

THE HEART OF IT ALL

• THE PROMISE OF SPRING

ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVEN DAY ADVENTISTS

MARCH 28, 1996



The Perfect Parent

Thanks, Youth

I am so grateful to the youth of our church for promoting "Take a Fast From Noise" (Dec. 28). I participated and learned that you cannot focus on your worries, shortcomings, etc., and listen to God at the same time. It just isn't possible. There was peace and calm in my heart. I thought before I spoke. I was lifted up each morning and throughout the day as I remembered to "listen to God." To think that thousands of others were experiencing the same thing was inspiring. One morning I sat on the sofa with the door shut and sang hymns from the new hymnal for an hour. And I am not a singer.

God bless our young people, and may we not forget to listen.

*Genevieve McIntosh
Pensacola, Florida*

Depression—and Ignorance

I am writing to commend you and your staff on a good job with our church paper. Times have changed—you realize that and are publishing more "personal problem" articles than before. I don't always agree with everything in the articles or the editorials, but then I am an individual able to think for myself, as the Creator intended.

Specifically, I want to praise Laurie Denski-Snyman's "Depression—Why It Happens to Christians" (Jan. 25). It is the first such understanding of a real illness that I have seen in your publication. Our daughter and I both have suffered from biological depression, as described by Ms. Denski-Snyman. But how many of our fellow believers really believe it can be biological? Not many, based on comments I have heard from members and ministers.

One Sabbath our pastor spoke about depression. When I saw the sermon title in the bulletin I was very hopeful for some understanding, since I had recently confided in him about my illness.

But all his solutions were "keep busy," "trust God," etc. A few weeks later a guest speaker said the same things. Needless to say, I don't tell any Seventh-day Adventists that I have this terrible "faithless" disease.

Name Withheld

When the Leader Leaves

The many contributions of L. R. Conradi to the Seventh-day Adventist Church are worth reviewing and remembering ("The Amazing Life of L. R. Conradi," Jan. 18). Author Brian E. Strayer referred to Ellen G. White's appraisal of Conradi's service in Europe, but no mention was made of this German leader's position on the significance of Ellen G. White and her prophetic gift.

Conradi's final rejection of Ellen G. White and her testimonies is well documented in various publications on the history of the SDA Church and is not disputed. Adventist historians can only imagine the tremendous negative impact Conradi's position on the Spirit of Prophecy had on the lives of his contemporaries, also of German extraction, living in Europe, North America, and South America. As an individual who traces his spiritual legacy to Conradi's ministry in the Crimean Peninsula, it is left

for me to ponder and to grieve.

*Elmer A. Widmer, Ph.D.
Lakeport, California*

Don't Change It

Thank you so much for the "good old Review." I have been a reader for about 40 years. I look forward to it every Sabbath. When it does not get here by Friday, I am very disappointed.

However, now I have a concern. You are talking about the "new Review." I don't know if I like the sound of that or not. I love the "good old Review." I hate to see it changed. You folks have done a beautiful job for years.

Perhaps someone should start a new publication for the ones you are endeavoring to reach.

*Jack Faatz
Dayton, Tennessee*

This is the kind of criticism we love, Jack—"You're doing fine; don't change a thing." But don't worry. We think you'll find the new Review a beautiful blend of past strengths and present freshness. Our objective remains the same: to uplift Jesus Christ the best we know how. Look for the new Review next week—and tell us what you think.—Editors.

Bless You Too, Maybelle

I enjoy the magazine and give them away at church. My old age of 97 gives me troubles one way or another, but I do not worry about anything. I know that Jesus will come before long, and then there will be no troubles of body or mind. I feel sure that God wants me here. He helps me day by day. I send money monthly to more than 12 of His workers, and I receive various items to give at church that are appreciated.

I pray every day that God will bless all His workers and others.

*Maybelle Barnett
Sacramento, California*

The Adventist Review Unwrapped

You can get the first look at the new *Adventist Review* during a special satellite television concert on March 30, 4:00-5:30 p.m. EST on Galaxy 4, channel 9.

The program, *Adventist Review Unwrapped—A Celebration of a Faith That Works*, includes musical artists Faith First of Loma Linda, California; Bob Edwards, formerly of the *Voice of Prophecy*; the Sounds of Steel, a steel band from Washington, D.C.; and pianist Sam Ocampo, of Berrien Springs, Michigan.

The program will feature music, interviews, and surprises, and the unveiling of the new *Review*. Editor William G. Johnsson and General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg will participate in the program.

For further information, call 1-800-ACN1119.

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Cover photo by
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The Heart of It All

"When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8, NIV).

"Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come" (Rev. 14:7).

Let's be quite clear about the heart of the Adventist message to the world—God and God alone. Our mission is to call men and women to God, their Creator, Saviour, Lord, and coming King.

What an amazing age is this! While Bible versions proliferate and aids to the study of Scripture abound as never before, society is becoming biblically illiterate. While many hunger for spirituality and run after a welter of religions from the East or the New Age, biblical faith seems less and less evident.

In spite of all the churchgoing and religious talk in American society, the god who really counts is not Jesus, but "I." People today worship at the throne of the ego: their wisdom, learning, feelings, and desires count beyond anything that the God of the Bible calls for.

But at such a time as this a message will go out to the world. Resounding from pole to pole, it will confront the pseudospirituality of the age; it will challenge men and women to topple their idols of egoism. It will proclaim God as the only one to whom we should commit our whole being for now and eternity.

Revelation 14:6-12 encapsulates this message. It exalts God as Creator of all and Judge of all; it points out the failure and collapse of all the world systems and religions and devices of the ego that people erect to take the place of God, and it challenges all to turn from

the worship of anyone or anything but God.

And it calls this message about God "the everlasting gospel" (verse 6). It's good news—the good news about God.

God Is Wonderful

Our God, the biblical God, the God who revealed Himself by becoming incarnate as Jesus Christ, is wonderful. He is incredibly great—He is the mind that holds the 10 billion trillion stars in place. And He is incredibly good—He notices you and me, knows all about us, and loves us just the same, accepts us as His children. He has rescued us from our terrible lostness, has come to earth and paid the price of our sins. He is still in charge of the universe, superintending events and leading them on to the climax in His time. And He will come again!

Before such a God, all our idols crumble to dust. Even the idol of our ego, so big in our own eyes, melts like snow. God alone is worthy! He alone is God!

Jesus predicted our amazing age. "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" He asked rhetorically. But He also gave His beloved follower John a vision that shows that even in this age of unbelief, Jesus will have a people who love Him supremely and make Him first and last and best in everything. John saw them—a multitude from every nation, race, tribe, people (Rev. 7:9). And of them it was said: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

Thus the great controversy will reach its climax on earth over the same issue with which it began in heaven. At its beginning Lucifer attacked the character of God. He

accused God of being unjust, unfair, arbitrary.

Throughout the centuries of conflict, Satan has continued to portray God in the same way. All that the evil one is he has sought to transfer to God. Today God still gets a bad rap, still is blamed for what Satan causes. And so earth's last message tells the world in clarion tones the truth about God, the everlasting good news of the God who loves us so much He gave Himself for us.

The Heart of Our Message

Ellen White makes crystal clear what must lie at the heart of our message and mission. "It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of this world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth. . . . Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, 'Behold your God.' The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 415).

Next week we will roll out the new *Adventist Review*. You will find a fresh look, bright contents. But above all I hope you find in that issue and every subsequent issue food for your soul, because the focus is God and God alone.

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



Stories of Salvation

How much of the Bible would be left if it had no stories? What if God had stripped out all the people and had given us only the bare minimum truth needed for salvation?

Suppose God had given us a Bible that included only the Ten Commandments, some key prophecies, Jesus' sayings—no parables, of course—and Paul's theology?

You'll have to admit that leaving out the stories would have big advantages. First, efficiency. With a good editing, the Bible could become a very precise, efficient tool for giving us a knowledge of truth. Pure facts. No fluff.

Another advantage would be economy. Dropping the stories would slim down the Bible from a bloated hodgepodge to a thin, trim book. It would certainly be cheaper to translate, print, and distribute to all the world.

Big chunks would vanish from Genesis and Exodus, Joshua and Judges, Kings and Chronicles—not to mention Job, Jonah, Ruth, and Esther. The Gospels, of course, would be condensed to Jesus' choicest sayings.

Do we wince at the idea of a Bible with no stories? If "facts" and "knowledge" and "law" summarize truth, why don't they seem to be enough?

Maybe it is because we are not machines, but *children* of a God in three *persons*. For us, God is not simply a perfect idea, not just a source of all power, not primarily a celestial arbitrator. For us, God is personal. God is relational.

