

ADVENTIST Review

July 25, 1996

AnchorPoints

**Seven
Deadly
Delusions**

**Heaven's
Grocery
Store**

Becky Lane :

**What
My Church
Did Right**



LETTERS

So Many Blessings

After returning from the cemetery today I sat down to *Review* reading.



So many blessings in the May 23 issue.

"Graves Will Open" by John McVay comforted me. "The Old Bear" by Althea Roderick renewed my gratitude for

God's work in my heart. "The Head of the Class" by Miriam Wood brought memories of my own experiences as a young church school teacher 40 years ago. Most inspirational of all was "Jesus: Man of Compassion" by E. G. White.

The new *Review* is excellent. I liked to read the "old *Review*" as well, but I'm all for reaching a broad range of readers.

—Joyce Jensen

YAKIMA, WASHINGTON

Now You See Them . . .

Ella Rydzewski's editorial "Now You See Them, Now You Don't" (May 23) certainly brought to our attention the million-plus members who no longer attend our services, many of them who no longer consider themselves as Adventists. But the well-written article left me heartsick. Not only do I mourn for the missing members, some I personally baptized, but I mourn to see the *Review* print a statement that "Not everyone has a need to be an Adventist."

My son met a young lady at an Adventist college and married her. She is a non-Adventist Christian and they are both attending a Sunday church. He has now turned from the Sabbath, believes in the immortal soul, and has lost most of our distinctive beliefs. He is a prominent surgeon, but is not using his skills to further this message. I cry out to God for him daily.

This old retired minister spent his life trying to persuade all he could that all who are willing to follow God should embrace this message. Do you really think I should rejoice that my son and his family "have found Christ in their new church"?

—Name Withheld

Ella M. Rydzewski states, "World War II vets triggered the first phase of a divorce plague that continues to escalate."

As a World War II veteran I deeply resent that accusation. Almost without exception the many vets I know are celebrating their golden wedding anniversaries with the only wives they have ever had.

About the only thing I know of that has not been blamed on war veterans is the AIDS epidemic. I'm sure that with a little more time and study we will get credit for that, too.

—Jim Muffo

CASEVILLE, ILLINOIS

Golden Rule Days

Miriam Wood's "The Head of the Class" (May 23) was greatly appreciated; it gave honor to whom much honor is due—our early Adventist church school teachers.

—Dr. Charles H. Tidwell, Sr.

CHEHALIS, WASHINGTON

Miriam Wood's "Long Ago and Not So Far Away" (April 25) struck a chord. In the late thirties I was a dirt-poor boy attending a slab-sided one-room school in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Our only teacher, Mrs. Hazel Davis, had all eight grades and 15 students to face every day. Her pay was \$100 a month and free rent in another slab-sided one-room house. But she brought me to Jesus, not by Bible studies, but by lifestyle and love.

One day she asked the eighth-grade class (both of us) to write out the twenty-third psalm from memory. When I came to the last sentence, "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever," I underlined and capitalized it as my way of telling her I wanted to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. As I handed it to her, she recognized it as my commitment to Christ. She quietly slipped her arm around my waist, leaned over, and gave me a kiss on the cheek. I didn't wash that cheek for a week.

—H. Jack Harris

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When I read Miriam Wood's column regarding our church schools, I immediately thought of my fourth-grade church school teacher, Marion Seitz Simmons. At age 18, she was in her first year of teaching, and she was responsible for my being baptized that year.

For the past 70 years Marion Simmons has kept in touch with her former students who write to her. She is a godly influence and a good friend to all who know her.

—Leana Keim

ENCINITAS, CALIFORNIA

Mad Cows—Only the Beginning

An article in the *Review* (Aug. 31) by Roger Coon brought out the dangers of getting *E. coli*, salmonella, and other bacterial infections from eating meat. A recent article in the *Weimar Tidings* comments on the problem of the transmission of virus infections from meat such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease from animals infected with what is known as mad cow disease. Both of these articles are written for the purpose of promoting a vegetarian diet.

