in the pristine humanity of original creation when he failed; Jesus succeeded in a body bearing our infirmities. The first Adam was surrounded with the perfect atmosphere of Eden; Jesus was engulfed by the wickedness of a world suffering the consequences of four millennia of sin.

But Jesus was *disadvantaged* in comparison to us as well. His greatest temptation was to use His power to overcome emotional and physical stress and to retaliate against His enemies. That is a problem that you and I do not have.

Jesus' victory on our behalf is morally valid also because He *voluntarily* performed His services for fallen humanity. A primary principle of ethics, established by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), is that rational individuals are morally responsible for all uncoerced actions.

Ellen White utilized both of these principles of moral validity when she wrote: "The Second Adam was a free moral agent, held responsible for His conduct. Surrounded by intensely subtle and misleading influences, He was much less favorably situated than was the first Adam to lead a sinless life" (*ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 1074).

By being fully liable for his actions, Jesus qualified to be fully accountable for our sins. Thus the Father, in appraising His saving ministry, could with absolute justification see "the travail of His soul, and be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11, NKJV).

I am one of those North American Adventists who is tired of being held hostage by the other divisions on issues such as women's ordination. They do what they want to do and then come together to hold us back. Why can't we do our own thing?

It's true that lifestyle as well as implementation of some doctrines vary within the Adventist family. This is not surprising given our cultural differentiation in many countries. What is surprising—even miraculous—is that over the decades we have maintained as much unity as we have.

Furthermore, I know of no division in which people "do what they want to do." My travels within the other 10 divisions convince me that no demographic unit has a lesser spirituality or conversely a preeminence on holiness. Difference of opinion is the result not of purposeful insensitivity, but of dif-

ference in background.

As our global community shrinks and we are forced into more intense interaction with other cultures, the danger of tensions within the body increases. Because theological interpretation is inevitably flavored by social orientation, it is important that we have a healthy appreciation for the sociohistorical background of others. Name-calling and stereotyping hurt, not help. We shouldn't expect to function in *unison*, but we can function in *unity* if we maintain clear communication, mutual toleration, and a healthy respect for the democratic process.

Our ability and willingness to be guided by such generosity will be firmly tested in discussions at the upcoming General Conference session with North America's request that: "The General Conference vests in each division the right to authorize the ordination of individuals within its territory in harmony with established policies. In addition, where circumstances do not render it inadvisable, a division may authorize the ordination of qualified individuals without regard to gender. In divisions where the division executive committees take specific actions approving the ordination of women to the gospel ministry, women may be ordained to serve in those divisions."

I hope the world divisions will find this request reasonable. But whether or not they do, I must affirm that the disagreement is genuine, the process is fair, and, I believe, if considered with dispassionate openness and Christian charity, the results will be pleasing to God.

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

From Prisoner to Evangelist



Anna and Ron Williams

BY R. S. NORMAN

When he told me I was going to be his wife, I laughed in his face." Anna smiles as she recalls that day.

"The very idea that I, a prison chaplain, would consider marrying an inmate was the farthest thing from my plans for the future."

Anna Harris was pastor of the 300-member Lighthouse Holiness Church in Memphis, Tennessee. She had also been a chaplain at the local prison for more than three years when Ron Williams arrived as a prisoner. He was soon talking with her as often as possible.

Even though in prison, Ron was a keen Bible student. Soon he had a group of 54 inmates and three officers studying with him. During his own private study at this time, Ron became aware of the 2300 days, the sanctuary, and the state of the dead, along with other topics he had never noticed before.

Same Day Ceremonies

After Ron was released from prison he visited a Seventh-day Adventist church and could hardly believe his ears as he heard Dana Edmond preach. He didn't know anyone else had the same beliefs he did. Ron shared the good news with Anna. They had a new church family.

In May 1990 Ron and Anna were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They also married on the same day.

Within weeks Ron was hired as a chaplain at the prison in which he had been recently incarcerated. Now the Williamses refocused their evangelistic outreach. In cooperation with J. A. Jones, pastor in Memphis, they held evangelistic meetings in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama. Later they led meetings on their own in Texas, Kentucky, and Louisiana.