God is also creative. We weren't dumped into a foursquare, black-and-white world with a squadron of robots. God placed us in a garden burgeoning with living color. God created us with

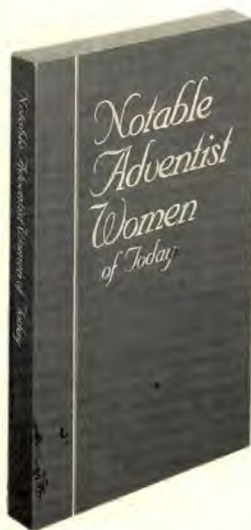
personalities. God gave us the power to choose and interact.

And frankly, if there's one thing we can learn about God from the Bible, it's how much God loves stories! It is something we seem to have inherited.

We love the Bible that tells us about Rachel, Rebekah, and Ruth. We love the Bible that tells us about the tough

pects, and scholarships blossomed the world over.

One among these was a book of stories, *Notable Adventist Women of Today*.^{*} Not only do the stories recount lives of faith, but the book itself was an act of faith. There was little money for this project. But thanks to scores of volunteer writers and editors and several financial donors, the project may "break even." (Any profits will benefit the Women's Ministry Department.)



choices and unusual circumstances that Deborah and Miriam, Anna and Esther, had to face.

Did they keep the Ten Commandments perfectly? Could they all explain Paul's theology? No, but they lived in faith that God loved them, forgave them, and would save them.

Does God Have Any More Good Stories?

And now? Are there people putting their faith to work in ways that will make us sing and smile and pray—and go and do likewise?

In 1995 the Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated the Year of the Adventist Woman. A beautiful bouquet of seminars, outreach programs, proj-

The stories of nearly 150 women from 37 countries were collected, edited, and published by Selma Chaij Mastrapa, a dietitian and counseling psychologist who lives in Maryland.

Many of the names you read will remind you of the Bible. There is Ana—a lifetime Bible worker, preacher, and musician in Cuba. Rachel—a government worker and wife of the former ambassador to the U.S. from Tanzania. Deborah—the organizer extraordinaire who attracted 2,000 women to attend the largest Adventist women's retreat weekend ever.

Miriam—an articulate, efficient, respected vice president at Philippine Union College. Esther—a nurse, a Bible student who has led many to Jesus, and the leader of the primary Sabbath school in her Michigan church for 25 years. Rebecca—a physician and university teacher who cohosts Faith for Today's *Lifestyle Magazine* TV program.

If you love good stories, if you'd like another glimpse of how God is working today, it's a book worth reading.

^{*}A few hundred of the 2,000 books are still available at US\$12.95 plus shipping and handling. Purchase at an Adventist Book Center or by calling AdventSource (formerly known as the North American Division Distribution Center) at 1-800-328-0525.

NORTH AMERICA

Atlantic Union College Update.

At a special constituency session of Atlantic Union College on March 10, members approved a two-track survival plan for the 114-year-old college. The college has experienced large losses for several years. Its current debt is more than \$7 million, says Theodore T. Jones, Atlantic Union president and chair of AUC's board.

The delegates authorized the college administration to continue exploring a tentative proposal from Andrews University to make AUC a campus of AU. This proposal has been approved tentatively by the respective boards of Andrews and AUC. Exploration of such feasibility will continue.

Concurrently, the delegates also advised college administrators to explore a plan submitted by an ad hoc committee of alumni, faculty, and students that would allow the school to remain a stand-alone entity, says Jones.

Union officials have called for a special union constituency session on March 31 to discuss the issue.

Pennsylvania Prison Ministry Grows.

After just one year the Adventist ministry conducted at the Lehigh County Prison in Pennsylvania has grown from two inmates to more than 100.

Currently about 30 volunteers from the Adventist churches in Allentown, Bethlehem, Slatington, and New Tripoli participate in the

Singapore Government to Acquire Adventist Properties

Adventist leaders in Singapore are shocked and saddened by the government's decision to acquire a major portion of the church's land to build a branch line of its rapid transit rail system.

According to the *Asia-Pacific Division Outlook*, the government intends to acquire land currently occupied by most of the union's major facilities: Youngberg Adventist Hospital, Southeast Asia Union College and the primary and secondary school, the college church, Southeast Asia Union Mission headquarters, and the facilities that housed the former publishing house.

Church leaders have spent many hours visiting with government leaders and found that the decision appears to be final—"apart from the direct intervention of God." Church leaders will negotiate the amount of compensation for the land. Legal counsel has advised the church not to appeal the decision, the *Outlook* says.

Church entities may be able to stay on the properties for the next two or three years because construction will not begin until after 2000. Robin Riches, SAUM president, says, "We have been given an opportunity we seldom get—to start all over again, to review what we have been doing."

ministry. According to Diane Miller, ministry coordinator, more inmates attend the weekly Sabbath service than the official Sunday services.

Portland Basketball Team Wins State Championship.

The Portland Adventist Academy basketball team (see photo) won the Oregon

State IIA Championship on March 9. This is the academy's first championship team, says Michael Conner, PAA principal.

The IIA tournament includes all Oregon high schools with 200 to 250 students. There are 66 schools and 13,500 students in the IIA category. "We are proud



of the way the team conducted itself on and off the court. They were a model of Christian decorum," Conner says.

Florida Member Shares Her Experience With AIDS.

When Angelia Diya, a 12-year-old member of the Jupiter Adventist Church in Florida, made the decision to talk pub-



licly about her struggle with AIDS, thousands of people listened, says Cindy

Kurtzhals, Florida Conference communication director.

Last year she shared her story on the CBS program *Before Your Eyes*, the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, *A Current Affair*, and in *Women's World* magazine. She also appeared with the San Francisco Giants baseball team at a fund-raising event, where she spoke to more than 33,000 persons.

Born with HIV, doctors discovered that Angelia had AIDS when she was 2½ years old. Angelia describes her most difficult experience as being when she appeared on her school's closed-circuit TV to make the announcement, Kurtzhals says.

WORLD CHURCH

Belarus Deaf Church Doubles Membership.

A newly organized Adventist church serving deaf individuals, in Vitipsk, Belarus, in the former Soviet Union, doubled its membership from 11 believers to 23 in one year, reports Adventist News Network at the General Conference.

The church's growth occurred through members' efforts and not through a public evangelistic series. Vitipsk is home to more than 10,000 deaf people, most of them radiation victims who trace their disability to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

MVI Volunteers Build Two Churches in Bahamas. Eighty volunteers from Maranatha Volunteers International used their vacation time to build two churches on Eleuthera Island in the Bahamas between January 19 and February 2.

The volunteers came from the United States and Canada and represented diverse professions, reports L. A. Johnson, Bahamas Conference communication director.

To New Position. Antonio Torres, assistant to the vice president for financial affairs at Montemorelos University in Mexico, recently was appointed general manager of the Inter-American Publishing Association. Torres replaces retiring Juan de Armas.

FOR YOUR INTEREST

Adventist Review Featured on First Wednesday. Get a behind-the-scenes look at the new *Adventist Review* on Adventist Communication Network's satellite broadcast *First Wednesday*, airing April 3 at 7:30-8:30 p.m. Eastern time, on Galaxy 4, channel 5. For more information, call (800) ACN-1119, option 2.

SDAs On-line Forum to Expand. The increasingly popular SDAs On-line computer forum on CompuServe

GC Votes Statement on Dangers of Climate Change

The following statement on climate change recently was voted by the Administrative Committee of the General Conference. In issuing the statement, the Seventh-day Adventist Church joins other religious organizations worldwide in encouraging governments to act responsibly in the stewardship of the Earth, reports Adventist News Network.

Scientists warn that the gradual warming of the atmosphere as a result of human activity will have serious environmental consequences. The climate will change, resulting in more storms, more floods, and more droughts.

To keep climate change within bearable limits, the emissions of greenhouse gasses, especially carbon dioxide (CO₂), need to be significantly reduced. Industrialized countries are the main source of these emissions, while the first victims are the small island states and low-lying coastal countries. Despite the clear risks, governments appear slow to act.

The world membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church requests that the governments concerned take steps necessary to avert the danger: by fulfilling the agreement reached in Rio de Janeiro (1992 convention on climate change) to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000 at 1990 levels; by establishing plans for further reductions in carbon dioxide emissions after the year 2000; and by initiating more forcefully public debate on the risks of climate change.

In signing this statement, Seventh-day Adventists declare their advocacy of a simple, wholesome lifestyle, in which people do not step on the treadmill of unbridled consumerism and production of waste. They call for respect of creation, restraint in the use of the world's resources, and reevaluation of our needs as individuals.

is expanding, with a supplemental forum that adds an additional 22 sections.

The new forum allows for both public and private sections for assigned organizations. All but two sections have been spoken for. Each section includes a message board, file library, and conference room for group discussions.

SDAs On-line will also change its name by dropping the SDAs and calling it a less-confusing name—

Adventists On-line. For information, contact sysop Ralph Blodgett at 74431,1566 or (301) 680-6316. More than 4,500 members are now on the forum.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Mar. 30 | The "Adventist Review Unwrapped" satellite concert introducing the new <i>Adventist Review</i> , 4:00 p.m. EST, on Galaxy 4, channel 9 |
| Mar. 30 | Thirteenth Sabbath Offering—a percentage goes to the Asia-Pacific Division |
| Apr. 6 | Missionary Magazine Promotion (<i>Signs, Message, El Centinela, La Sentinelle</i>) |

ALSO IN THE NEWS

Southern Baptists Establish New Congregations.

Officials at the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board announced that its missionaries established a record 2,612 new congregations overseas in 1995, bringing the total number of overseas SBC congregations to 39,073, reports Religion News Service.

The board also reported that there were 287,806 baptisms—boosting overseas membership beyond the 4 million mark for the first time.

Campus Crusade Founder Wins \$1 Million Prize.

Bill Bright, who founded Campus Crusade for Christ 45 years ago and turned it into an evangelical ministry in 165 countries, won the 1996 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion on March 6. The prize is valued at more than \$1 million, reports Religion News Service.



Based in Orlando, Florida, the ministry focuses on such widely diverse groups as students, business executives, athletes, and military personnel.

Abba, Father

God wants to draw us close to Him.

BY GERALD COLVIN

Son," my mother said in a hushed voice as I placed the receiver to my ear, "Dad suffered a stroke in the night and is in the hospital." A blood vessel had given way on the left side of his brain, and he was experiencing impaired speech as well as loss of muscle control on his right side. "They called it a cerebral aneurysm," she added.

I left immediately for his bedside some 500 miles away, brushing away tears and praying as I drove. The vagaries of time were touching my family, and I was alarmed. Although my dad had been rebaptized more than 10 years before and was likely prepared for the hand of fate—even in the form of a stroke—I was not.

Arriving at the hospital in the middle of the night, I went immediately to his room and, after hugging my mother, approached his bedside. I later recorded my perception of that experience in a personal journal:

"Reaching out, I take my father's hand; the other now is chained to last night's stroke. He blinks one eye and stirs one restless leg, and through distorted lips his mind provokes my name, half-formed and slurred. I answer, 'Dad?' He lies so small beneath the chalk-white sheets, his cheekbones perched above his toothless mouth. 'Dad?' I cry, 'Ah, Daddy!' I repeat. My father's

Father reaches out to me, and I, like Dad, am struggling to respond with troubled legs and thick, uncertain speech. When Jesus comes, we both shall be set free—no pain for Dad, for me no tempter's bonds. What miracles our Father grants to each!"

Sitting with Dad through the night, I remembered that when I was a child he had always looked bigger to me than he actually was. But all along I had understood him to be a man's man. A silent, very dark-complexioned, oil field-working man who loved sports and hunting. My mother seemed to enjoy reminding my older brother and me that as a young man Dad had not only been stronger than either of us but also better looking! Even into his 40s Dad could still outrun either of us. Once when I had pressed him he told me that as an 18-year-old in the army he had run the 100-yard dash in a little more than 11 seconds. Not bad for a farmboy who had never had any training for track.

I remembered Mother saying that when he had been hospitalized after a boiler explosion in east Texas the doctor kept thinking his neck had been injured because it looked swollen, but that was just the normal size of my father's neck.

Dad was tough, and I had

failed to contemplate his growing older. But then many people have had similar opinions about their dads. It is natural for us to esteem our fathers and think of them as perpetual. Jesse Stuart wrote plaintively of his deceased Kentucky father:

"Why do I keep looking for him? Why doesn't he come? Why do I think I hear him and his team go past when it is only the wind in the long green fronds of the weeping willow and in the strange durable half-leaved branches of the oaks on the hill above his house? Why do I hear him on my walks? Why isn't he here?"¹

Maybe our need for a constant father was a primary reason that in the plan of salvation, laid before the creation of the earth, the Godhead decided that one of Them should call another of Them "Father." It would have a certain ready appeal to us human beings.

"Father" Speaks of Closeness

As the everyday language of first-century Jews, and the language of Christ and the disciples, Aramaic was the first "Christian" language. A Semitic tongue closely related to Hebrew, it was soon superseded by the common Greek of the Roman Empire, especially in the East. As Christianity attracted more Greek-speaking

Gentiles, the Jewish and Aramaic flavor became much more diluted. But a few early Aramaic expressions made their way into the New Testament.

Abba is the most family-oriented of the Aramaic terms used in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God was sometimes seen as the Father of the nation of Israel, but Christ emphasized that all believers are individual children of God by redemption. In the broadest sense, of course, all people are children of God by creation. But in the sense of the model prayer, "Our Father" can be claimed only by Christians.

"*Abba*, Father" occurs three times in the New Testament, the Aramaic term being used with the trailing Greek translation. This was the most intimate term for "Father" and was doubtlessly the first word a child learned for "Daddy." The use of this word in Scripture reveals how very close Jehovah wants us to feel to Him.

The first recorded use of *abba* is found in Mark 14. Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples. "He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,' he said to them. 'Stay here and keep watch.' Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. '*Abba*, Father,' he said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will'" (Mark 14:33-36).²

At this crisis hour in His earthly ministry, facing betrayal by Judas and a painful death on the cross, Jesus reverted to the familiar term He

had first used at Joseph's knee: *Abba*. He had gained respect for His heavenly Father at the feet of Joseph.

In His time of overwhelming need, Jesus turned to His heavenly Father. How about us? When we have stressed ourselves out with unnecessary

worry, do we merely seek out more pills, or do we go to our Father in prayer, knowing that He and He alone can relieve our obsessive thought patterns? Or when we are troubled over life's decisions, do we always turn to secular helpers rather than laying our burdens upon the Lord



and seeking His counsel in prayer and study?

Jesus' Gethsemane experience was desperate, even for Him, but He survived it through His Father's help. "Watch and pray," He urges, "so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak" (verse 38).

Abba Means We're Family

The second use of *Abba* is in Romans 8. In one of the most

beloved chapters in the Bible, Paul uses a word he learned at his own Jewish mother's knee. He writes, "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father'" (verse 15).

"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit," Paul goes on to declare, "that we are God's children. Now if we are chil-

dren, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (verses 16, 17).

The Holy Spirit makes the once cold, reluctant, apprehensive heart "know and believe the love of God." He "sheds abroad God's love in it." He brings home to consciousness and insight the "sober certainty" of the promises of the Word; that Word through which, above all other means, He speaks. He shows us "the

things of Christ," the Beloved, in whom we have adoption and regeneration, making us see, as all souls must see, what a paternal welcome exists for those who are "in Him."

Abba Means We're Adopted

The final instance of the use of *abba* in Scripture is in Galatians 4. Paul's use here is similar to that in Romans 8:15, only here sonship is contrasted with slavery. Paul employs *abba* while seeking to persuade the Galatians of their rightful claim to God's grace *apart from the law*:


"What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave. . . . So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son . . . born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father,'" (verses 1-6).

Today Paul would be more likely to say, "When you were an orphan you had no right of ownership, because you weren't a legal heir. It was only when Jesus paid the court fee for you and persuaded His Father to adopt you into His family that you became a bona fide child of God—and sibling of Christ—with all the rights pertaining thereto."

Paul's point might be paraphrased as follows: "Because He wanted us as His children, *Abba* sent the Spirit of His firstborn Son—our Elder Brother—into our hearts, the forerunner of the Spirit, who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'" So we are no longer orphans, but legally adopted offspring; and because we are His children, *Abba* also made us His heirs.

Christ meant for Paul an adoption that would free him from every form of bondage. Only someone who had escaped from slavery could write, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1). Paul pleads for the very thing that makes Christianity unique: the change that Christ can make in our lives so that we can exercise our fullest freedom. Only one who had found personal freedom could have written the Galatian letter, "the Magna Carta of the early church."

Christ, grace, cross, faith, freedom: these are the major chords on the keyboard of Christian hope. Here is the freedom granted by *Abba*. Here is *Abba* adopting us! And through our adoption by Jehovah God, we are released from blind obedience into enlightened choice.

The unique contribution that our Elder Brother makes is the complete forgiveness of sin. No other person has ever claimed that power. Forgiveness is the essence of our adoption. But Christ's forgiveness does not simply set us free; it heals our lives. His forgiveness is the key that unlocks to us the abundant life and readies us to finish the work and go home to reign with *Abba*. 

¹ Jesse Stuart, *God's Oddling* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 266.

² All Scripture references are from the New International Version.