Ron and Anna then moved to Dallas, where he shared his newfound faith with friends. He also applied for a job as a prison chaplain, but did not meet the college educational requirements.

Since Jones had earlier urged him to attend Oakwood College, to Oakwood Ron and Anna went for the 1992-1993 school year.

At first they had to sleep on the floor, and food money was short. Ron also found it was not easy to keep up with

administration were very pleased with their work.


God's Surprises

During the summer of 1993 Ron and Anna had invitations to hold evangelistic meetings in New York, Kentucky, and the Allegheny West conferences.

But the Lord apparently had other plans. What worked out for them instead was conducting revivals four nights a week at the Limestone Correctional Facility with E. C. Ward, then pastor of the Oakwood College church. At the conclusion of the series, Ron, now ordained as a local elder, and Ward baptized 43 candidates. All were HIV positive or had AIDS.

Anna and Ron work together. She is dedicated to reaching the goals the Lord has set for them as a team. She is also in the process of writing a book about her life as a prison chaplain and her adventures with Ron, whom she never expected to marry.

Currently Ron is director of The Potter's House, in Lubbock, Texas, the second self-supporting halfway house he and Anna have established. Ron says, "Whether I ever finish college or not, I feel my life's work is to work with prisoners, children at risk, pimps, prostitutes, drug abusers, and others who may need help."

Ron's immediate goal is to continue directing The Potter's House. After that, who knows? 

Anna, a chaplain,

met Ron in prison,

and both found that

God is full of surprises.

classmates who were 10 or 12 years younger. But he and Anna persevered.

Soon they were getting along better financially. They became a big brother and a big sister to many younger students. With the aid of other students, during the fall of 1992 they organized and conducted Bible studies in 189 homes.

In January 1993 they produced programs to be aired by the Three Angels Network. They also inspired many to take up prison ministry.

As Ron and Anna became better known, their work for prisoners grew. While at Oakwood they held services on Friday nights, Sabbath, and Sunday each week at the Limestone Correctional Facility in Huntsville, Alabama, where both inmates and the



R. S. Norman is a retired educator living in Avon Park, Florida.

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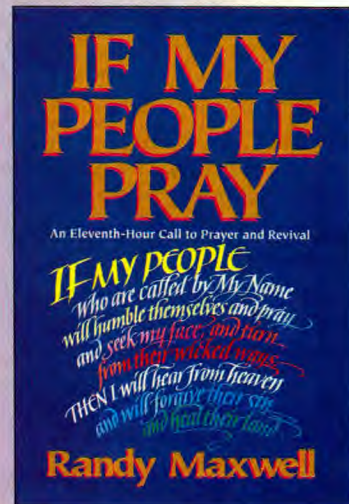
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CHILDREN'S CORNER



This Little Bite of Mine

BY WAYNE HICKS

Has anyone ever called you a bird-brain? Would that be a compliment or a put-down? Most of us would say a put-down. Generally speaking, that's true. However, it wouldn't be true if they were talking about some parrots. For example, we own an African gray parrot. She has the vocabulary capacity of a 2-year-old child, and some grays can say as many as 2,000 words.

We call our bird Cherub. My two sons think the name This Little Bite of Mine would be more appropriate. They are not as impressed with her vocabulary as they are with her biting ability.

Cherub says the usual "hello [in several voices]; how are you? I'm fine" and "what ya doin'?"

Then there are some Cherub originals, like: *Hurry up; get over here*. She also imitates a duck's quack, a blackbird's whistle, our vacuum cleaner, a drippy faucet, and the beep of the answering machine on our telephone.

My wife likes it best when the bird whistles along with her. Cherub's favorite tune is "I Left My Heart in San Francisco."

She got my sons in trouble last summer with her wolf whistle. The boys

were working in the front yard. Cherub was in the house with the windows open. A teenage boy walked by with his girlfriend as Cherub cut loose with the wolf whistle. The young man was not impressed. His jealousy took control, and my boys could not convince him that it was a parrot that had whistled at his girl.

Cherub even prepares for Sabbath by preening several hundred feathers. She takes the feathers to the edge of her cage and dumps them on the clean kitchen floor.