The Father—God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 15:28; John 3:16; 1 John 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:17; Ex. 34:6, 7; John 14:9.)—Fundamental Belief, No. 3.



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Can We Do Both?

Sandra F. Doran

Two sides of the same issue landed on my desk recently. Wrote one individual: "I'm tired of all the hoopla given to unwed mothers in local Adventist congregations. In our church three young girls have gotten pregnant within the past two years. The social committee has planned showers, the babies have been publicly dedicated with much fanfare, and people have been falling all over themselves to dote on mother and child."

"What upsets me about all this is that I have three teenage daughters who have witnessed such goings on. It seems to me that they are concluding: 'This is how you get attention in the Adventist Church—just have a baby, and you become the most popular member of the church.'"

A member of another church wrote: "A 17-year-old in our church recently gave birth to a child out of wedlock. I planned a shower, which shocked some of the members. Don't you think this is what Christ would have us do—reach out to these young women who have nowhere else to turn?"

On One Hand . . .

As I've ruminated on the comments of these two individuals, I've concluded that both are communicating messages that need to be heard. Yes, it is our Christian duty to reach out to those within the ranks who have a need of any kind. Yes, we ought to be forgiving and understanding and accepting. Yes, the church ought to be an oasis in the midst of a world of chaos and turmoil.

But the other person also has a point. While we have a moral obligation to express kindness to teenage mothers in our churches, we ought to do so within the context of the congregation's value system as a whole. While "killing the

fatted calf" for our prodigal sons and daughters, we ought not forget the young men and women who have never "journeyed to a far country."

How can we strengthen the resolve of these teenagers in the midst of our efforts to sustain those who demand increased attention?

1. Affirm them. Find opportunities to point out what you appreciate about that quiet young woman, that young man whom you have never really gotten to know. Don't let them simply be faces in the background while all the "hoopla" is turned on those with greater needs.

Writes one young woman referring to her own tendency to bury her feelings while attention was turned on others: "I can remember intentionally building a wall around my heart. And I don't think I stopped doing that. What I think I did was push all my feelings back, just let them sit in there, and never look at them."

Don't forget about the quiet "good kids." Let them know it's OK to air their feelings.

2. Provide a reality check. Parents and Sabbath school teachers ought to be proactive in presenting these sobering facts: while it may appear glamorous to appear in church with a baby dressed in white lace, three out of four children from households headed by a mother under the age of 25 are below the poverty level. Even when the teenage pregnancy results in marriage, these families are three times as likely to be poor as two-parent families over the age of 25.*

3. Don't stereotype. In the closed communities of our churches and schools, a very real danger exists. Children acquire "reputations" that follow them through 12 years of elementary and high school. Lazy. Stubborn. Rebellious. Righteous. Popular. Good kid. Bad kid.

Such stereotyping happens not only among peers but on the part of adults as well. Unwittingly we pick up the "vibes" and fall into step, making assumptions about the children and teenagers in our ranks that are groundless.

Don't assume that you know "all about" the young people in your congregation. Maybe some of the "good kids" would love the opportunity to shed the mask and talk about the very real struggles of their lives. Maybe some of the "bad kids" would love the opportunity to shed the stereotype and acquaint you with the very real fears and hurts that follow them into the church's sanctuary and classrooms.

Let's Do Both

Yes, let's make an effort to keep teenage mothers and fathers in our congregations. Let's welcome their babies into the cradle roll classes. Let's be there for them when they are tired, discouraged, and disillusioned.

But let's not forget the "good kids," the "quiet ones," those who attend church each week without standing out. While their needs may not be apparent, they're still very real. If we don't seek to understand these young men and women today, they may not be with us tomorrow.

* Marian W. Edelman, "Defending America's Children," *Educational Leadership*, May 1989, pp. 78, 79.

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The Top Things Not to Say to a Single

*How we married folk can be kinder and gentler
to the unmarried*

BY SUSAN MAYCINIK

You never married, did you?" I was mingling at a gathering of my relatives when my mother's cousin's second wife startled me with this inquiry. It was more a statement than a question. *Never married, past tense?* I thought. *I guess she thinks there's no hope for me!* Yet I was only 32 at the time!

I gathered my composure, smiled sweetly, and told her about the Air Force officer I was dating. Just minutes later, in a different conversation, a distant cousin (who'd married her high school sweetheart) commented, "You never married, did you?"

By then the absurdity struck me, and I had to chuckle inwardly. Most of my high school girlfriends had married before they hit 20. At 30-plus, I *must* have seemed, to my relatives, like a confirmed "spinster"!

No harm was done that day. But I remember other instances when innocent comments by married people *did* hurt. In many cases they were trying to be encouraging. But because they had forgotten (or had never known) what it was like to wait for a mate year after year, their comments felt like stabs in an already-aching heart.

I'm not alone. As I've talked with dozens of single people, I've discovered we've heard many of the same lines from our married acquaintances and friends. Most of them are well-intentioned, but they have an underlying message that makes us cringe.

1. *"As soon as you're content, God will bring someone into your life."*

Granted, there's a hint of truth in this one. Some people do scare potential mates off because they're desperate to get married. But slapping this saying on every single person is insensitive.

The "just be content" line—and its close relative, "just have faith"—trivialize the struggle many have to accept singleness. God has built into most single individuals I've met a deep longing to have someone to share their lives with. When that desire goes unfulfilled for five, ten, fifteen years or more—when it begins to look like it will *never* be fulfilled—the pain can be intense. Telling a single person to "just be con-

ment" shows that you know little of this struggle.

What's more, this statement implies there's a formula to follow that will guarantee you'll soon be walking down the aisle. Conversely, if you're not married, you must be doing something wrong. Not true.

God's plan for each person—including if and when he or she marries—is unique. God's not a vending machine, dispensing a spouse when enough contentment coins are inserted. God doesn't withhold blessings until we deserve them.

I loved it when Sarah, who married for the first time at 34, told the truth about this myth. "Did you have to learn how to be content before you met Michael?" a single woman asked her. She laughed. "I tried that," she said, "and it didn't work! I was still really struggling with singleness when we began dating."

2. "Before you find someone wonderful, you've got to be someone wonderful."

We've all heard this platitude from well-meaning speakers at singles' functions. A woman who was discipling my friend Deena had another version: "Before you find your prince, you've got to be a princess."

Deena's mentor thought she was encouraging her to grow spiritually. Instead, her comment led to despair.

"It seemed like something I could never attain," Deena said. "Plus, it communicated that whether or not I got married rested on me. What if I couldn't be good enough?"

Like the admonition to be content, this statement communicates "You're not married because there's something wrong with you" or "You don't deserve anyone yet." So does speculating aloud that your friend must be single because God still has work to do in his or her life. God doesn't reward us with a spouse for spiritual maturity!

Obviously some very godly people never marry. And many who have quite a lot of growing to do find partners at an early age. Help your friends grow when you see areas of weakness. But don't give single people the mes-

sage that their chance for matrimony depends on their progress!

3. "You're too picky."

Home for the holidays, my childhood friend and I were sitting in her parents' kitchen discussing life. She had married at 18. When her mother overheard me explaining how hard it was to meet desirable men, she tossed off this concise assessment of my problem.

How would you know? I thought. You have no idea what the men I know are like. And besides, you haven't dated for more than 40 years!

Many married people think singles must be too picky because they imagine the dating scene to be like it was for them in high school or college. They assume there's an unlimited supply of available people, and those who can't find someone must be too selective.

But as a woman leaves her mid-20s, the situation changes drastically. She may not meet Christian men in her office or at the health club. Some churches do have singles groups, but often these groups attract some emotionally unhealthy men—or those who have no interest in following Jesus. I know many attractive, outgoing, godly women who have gone for years at a time without being asked for a date.

There may be a few women out there who are still looking for a handsome, witty, athletic, romantic, dynamic spiritual leader who could support a family on one income and talk easily about his feelings. But most Christian women just want to meet a man who loves God, whom they enjoy being around, and who is at least taking a stab at a career. Is that too much to ask?

4. "Are you seeing anyone special?"

If your friend is dating someone, you'll hear about it. If not, you've just brought up a sore subject. It may make them feel stupid to have to answer no to that question for what seems like the hundredth time. Single people sense that you want them to say yes, and when they can't, that they have failed somehow. It's like asking a woman who's been struggling with infertility for years, "Are you pregnant yet?"

Why not simply ask your single friends what they've been doing lately? That gives them a chance to focus on what's positive in their lives, not what's missing.

5. "If you'd just lose weight..."

Jeane commented at her friend's bridal shower that she wished she could date more. The tall, willowy bride-to-be responded, "Well, if you'd lose 25 pounds, more men would ask you out."

Injured, Jeane asked, "You mean to tell me that if God brought a man into my life, he wouldn't want me now?"

"No, he wouldn't," her friend said. "I'm just being honest because I care about you."

Jeane told me later, "I felt as though she were saying God would bless only thin women—that I was so flawed, no man would ever want me."

Another friend echoed her comments. "All my life people have been telling me, 'You have such a pretty face. If only you'd lose weight...' That's supposed to be a compliment?"

The women who suggested weight loss were trying to help. They'd observed that a lot of men—including Christian men—do judge a book by its cover. But it's harmful to suggest to a single friend that no man could accept her as she is.

6. "Getting married doesn't solve all your problems."

Around the time I turned 30, I went through a grieving process over my dream of having a husband and family. Sometimes I would try to tell other friends about my loneliness and disappointment. More than once, a married person responded somewhat impatiently, "Well, getting married doesn't solve all your problems!" Some added the tired corollary, "It just gives you new ones!"

That condescending response communicates two things: one, "I don't care how you're feeling," and two, "You don't have a clue what marriage involves."

I don't think any person really thinks that when they find a spouse, all problems disappear. Anyone who has married friends knows the struggles and

frustrations on the other side of the altar. Most of us don't dismiss lightly what we'd be giving up to become a spouse and parent. Yet many singles would gladly choose a more difficult life and someone to share it with over a simpler life alone.

7. "You're such a wonderful person. I can't believe you're not married."

What's wrong with this statement? It's a subtle putdown of someone's marital status. Imagine how you'd feel if a single said to you, "You're such a wonderful person. I can't believe you got married!"

If you want to affirm a single person, why not leave it at "You're such a wonderful person!"

8. "Why haven't you ever married?"

Well, that's what many of us would like to know! Why hasn't God given us

spouses when so many other people have one?

We may come up with an answer if we look at things from a human perspective: "I'm shy and people don't notice me." "My advanced degree intimidates guys." "I always seem to be attracted to the wrong women." Even, "I'm too tall [or too short]."

But only God knows the real reason for our singleness. He may have someone for us a few (or more than a few) years down the road. God may want us to minister to the growing population of singles. He may want to keep us free from the distractions of marriage (1 Cor. 7:32-35). Or God may want to build something into our character that only singleness can accomplish.

Please don't ask us why we're not married. In many cases singleness isn't our choice.

9. "You need to let Jesus meet your needs."

Certainly, Jesus is the true Lover of our soul. If we think a husband or wife will satisfy our deepest longings, we're sadly mistaken. We *all* need to grow in turning to the Lord first to meet our needs.

But before you quote Isaiah 54:5 to your friend ("Your Maker is your husband"), consider this: As the late psychologist Bill Crabb pointed out, in the Garden of Eden, Adam had perfect, unbroken fellowship with God. Yet God said, "It is not good for man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18). God never intended for fellowship with the divine to be enough! He created human relationships, including marriage, to meet some of our relational needs.

Don't imply to your friend that if they were just spiritual enough, being single wouldn't be a problem. Encourage singles to grow closer to Jesus, to let Him be their Best Friend—and to reach out to other Christian friends for companionship. But accept the fact that as long as a person is single, some healthy, important longings will go unmet, and that will be hard.

10. "God has someone picked out especially for you. You just need to wait."

Most of us wouldn't dream of telling a friend, "God is going to cure your cancer," or "Don't worry—you *will* be able to conceive." Yet some are certain they can predict the future in this area.

An elderly couple I spoke with at a missions conference assured me that God had a partner for everyone. "Why," one of them gushed, "we have a friend who married for the first time when she was 63!" (The thought of waiting more than 30 years didn't exactly fill me with joy!)

Though it would be nice to believe that everyone will marry eventually, it just isn't true. People I've met from all over the country—married and single—have observed that there are simply more women who are emotionally healthy, committed to Christ, and who want to get married than there are comparable men.

Telling singles that God has someone for them in the future may be building a false hope. It may also influence them to focus on the wrong goals. This may be

Words We Love to Hear

What are some things you *should* say to encourage your single friend?

"Sometimes I envy you." It's easy to fall into the trap of focusing on what we *don't* have. You can help single people see—and celebrate—the good things we'd have to give up if we married.

"Tell me about your job." In too many gatherings of women, conversation centers on husbands and children. Single women feel left out. We love to get the chance to talk about the important things in our lives. Ask us not only what we do, but what we like most about our job and what our dreams are for our careers. Ask us about our hobbies, too!

"Do you want to go shopping with me?" Or "Want to go to a ball game tomorrow night?" Or "Would you pray for me and hold me accountable about snapping at the kids?" In short, anything that would let singles into your life. Ask us to be a friend—we'd love it!

"God is big enough." Many times when we look around us, it seems certain that we'll always be alone. Remind us that our powerful and loving God is much bigger than our circumstances. Tell us about the miracles in your life, the "impossible" situations in which God has intervened. Help us focus on God.

"You're really special. Your friendship means a lot to me." It's a rare man or woman who doesn't, at some time, experience perpetual singleness as rejection. Tell us what you like about us, how you've seen us grow, why you're proud of us. Let us know you want to be around us.

more acute for women than men. When a young woman sees herself only as a future wife and mother, she may never develop her gifts in other areas. She may also face bitter disappointment when she discovers the role she's been preparing for all her life just isn't available.

The Gift of Hope

Singles go through many stages in their feelings about singleness. Some hardly ever think about it. But for others, singleness can be excruciating. They may feel as if the opposite sex has rejected them, God has betrayed them, and the most important dream of their life will never come true.

At 36, I've come to the point where I'm usually at peace with being single. I'm overwhelmed by how God is using and blessing me, and I'm excited about my life! But about a month ago those painful feelings of anger and hopelessness came rushing back after a serious

dating relationship ended suddenly.

My married friend Lorraine caught me on a particularly bad day. She sat and listened as I vented my pain and confusion. She admitted she didn't know the answers either. She reminded me that Jesus knew how I felt and wanted to comfort me.

Then after I'd gone through a pile of tissues and poured out everything that was in my heart, she said just the right thing. "What else are you passionate about?" she asked, leaning forward in her chair. "What other dreams do you have—besides marriage and a family—that make your heart beat faster?"

Drying my eyes, I began to think. "I want to work on sharing Christ with my neighbors. And I'm really excited about training Christian writers and editors in other countries. Oh, and there are some articles that I've been wanting to write . . ."

"What can you do right now about

those dreams?" she prodded. We began to brainstorm.

Lorraine gave me two gifts that day. She accepted me as I was. And she helped me to see that while one of my dreams is on hold, there are other important, fulfilling dreams that I can pursue. Lorraine gave me hope.

Our married friends' words can hurt us. But, guided by the Holy Spirit, they can also be God's instruments of healing.

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Mr. Bailey's Special Food

BY EDNA MAY OLSEN

MMeet Mr. Bailey! Mr. Bailey is a beautiful dark-brown horse. He lives on a farm where the grass stays wonderful and green all year round. This makes the other horses happy, for they love to eat it. But not Mr. Bailey. The grass makes him sick.

The other horses have a wonderful time together. They race round and round. Their tails fly in the wind as they run. Now and then they stop playing and chew on the sweet grasses. Poor Mr. Bailey just stands in the barn and watches. The only time he can go out to run is when one of his owners goes with him. Someone has to be with him to be sure make doesn't eat the grass.

Mr. Bailey has a problem. He has an allergy to grass. Do you know what an allergy is? I'll bet you know someone

with an allergy. That means they cannot eat or smell some things without getting sick. When Mr. Bailey would eat grass, his throat would swell till he couldn't swallow. Then he would have to take medicine to make it better.

Mr. Bailey's owners didn't know what to do about his problem with grass. They knew that they had to find food that he could eat. So they tried many things. Then one day they finally found he could eat cottage cheese without getting sick. You guessed it—they started feeding him cottage cheese and vitamins every day. How would you like to eat cottage cheese every day? I don't think you'd like it, especially if you were a horse!

At first Mr. Bailey made a terrible fuss whenever his bucket arrived full of

this horrible-looking mixture. But he finally got used to it. Now he gobbles it down with loud slurps and snorts. In fact, he seems to feel good about his special meal. Perhaps he knows his owners care about him and don't want him to get sick.

Have you ever grumbled when Mother gave you brown bread to eat instead of white bread? You know—that gooey white bread that sticks to your teeth like paste and tastes so good with peanut butter? Or have you wished you could eat candy and cake instead of apples and pears, which are much better for you?

But we are lucky when we have parents who care about us and give us healthful food. Unhealthful food seems to taste better at the time, but can make us sick later. Actually when we get used to good food just as Mr. Bailey got used to his special food, you know what? It actually tastes better to us, and we stop wanting the bad food.