One Friday while preening, she slipped from her perch and fell. During the fall to the bottom of her cage, we heard her cry, "Uh-oh-oh-oh-oh!"

Last summer a thunderstorm passed close by our house, and it reminded me of how afraid Jesus' disciples were out in the storm on the sea of Galilee. Even a bird-brain like Cherub fears storms and appreciates peace. The thunder cracked. A great bright shaft of lightning crashed from a huge dark cloud to the ground. Cherub's response? A horror-struck "WOW!"

■ CALIFORNIA

PlusLine HelpDesk

An idea whose time has come.

Somewhere in North America—at this very moment—printing presses are printing, production facilities are producing, and resource developers are developing materials and resources for Christian consumers involved in ministry.

New products and materials, denominational and otherwise, designed for nurture and outreach ministry are multiplying at such a rapid rate that it's impossible for active church members and pastors to keep up with it all. Consequently, some waste precious time sorting through catalogs and brochures, or worse, redeveloping products that already exist.

If only there was a central clearing house where information is stored and retrieved, which would help church members and leaders find just the right resource!

Meet the *PlusLine* ministry HelpDesk. It's an idea whose time has come—a user-friendly resource for all members to call and get information.

PlusLine eliminates the red tape by taking the hassle out of finding ministry-related information. If an item cannot be found in their files, operators conduct personalized searches to provide callers with requested information as quickly as possible.

Here are some of the types of calls and requests that PlusLine has responded to:

- Material on what Seventh-day Adventists believe
- A report on family life

By Rich DuBose, director of NAD PlusLine and associate director of church ministries for the Pacific Union, in Westlake Village, California.

- Information on “clean” and “unclean” foods

- How to find a video about William Miller

- Suggestions on a video series about spiritual gifts

- Information regarding Elmshaven, Ellen White's home in California

- Videos having to do with temperance-related topics

- Courses necessary to become a minister

Most of the inquiries result in callers being given specific names, resources, or organizations to contact. Often the information is found without having to make further calls.

PlusLine Is Born

Back in 1993 the Pacific Union Conference began a pilot project that evaluated the need for such a service throughout its region. The project was to help local leaders and members find the resources that would help them perform their ministry functions. And the union seemed the logical place to gather the information.

To begin, Daniel Savino, PlusLine developer and director of the Pacific Union Church Resource Center, asked members of the Academy of Adventist Church Ministry Professionals (AACMP) to submit resources that could be recommended as effective tools for 12 different areas of ministry, including: adult Sabbath school, children's ministry, community service, family life, health, high school youth, outreach, small groups, stewardship, women's ministry, worship, and young adults. Once this mechanism was in place, it didn't take long for the information database to expand and enthusiasm to build.

An advertisement in the *Pacific Union Recorder* (May 3, 1993) announced the new service would start on May 1, 1993. That day PlusLine was launched with a computer database, a toll-free phone number (1-800-SDA-PLUS), and a live operator.

Growth Continues

What started out as a trickle of inquiries quickly became a tidal wave of calls. In the months since the first calls were taken, more than 8,000 requests have been logged and serviced. Active church members have utilized this user-friendly resource for information and support.

The success of the pilot project in the Pacific Union brought a recommendation from the nine church ministries directors throughout North America that PlusLine be expanded to serve the entire division. The NAD officers and union presidents voted to implement that recommendation under the NAD Church Resources Consortium, with the cost to be shared by the NAD and the union conferences.

“It meets a real need,” says Monte Sahlin, an assistant to the president of the North American Division. “Pastors and members now have a place to phone when they are searching for resources and when they have questions.”

Sahlin oversees the development and “delivery system” for resource materials within the denomination. He said, “There is nothing more basic than an 800-number help desk. It's an essential part of the support system for local church leaders.”

Union conferences are personalizing this ministry with custom advertising in their local fields. A supporting eight-page newsletter, *PlusLine ACCESS*, promotes greater awareness as well. The

newsletter highlights specific materials and encourages readers to use the 800-number for more information. Several unions provide subscriptions for their pastors and select church leaders.