God wants us to have healthy bodies and has designed a special diet of cereals, nuts, fresh vegetables, and fruits. So let's be thankful for those who love us and want us to really feel well and happy all our lives.

Lord, You Are Good to Me

BY DICK DUERKSEN

Lord, over by the palm tree stands a genuine unwashed sinner. It's Levi-Matthew, publican from Capernaum, a stinking tax collector. A robber, thief, and collaborator with the Roman enemy. He represents all that is wrong with Your church, all the sinfulness

You're coming to wipe away and clean out.

I pray You'll clean it away soon, for the stench of sin pollutes this house that bears Your name.

Lord, when I look at him I am overwhelmed with the good life You have given me to enjoy.

Every Monday and Thursday, as You have requested, I drink only a little water, leave off all food, and pray to You thrice each hour. These are the days of my greatest pleasure. *Lord, You are good to me.*

When I receive my weekly payment and holy bonus from the Sanhedrin, as You have required, I return exactly 10 percent to You as tithe. I also freely give an additional 3.724 percent to cover Temple maintenance, widow feeding, and candlewicks. That leaves an adequate amount for me and my family. *Lord, You are good to me.*

I am so pleased and proud of the gifts You have given to me and to me only. The clothes I have to wear perfectly represent Your purity. The smile You have taught

me reflects Your grace. The words I speak are but Your words in my mouth. The funds jangling in my pockets are rewards for my sincerity, honesty, and hard work. They are sent from Your treasury by Your own hand. *Lord, You are good to me.*

Sovereign Lord, please accept my deepest, sincerest appreciation for Your great goodness to me. Instead of making me into a broken sinner like Levi-Matthew, You made *me* holy, Your worthy ambassador. Yes, Lord, You have chosen me as recipient of Your greatest blessings.

I congratulate You on the wisdom of Your choice.

Lord, You are good to me.

Father, I am unnerved by the whispers of hatred fluttering about me and so have come to You for safety. My clothes are poor, my smile weak, and my life broken. But Lord, Your love overwhelms and draws me to You.

I stand here begging to be washed with Your mercy, pleading for Your healing hands to cleanse the filth of my living, waiting for Your goodness to fill the vacuum created by my sinful spirit, calling for You to replace my desperation with Your smile of hope.

I have enjoyed being separated from You, living independently, powered by the strength of my own selfishness. But I enjoy it no longer—for I have seen You. And in Your glory I have seen the desperate uselessness of my life today and the delightful possibilities of tomorrow.

I bring the only gift You can accept from me—my need.

I pray for You to exchange that need for Your merciful acceptance. And I thank You for transforming me from *me* into Your servant, Your child.

Lord, You are good to me.



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A Vision for Renewing Adventist World Mission

BY GORDON R. DOSS

Major changes are occurring in our church's interdivision missionary program. And considering the massive areas of the globe where Christianity has hardly made a dent, this is not the hour for retrenchment, but for a strong renewal of Adventist world mission.

In the past 10 years we have significantly cut the number of Adventists serving as interdivision workers. In one year a division cut 45 missionary budgets. Funds once used to support interdivision workers are either not available or are being used for general operating expenses.

While the church's interdivision workers are being sent home, the number being sent out by supporting ministries such as Adventist Frontier Missions is steadily increasing.

My perspective comes as an American "missionary kid" and career missionary to Africa. My definition of a missionary is a church worker who resides full-time in a culture other than his or her own.

Basic Questions

Let's ask ourselves some basic questions. Does our missionary ministry still occupy a legitimate position in our church? Should we limit ourselves to short-term Maranatha-type projects, visiting evangelistic thrusts, and donations to special projects? Or does a place remain for full-time resident missionaries? Will Adventists continue to support such missionaries? What changes could facilitate a continued, vibrant program?

I believe full-time missionary ministry occupies a permanent place in Christianity, both in entered and unentered areas. Although the positions that

missionaries occupy, their numbers, and their roles may change as the church and the world change, *never will the time come when the church no longer needs full-time workers serving in cultures other than their own.* And this doesn't mean that only North Americans will be the missionaries, since many of the world divisions have trained workers who are serving, or are ready to serve, outside their homeland.

Theological Undergirding

Several theological themes support the continued role of missionaries.

The Great Commission. Christ's commission requires us to reach the hundreds of unreached people groups. However, our great successes sometimes make us forget that we really have only just begun.

The Church as Christ's Body. Paul describes the church as Christ's body. The diverse parts of His body are to work harmoniously toward a common goal. Ethnic diversity is one element of the unified diversity of the church.

Spiritual Gifts. Jesus Christ bestows spiritual gifts for the upbuilding of the church. Paul, the great spiritual gift theologian, was a Spirit-gifted missionary who moved skillfully between his own culture and other cultures. Surely the missionary gift will remain until Christ's second coming.

America's Prophetic Mission. Adventists apply the lamb symbol of Revelation 13 to the United States of America. America was endowed by God with certain material and human resources to facilitate the growth of His church. Revelation 13 speaks of responsibility and function, not status,

thus ruling out pride or nationalism.

Adventist Ecclesiology. Adventists are neither congregationalist nor centralized. We give considerable authority and autonomy to each organizational link, but we insist that we are members of a unified world fellowship. We have no "Adventist Church of North America," but rather the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. The application of our ecclesiology means that we remain open to cultural mingling in the worldwide workforce.

Practical Support for Continued Missionary Ministry

Just as multinational companies recruit employees from around the globe, the mingling of ethnic groups in the church's workforce is beneficial.

North American world mission has two mutually dependent and complementary arms: foreign and home missions. One of the practical keys to evangelize North America is to keep the fires of foreign missions burning. The isolationism that sometimes afflicts American members is best combated through foreign missions involvement.

Missionaries provide a vital link between wealthier churches and the poorer ones. As missionaries bring friends and relatives into contact with needs, hearts are touched and funds are donated more liberally. Givers are blessed most, but receivers also praise the Lord as His work is advanced.

Evidence of Continued North American Support

Is there enough support among North

American Adventists for foreign missions to maintain a strong missionary program?

When my family and I were in America on furlough, our ears and eyes were wide open to evaluate attitudes to missions. We heard about grassroots-inspired mission conferences at Andrews University. We heard about the Stahl Center of World Missions at La Sierra University. Each one of the seven churches we attended had a foreign missions project of some kind. The Pioneer Memorial church at Andrews University featured the John and Belinda Kent family from Papua New Guinea on the Sabbath we were there. The Kents have been sponsored by Pioneer Memorial under Adventist Frontier Missions. The relationship between church and missionary family was warm and enthusiastic.

In the past six years dedicated Adventists from North America have made possible major campus development where we work and more than 30 new church buildings in the area.

I am convinced that North American Adventists have both the means and the will to maintain a strong mission program.

Challenges Facing World Mission

Yet have we outgrown our present system of assigning missionaries? Consider these challenges.

An Impersonal System. We are asked to support an impersonal mission program. North America stands to the side as funding observer while the General Conference administers the missionaries. No formal plan links missionaries to particular churches or conferences. Major efforts have been made to give North American churches personal contact with the mission field, but a missing factor has been structured contact with individual missionaries. Missionaries are a major promotional resource that the church is not using fully.

Weak Support System for Missionaries. The present support system for missionaries is weak. Orientation is offered at the Institute of World Mission prior to their departure. But missionaries then receive little support (beyond basic remuneration) specifically designed to

meet the needs and challenges that arise from their mission service.

World Mission Funding. Foreign division budgets are being balanced by cutting missionary budgets. When the missionary budgets are swallowed up, what then? An important part of the workforce will be gone, and the budget will still be in trouble.

Improving the System

To keep interdivision workers going "from everywhere to everywhere," I'd propose some changes.

Shift the Initiative to the Division. The initiative for sending and supporting missionaries from North America should shift from the General Conference to the North American Division. The GC would still oversee the interdivision personnel movements.


The shift of responsibility would give the North American Division a greater sense of *ownership* of its part of Adventist world missions. Instead of being funding *observers*, the North American church entities would be funding *participants* in the administration of the program—overseen by a mission board.

Establish Formal Missionary-Church Links. Missionaries should be linked with one or more local churches and a conference to foster ownership and relationship. Missionaries would make regular reports to their home churches and conferences, and would visit them on furlough. Regular offerings would continue to support mission board activities, not individual missionaries.

Restructure World Mission Funding. A new openness is needed in the structure of mission offerings. Members should be able to give regular offerings directly to the mission board.

We need to remove the burden of supporting missionaries from the other divisions. North America is already paying the missionary bill and should shoulder the responsibility for missionaries directly. The system can be strengthened only by clarifying lines of responsibility.

Openness and personal involvement are important stewardship principles. The Holy Spirit really does move hearts

for the support of God's work. Sometimes we hamper the Holy Spirit by trying to force giving into certain channels. I am convinced that individual members will be impressed by the Spirit to support a revised system and that the result will be a gain for His church. 

The material in our Opinion category is presented to stimulate thought among our readers. We encourage the expression of individual opinions even if they do not always reflect those of the editors or the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Gordon R. Doss is principal of Lake View Seminary in Mlangeni, Malawi.

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■ COLORADO

Partners in Service

Two health-care systems unite to create state's largest provider of integrated health services.

Two of Colorado's largest health-care providers recently finalized an agreement to form an operating partnership. PorterCare Adventist Health System and Sisters of Charity Health Services/Colorado, both nonprofit health-care systems, consolidated their operating and management structures into one joint operating company, Centura Health.

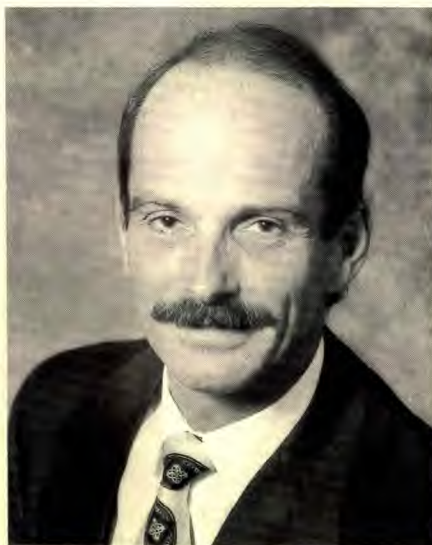
The new organization will manage the assets of both systems. It is a unique arrangement that for the first time links two separate Christian health-care systems and provides a full continuum of care throughout a large geographic area.

Terry White, president and CEO of PorterCare Adventist Health System, remarked, "We believe there is benefit in working together. This new organization will bolster our ability to provide quality, cost-effective, and integrated health care that preserves the dignity of each patient and enables us to continue our mission of service to the community." White will serve as the chief operating officer for Centura Health in the metropolitan Denver area.

According to Gary W. Susnara, president and CEO of Sisters of Charity Health Services/Colorado, "health care is one of the most rapidly changing industries in America. Creative alliances such as this will enhance our ability to compete favorably with the large

investor-owned health delivery companies that are moving to dominate the field of health care. These for-profit organizations are committed to enhancing stockholder profits, whereas we are committed to our mission of community service."

As part of the agreement, each system retains its own distinctive identity, beliefs, and mission. Both



Terry White, president and CEO of PorterCare Adventist Health System

systems have historic roots in the state that date back more than 100 years. "PorterCare Adventist Health System facilities will continue to be Adventist, and Sisters of Charity Health Services/Colorado facilities will continue to be Catholic," said Susnara.

The new organization will be governed by a board of directors who are appointed by the two sponsoring boards. Each system will maintain its own identity—name, logo, assets,

religious association, etc. And although the two systems will operate under a combined management company, PorterCare retains ownership of its assets, the right to name the operating officers of its own facilities, and control over its mission-related activities. Indeed, a portion of Centura Health's annual profit will be returned to PorterCare for additional mission activities.

Responding to a question about the necessity of such a partnership, Charles Sandefur, president of the Mid-America Union Conference and chair of the PorterCare Board of Trustees, stated, "PorterCare was faced with the challenge of accepting a steady decline in market share or of making an assertive move toward management partnerships. Without this partnership we are not confident that we would be able to survive financially. Throughout the country, hospitals are forming alliances in an attempt to stabilize or expand their position in the marketplace."

According to Sandefur, the Adventist Church has been studying how to increase the viability of the health work for some time. "General Conference and North American Division church leadership have worked closely with health-care leadership in developing a set of guidelines local systems must follow," he said. "In entering into a partnership with Sisters of Charity Health Services/Colorado, PorterCare Adventist Health System met each of the guidelines for developing collaborative relationships with other nonprofit and/or for-profit health-care

By John Gardner, vice president for marketing and planning, PorterCare Adventist Health System, Denver, Colorado.



PorterCare Hospital (left), PorterCare Avista Hospital (right), and PorterCare Littleton Hospital (below) are the three health-care facilities owned and operated by PorterCare Adventist Health System.

organizations, as supplied by the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.”

PorterCare’s White observed, “While some might view Sisters of Charity as an unlikely partner, there are a number of factors that favor this relationship.” The factors he

mentioned include: both systems hold a strong Christian view of health care as a mission, both are nonprofit, and both have historic roots and provide access to patients throughout Colorado. It is estimated that 80 percent of Colorado’s population lives in close proximity to

one of the two systems’ facilities.

Sandefur observed that PorterCare’s facilities have functioned alongside the Sisters of Charity in several communities over many years. “While we don’t in any way support their theology, we are happy to be working together as Christian partners who genuinely respect each other’s efforts to serve with compassion.”

“It is crucial to remember that in this partnership, each organization retains its distinctive heritage, beliefs, and culture,” said White. “The Sisters of Charity are just as committed to this provision for their system as we are for ours. . . . It is unlikely that a secular health-care partner would be as understanding of our need to control and continue our religious mission.”

In a letter to church leaders, Sandefur wrote, “At a time when conducting our Adventist mission proves a deepening challenge, PorterCare continues its pledge of being truly effective stewards of the compassionate ministry of Jesus. Please keep the ministry and people of PorterCare in your prayers as they seek to faithfully fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to them.”



Regular Missionary Service

The following individuals and their families left North America during the latter part of 1995 for mission service.

Robert Clifford Darken, to serve as field assistant, ADRA-Azerbaijan, of Ephraim, Wisconsin, left October 30.

Paul Gheorghe, returning as physician, Batouri Adventist Hospital, Batouri, Cameroon, and **Ligia Elvira (Goran) Gheorghe** left Los Angeles, October 19.

John Maxwell Howard III, to serve as director, packing services, Haitian Adventist College, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, **Theresa Wanda Howard**, and two children, of Ryley, Alberta, left November 27.

Keith Eugene Jacobson, to serve as director, ADRA-Bhutan-Tibet, Kathmandu, Nepal, **Kari Louise (Nelson) Jacobson**, and two children, of Redding, California, left December 10.

Dallas Eugene Lighthouse, returning as optometrist, Guam SDA Clinic, Tamuning, Guam, and **Martha Lee (Sauer) Lighthouse** left San Francisco December 20.

Timothy Allen Mayne, returning as associate academic dean, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul,

Korea, **Bonnie Sue (Smith) Mayne**, and three children left Portland, Oregon, October 22.

Barbara Payton, returning as matron/nursing director, Malamulo Hospital, Malawi, left Toronto, Ontario, September 10.

Kenneth Dale Rose, to serve as general surgeon, Penang Adventist Hospital, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, **Lana Dee (Smith) Rose**, and two children, of College Place, Washington, left November 6.

Emilia Elena Rosu, returning as dentist, Kinshasa Dental Clinic, Kinshasa, Zaire, and **Nicolae Rosu**, left Los Angeles November 5.

Allen Richard Steele, returning as program director, AWR-Europe, Germany, and **Andrea Paige (Grove) Steele**, left Washington, D.C., October 10.

Adventist Youth Service

The Office of the General Conference Secretariat has provided the following names of Adventist young adults who served overseas in the latter part of 1995.

Michal Adine Anderson, to serve as English/Bible teacher, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea,

of Nampa, Idaho, left December 26.

John Tom Appel (WWC), to serve as youth worker and assistant pastor, Eight Mile Plains church, Trans-Tasman Union Conference, Gordon, Australia, of McCall, Idaho, left October 10.

Deanna Sue Bentzinger (SC), to serve as teacher/assistant girls' dean, Maxwell Adventist Academy, Nairobi, Kenya, of Longwood, Florida, left December 5.

Amy Ferrell (PUC), to serve as teacher, Pohnpei Adventist High School, Kolonia, Pohnpei, Guam-Micronesia Mission, of Colton, California, left, August 2.

Kalvin Leslie Follett (SAC), to serve as programmer, AWR-Latin America, Costa Rica, of Ramsey, Minnesota, left July 20.

Gary Donald Gifford and Trina Ann (Hannah) Gifford (PUC), to serve as teachers, Ekamai International School, Bangkok, Thailand, of Angwin, California, left July 26.

Chelsea A. Hoff (SC), to serve as English/Bible teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, of Morganton, North Carolina, left Los Angeles August 13.

John W. Keighley III (PUC), to serve as men's assistant dean, Danish Junior College, Dagaard, Denmark, of Elk Grove, California, left August 6.