The word is out: PlusLine's HelpDesk is serious about helping people connect their ministry dreams to the appropriate resource tools. In today's rapidly changing world, it's the least we can do.

■ CUBA

Adventists Visit Cuban Refugees

Having fled their towns and villages, they have yet to find a home.

Two Seventh-day Adventists, Rolando de los Rios and Nidia Alonso, were among a delegation of 30 government and religious leaders who recently visited the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The two Adventists helped as translators at the base hospital during their stay.

De los Rios, Florida Conference vice president for Hispanic ministries, and Alonso, coordinator of the refugee assistance program in Miami, Florida, visited 10 of the 33 refugee camps on the base.

Conditions at the camps were miserable. "The reality is impossible to express," said de los Rios. "It's a sad situation."

With more than 30,000 refugees in the camps, only a handful of Adventists were located. "I estimate the total number of Adventists in the camps to be between 50 and 70," said de los Rios. Sabbath school quarterlies and Bibles were distributed to some.

De los Rios acknowledged that the problems facing the refugees are a long way from being resolved. But he suggested that humanitarian groups such as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) could possibly help relieve some of the material needs of the refugees and provide them with hope and faith in God.



Camps like this one in Cuba are filled with refugees who are waiting to begin new lives.

■ FRANCE

Mission Institute to Follow GC Session

Immediately following the General Conference session in Utrecht, the Euro-Africa and Trans-European divisions are organizing a missions institute at Collonges-sous-Saleve, France.

The three-week program—July 10-30—will present instruction to develop mission awareness and cross-cultural sensitivity. Specific areas of study will include instruction on traditional religions of African, Asian, and Islamic cultures; health and hygiene; Adventist policy matters; anthropology; communication methods; etc. There will even be classes for the children of those planning for missionary service.

Instructors for the institute are experienced Adventist administrators and missiologists.

Collonges-sous-Saleve is located a few hours from Utrecht in one of the most scenic areas of Europe. The institute is designed especially for newly appointed or returning missionaries, short-term cross-cultural workers, and administrators with multinational responsibilities. Postgraduate students can earn up to six credit hours toward their scholastic degree.

More information can be obtained from:

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BULLETINBOARD

To New Posts

ADVENTIST YOUTH SERVICE—1994

The names of Adventist youth serving all over the world have been appearing throughout the year. This section lists only a portion of those who served in 1994.

Alma Patricia Luna (PUC), to serve as assistant dean of women, Villa Aurora Seminary, Rome, Italy, of Los Angeles, left July 31.

Douglas Allen Walter (LSU), to serve as English/Bible teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, of Riverside, California, left July 12.

Robert Richard Wells (PUC), to serve as teacher, Ailinglaplap SDA Elementary School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Visalia, California, left Aug. 2.

Michael J. Wiley (SC), to serve as school chaplain/youth pastor, Murwillumbah SDA Church, Trans-Tasman Union, Gordon, New South Wales, Australia, of Lakewood, New York, left Aug. 8.

Robby Lee Wooten (SC), to serve as teacher, Yap SDA Elementary School, Colonia, Yap, of Westbury, New York, left Aug. 2.

Emile Ignatius Yacoub (LSU), to serve as programmer, AWR-Latin America, Alajuela, Costa Rica, of Riverside, California, left Aug. 28.

Grace Eun Hyun Yuh (PUC), to serve as English/Bible teacher, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Angwin, California, left June 20.

Heather Sheree Zinke (SC), to serve as English teacher, Montemorelos University, Montemorelos, Mexico, of Silver Spring, Maryland, left June 15.

Deaths

KIRK, Emma—b. 1910, Avon Park, Fla.; d. Nov. 14, 1994, Avon Park, Fla. She served 30 years in the Atlantic Union Conference. She is survived by one son, John Kirk, Jr.; one sister, Phyllis Bergstrom; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

LAURENCE, Jack Paul—b. Feb. 14, 1911, Pittsburgh, Pa.; d. Jan. 6, 1995, Takoma Park, Md. He spent 60 years of service in Adventist education. He was a teacher at Madison, Southwestern, and Union colleges; a principal of Mount Vernon and Takoma academies, and a vice president for administration at Columbia Union College. He is survived by one son, Earl; and one daughter, Ellen; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

LEHMANN, Luise Elsie—b. Oct. 27, 1907, Rosthern, Sask.; d. Oct. 15, 1994, Rosthern, Sask. She served as a secretary in Canada, Oregon, and at the General Conference.

MAAS, Ellis Robert—b. Sept. 10, 1902, Argentina; d. Mar. 31, 1994, Loma Linda, Calif. He served as an educator for 45 years in North and South America. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Evelyn; one daughter, Vivian Chai; two sisters, Esther Nelson and Noema Knopf; one brother, Arthur; three grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

MCCLURE, Mildred Evelyn—b. Oct. 24, 1917, Reeves, Ga.; d. Oct. 4, 1994, Loma Linda, Calif. She served as an administrator and teacher in Adventist hospitals and schools of nursing. She is survived by her husband, Warner E.; two daughters, Marjorie Eggers and Marilyn Plata; and two sons, Warner M. and Denny Nelson.

MILLER, Mary Elizabeth—b. Dec. 23, 1919, Illinois; d. Oct. 1994, Riverside, Calif. She spent many years serving with her husband, Dr. Harry Miller, the “China Doctor.” She is survived by one brother, Charles W. Greer.

MONCRIEFF, J. Edwin—b. Nov. 23, 1918, China; d. Dec. 13, 1994, Loma Linda, Calif. He served the

denomination 41 years, working for Adventist Health Systems/West in medical technology and as a microbiology technician.

OLSEN, David Livingston—b. Nov. 24, 1909, Nebraska; d. Oct. 22, 1994, Loma Linda, Calif. He served as a pastor and administrator from 1936 to 1974. He was an associate speaker of the *Voice of Prophecy* in the 1950s. He is survived by his wife, Marguerite; one daughter, Carolyn Wieder; one son, Don; and two grandchildren.

OLSON, Rowena E.—b. Sept. 9, 1921, Berrien Springs, Mich.; d. Oct. 23, 1994, Calimesa, Calif. She served as a secretary and administrative assistant in California and at the General Conference until 1989. She taught typing in England when her husband served as president of Newbold College. She is survived by her husband, Robert; one son, Wesley; one daughter, Evelyn Georgeson; six grandchildren; and one sister, Catharine Miller.

PEASE, Norval F.—b. Mar. 10, 1910, Oregon; d. Feb. 22, 1995, Wheaton, Ill. He served as a pastor, educator, and writer for nearly 60 years in Washington, Massachusetts, Michigan, and California. He was at the Andrews University Theological Seminary from 1960 to 1967 and then went to chair the undergraduate Theology Department at Loma Linda University until his retirement. He is survived by his wife, Blanche; one daughter, LaVonne Neff; one son, Harold Pease; and six grandchildren.

PHILLIPS, Frank Berg—b. Jan. 2, 1914, Montana; d. Sept. 4, 1994, Tacoma, Wash. He served as a singing evangelist and pastor for more than 45 years in Illinois, California, Washington, and Oregon. He continued to hold revival meetings 10 years after his retirement. He is survived by one daughter, Alice; seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and one brother, Floyd.

RAY, Herman C.—b. Oct. 26, 1907, North Carolina; d. Sept. 11, 1994, Winter Park, Fla. He served as a hospital chaplain for more than 30 years. He is survived by his wife, Louise; one stepson, Richard Miller; two stepdaughters, Pattie Bishop and Jacqueline Runyon; one brother, Merwin; and three sisters, Ola Crabtree, Ruth Payne, and Lalah Neece.

RIECKMANN, Carl H.—b. Apr. 3, 1903, Germany; d. Nov. 5, 1994, Adelaide, Australia. He served as a missionary in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries between 1926 and 1940. He pastored in Germany and Australia, and was known for his work among immigrants in South Australia. He is survived by two sons, Karl and Wilfried; and five grandchildren.