Stephen Hwan Kim (Weimar), to serve as teacher/evangelist, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Weimar, California, left December 31.

Roy Kyung-Won Kim (LLU), to serve as teacher/evangelist, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Niles, Illinois, left June 29.

Arata Kondo (PUC), to serve as math teacher, Ebeye SDA High School, Marshall Islands, of Matsuyama, Japan, left San Francisco December 28.

Jennifer Lynn Korb (WWC), to serve as teacher, West Adventist Academy, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, of Troutdale, Oregon, left August 13.

Scott Eugene Krause (UC), to serve as youth worker/assistant pastor, Wantirna church, Surrey Hills, Victoria, Australia, of Alliance, Nebraska, left June 15.

John Kellsie Kriegelstein (WWC), to serve as teacher, Pohnpei Adventist High School, Kolonia, Pohnpei, of Bozeman, Montana, left August 2.

Koreen Winifred Lang (CaUC), to serve as assistant dean of girls, Lilydale Adventist Academy, Lilydale, Victoria, Australia, of Cranbrook, British Columbia, left July 25.

Trinda D. Lawson (LSU), to serve as Bible/English teacher, Ekamai International School, Bangkok, Thailand, of National City, California, left July 30.

Roderick Lazo (LSU), to serve as teacher, Guam Adventist Academy, Talofofo, Guam, of Riverside, California, left July 2.

Sharon Lee (AU), to serve as teacher/evangelist, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Berrien Springs, Michigan, left December 28.

Larra Michelle Miller, to serve as teacher, West Adventist Academy, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, of Burlington, Washington, left August 15.

L. Christopher Ramsey (WWC), to serve as teacher, Marshall Islands Mission Academy, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Shelton, Washington, left October 15.

Rachel Raelene Smith (SAC), to serve as worker, ADRA/North Brazil Language School, Manaus, Brazil, of Richardson, Texas, left November 3.

Lesson Helps for Next Quarter

As Roy Gane explores the book of Judges, he vividly illustrates the powerful warning, appeal, and promise of the message to Laodicea in the lives of real people such as Deborah, Barak, Gideon, and Jephthah. Paper, 140 pages. US\$8.99, Cdn\$12.99.



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You can help by sending **Bibles, periodicals** (*Adventist Review, Guide, Insight, Message, Ministry, Our Little Friend, Primary Treasure, Signs, Vibrant Life*), tracts, and Picture Rolls.

As of February 1996, we have received requests for literature from the following persons. They would welcome the above materials. If they have specified certain items, they are listed with the name and address.

Many thanks to all of our readers who have participated in this important work.

AFRICA

Pastor Nana Afari-Dadzie, P.O. Box 39, Dunkwa-on-Offin, Ghana. Spirit of Prophecy books, Bible commentaries, periodicals, and Bible-based books. He is headmaster of the SDA Secondary Technical School.

Isaac Bofo Atta, SDA Church, P.O. Box 22, Kintampo, B/A, Ghana, sends us a report of his extensive evangelistic work and how he has used the materials sent to him. He is learning the Mo language to witness to more people. Continue to send him the above materials.

Johnny Barnes, 7 Valley Lane, P.G. Box 148, Paget, Bermuda. Any used books. He is well known for his literature distribution work in Bermuda, but he needs more material.

Pastor Edward Jones Boadi, SDA Church, P.O. Box 2, Agona Ahanta-Western Region, Ghana. Books to build up a church library. They carry on a large evangelistic effort and need Spirit of Prophecy and inspirational books. His assistant is John Kojo Dadzie, and materials can be sent to him at the same address.

Samuel Bwami, executive and ministerial secretary, Central Uganda Field, Seventh-day Adventist Church, P.O. Box 22, Kampala, Uganda. Their pastors are in need of Spirit of Prophecy and other denominational books and magazines.

Godwin Obiora Chuks, SDA Church West Ogbomosho, P.O. Box 533, Kaduna, Nigeria. Reports on their Holy Spirit Ministry, a group of young men and women called of God to win souls for Christ in a Muslim-dominated city. They request Spirit of Prophecy and other books (*Bible Readings*, etc.), and Bibles.

Kaoma Kashito, SDA Church, Kaonga Company, P.O. Box 670145, Mazabuka, Zambia. Sabbath school, youth, and lay activities material.

Benson Kibochi Nganga, P.O. Box 2020, Kericho, Kenya. He sends his thanks for all the literature sent him, which he has distributed. He would also like Spirit of Prophecy books and used Bibles.

Pastor N. Osei-Kofi, Valley View College, P.O. Box 9358, Airport, Accra, Ghana. Periodicals and soul-winning materials.

Kwane Pasco, c/o Abuu-Athas, Bonna Junior Secondary School, P.O. Box 34, Japekrom BIA, Ghana. He is 10 years old and just requests a "Bible to read and take to church."

Pastor James Tandon, SDA Church, P.O. Box 2, Agona Ahanta via Takoradi, Ghana. Used Bibles and books for evangelism.

COSTA RICA

Millicent Lynch, Box 946, Limon, Costa Rica (Panoramas SDA Church). Children's materials and pictures.

INDIA

Pastor H. Lalengliana, circle leader, SDA Bazar Church, Bazar Veng., Lunglei 796701, S. Mizoram, India. Needs literature for evangelistic work.

*Check with your local postmaster for the least expensive postage rates. Ask for the publication "International Postal Rates and Fees," which explains the M-Bag Surface Mail method. Even magazines can be sent book rate if they are 18 pages or more with no ads (except those relating to itself). Some children's periodicals meet this qualification. If you need further explanation on mailing, Carolyn Crawford, of Hemet, California, would be glad to help you. Call her at 909-658-0027.



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The Promise of Spring

After an arduous 24-mile winter storm drive to the nursing home, I wasn't pleased to see my mother frowning at me. "I knew you'd come," she said, still frowning. "They said it was a bad day out there—but I knew you'd come." Her disturbed look stayed, seeming to match the dark early-morning hour.

The Worry

"You're worried about the operation, aren't you?" I asked. (I'd promised to take her for outpatient surgery at a nearby hospital so she wouldn't have to go by ambulance.)

"I'm worried more about the storm," she answered.

I assured her, "It won't last long," trying to hide my own uneasy feeling as I began readying her for the trip. While doing so, I hummed Bill Gaither's song "Thank God for the Promise of Spring."

Her knotted brow and tight lips eased into a small smile, but a smile indeed—the masklike look of a Parkinson's patient doesn't give way to smiles easily.

"That's my favorite," she said. Her well-played recording of Jerry Shoemaker's rendition of this song, from his album *The Prodigal*, had brought her many hours of pleasure in her before-nursing-home days.

On the way to the hospital, I talked with her about heaven's springtime, of seeing Jesus face-to-face, of His promises.

Our situation was not like that of most Christian mothers and daughters. I'd never learned to pray at her knee, nor did she teach me of Jesus. When I was a child, churchgoing wasn't a part of our lifestyle. But after I grew up and discovered Jesus, He allowed me the privilege of role reversal. Mother too accepted Jesus as her Saviour.

She, like me, wasn't a singer—but when the storm picked up force as we drove on toward the hospital, I heard her humming weakly (rare for her) "Jerry's song," as she always called it. And I joined in the humming, claiming the words as a prayer.

Later that day, driving home free of the storm on a calm afternoon, I wrote a poem which I entitled "Seasons:"



*How do you give
hope to an elderly
parent who is
trapped in a life-
sapping disease?*

Like a November leaf,
colorless, brittle, curled,
she waits
in the nursing home
for December's wind
to blow.
Her hope
heaven's springtime—
to bloom again,
like a verdant, ever-new
green leaf.

Writing the poem seemed rather like a benediction for the day. As I laid it aside, I thought of how her present storm of illness gave reason for her dire situation. Yet even chronic illness, which turns acute, seems a tame wind in comparison to the fury of Satan's tornado-like blasts of discouragement that disturb our peace with God.

Thus I felt appreciative and comforted as I realized her wait for the springtime of Jesus' return will be the newest of all new things, for God has promised, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

The Newness to Come

Thinking all these thoughts, I went to the photograph album and searched out a faded picture of Mother at age 16. No, she'll never look like that again—she'll look so much better in her glorified body! And she'll never have to be afraid of winter storms again; nor will I, the original fair-weather driver, who must don my strongest emotional suit of armor for such occasions.

I recalled the words of Job 38:1: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm" (NIV). And I offered up this prayer, *O God, Your promise of heaven's springtime sees me through life's winter storm—and I rejoice with praise to You, even if it's a hum instead of singing, because I know You hear me—and smile! Amen.*



Betty Kossick is a freelance writer living in Cadillac, Michigan.

BY BETTY KOSSICK



UNITY VS. INTEGRITY



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