SANDEFUR, Cree—b. 1914, Bowie, Tex.; d. July 22, 1994, Loma Linda, Calif. He served as a pastor and church administrator, and was president of the Columbia and Pacific unions. He is survived by his wife Mildred; two sons, Charles and Jere; and four grandchildren.

SETON, Marjorie Lillie—b. Dec. 17, 1912, Cairo, Egypt; d. Sept. 5, 1994, Hendersonville, N.C. She served as a Bible instructor and secretary in South Africa, Switzerland, and Britain. She is survived by her husband, Bernard Seton; one son, Gerard; one daughter, Hilary Resla; and five grandchildren.

SORENSEN, Manuel J.—b. Jan. 28, 1896, Denmark; d. July 13, 1994, Riverside, Calif. An early missionary to Ethiopia, he served there for 21 years and became close friends with Emperor Haile Selassie. He also served as college president at West Indies College, Jamaica, until 1959. The Sorensens settled in La Sierra, where he taught for eight years; he taught two years at California Baptist College, completing 50 years of educational work. He is survived by two daughters, Margaret Spear and Shirley Maxson; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and one sister, Myrtle Sorensen.

The Invisible Ones

We all wear clothing as a kind of uniform," said a noted wearing apparel specialist. "It's a way to identify ourselves to the rest of the world." He might have cited police officers, postal workers, or physicians in white smocks.

I had to chuckle over a true story a young Christian told on himself. He had joined the Salvation Army, and as a new recruit he had to travel on a bus in his uniform. To wear the uniform "back at the barracks" was one thing, he said. Then he added sheepishly, "But to wear it in a crowded public place, with scores of eyes upon me, was a far different matter. It sent waves of terror down my spine."

The young Christian confessed, "I found myself wishing I had never promised to be a Christian witness in uniform. The only way of escape was to cover my uniform with a plain, heavy overcoat." Recalling this incident, the man said, "It still brings sheer embarrassment, especially when remembering all those stares at my overcoat in June."

Who Is Who?

The Old Testament tells of some people who took vows of separation (Num. 6:2, 3). Their vows included no fruit of the vine, no hair cutting, and no contact with dead bodies. In spite of their attempts to be a holy people—distinct, separate, and wearing an identifying uniform, so to speak—some lost their sense of identity and yearned for the luxury of being just like everybody else. Some, like Samson, came to a bitter end.

Bob Chuvalla, editorial writer for *Christian Herald*, once wrote, "Unbelievers have a hard time spotting us (Christians) unless we carry a Bible for identification. We watch the same TV shows as they, work the same jobs, root for the same team, live in the same neighborhoods, vote for the same politicians, have the same worries. For the most part we are invisible, silent as our cultures rot, deaf to cries of injustice and pain, to the hollow ring of materialism that echoes through our souls."

Perhaps you have smiled at the story about



Some of us remain

"silent as our cul-

tures rot, deaf to

cries of injustice

and pain."

the bewildered Christian motorist who pulled behind another car waiting at a stoplight and beeped. The driver of the first car suddenly jumped out, waving his arms furiously and shouting at the driver behind him. "Hey, idiot, you've convinced me your horn works; now let's try your lights."

"Oh, I'm sorry. Your bumper sticker says, 'Honk if you love Jesus.'"

Quiet Versus Invisible

There is a difference between a quiet Christian and an invisible one. Often the quiet testimony that is lived out in the style of Jesus is the best of sermons. There is nothing invisible about a genuine, silent witness *who takes a stand* without preaching and so becomes impressively visible simply by holding unswervingly to his Christian convictions, no matter what.

Conversely, in the case of a secret or invisible Christian, what you see is not always what you get. Such a one becomes two-faced, a double personality, using one image while mingling safely in the church group; another image to match his secular friends and associates.

We don't need more "bumper sticker bumpkins" (awkward, unstable persons) like the jumpy fellow who forgot the image his bumper sticker projected, making him pathetically transparent.

It's a bit disarming, isn't it, to be surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and to know that most of them can see right through us. It can be a challenge too for us to put Christlike substance onto our bones and into our living.



H. Woody Bailey is a freelance writer living in Chatsworth, Illinois.

BY H. WOODY BAILEY

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