That there is some danger of getting these infections from contaminated meat is well documented. However, simply eating meat and animal products (with their high protein, high saturated fat, high iron, low fiber content and low content of some vitamins) far outweighs the problems of diseases from viral and bacterial infection. The number one cause of death in the United States is from atherosclerosis or cardiovascular disease—the hardening of the arteries brought on by a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet with low fiber and low nutrient content. This is aggravated, of course, by smoking and lack of exercise.

The second most common cause of death is cancer, also promoted by high-fat meat diets and by cooking meat where the high heat causes a production of carcinogenic substances.

Red meat, in particular, is very high in iron, and excessive iron intake has been associated with increased risk of heart attack and cardiovascular disease.

In the so-called civilized or advanced Western world, the vast majority of our major diseases, particularly cardiovascular disease and cancer, unfortunately are self-inflicted by poor choices in our lifestyle and eating habits.

Adventists do better than the general population, but could do even better if they followed guidelines.

—Ira Baillie, M.D.

TURLOCK, CALIFORNIA

Meeting Ellen White

I just finished reading the Special Edition of the *Adventist Review*, "Meet Ellen White for Yourself." It is wonderful!

I especially enjoyed Joe Engelkemier's article "The Use—and Misuse—of a Precious Gift."

I would like to suggest that the class he developed, "Introduction to the *Testimonies*," be made available to individuals and churches for further study. This would be a great Sabbath afternoon or midweek study course.

—Shirley Stewart

HAMILTON, OHIO

It's about time you spoke up and told the world of the merits of Sister White. Why have you been silent so long?

—Ella Beltz-Sabo

LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA

ON THE COVER: Becky Lane grew up attending the Blackberry Seventh-day Adventist Church near Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Read her tribute to the members who modeled Christian love for her and her friends on page 8. Photo by Joel D. Springer.

ADVENTIST Review

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NEXT WEEK

Suffer the Little Children

Thirteen months after the blast, Adventists are still reaching out to the victims of the bombing in Oklahoma City.

ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

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Seven Deadly Delusions

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

The Middle Ages had its seven deadly sins; we have seven deadly delusions:

1. *The most important person in my life is myself.* For a generation

the conventional wisdom has elevated the cult of "I." My feelings, my wants, my wishes, my happiness, my career—looking out for number one has ridden roughshod over relationships in and out of marriage.

The cult of "I" is bankrupt, a delusion. It promises to expand life; it shrivels life. We don't find happiness by seeking it, but by forgetting ourselves. We find our true "I" only in the paradox woven into the fabric of the universe by the Master Designer—by losing ourselves we find ourselves.

Ellen White wrote, "The law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. . . . To give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 623).

2. *Quality time is all that really counts.* On the wings of that delusion parents salve their consciences for hardly ever being with their kids, and couples talk themselves into believing that their marriages will work out.

To build and to maintain any relationship—including one with God—the time together must be high quality. Who wants to get close to someone who is boring or yawning? But here's the catch—relationships need *time*, lots of it. Not just dollops of "quality time," but many hours together.

So kids are lonely and messed up, marriages break up, and Christians wonder why they don't enjoy their faith. They've been hooked on the snare of "quality time."

3. *Safe sex.* The swinging generation gave way to the smart one. How smart?

Fact: protective devices fail. The only safe method is the one God gave in Eden—marriage to one partner.

4. *Kids can get along fine with only one parent.* Just four years ago then U.S. vice president Dan Quayle became a media laughingstock because he criticized the popular TV sitcom *Murphy Brown* for portraying the lead character as pregnant outside of marriage and planning to raise her child as a single parent.

Guess who was right? In only four years the data have poured in, and the conclusions are devastating: very often children of one parent are greatly disadvantaged.

Single parents have a heavy load, and I feel for you. I bring up the point because for nearly a generation single parenthood was not only defended but even flaunted by Hollywood and the media. But the idea that it's fine for kids is a delusion.

5. *Women can have it all—a career and a family.* I support equality for women and the responsibility of both partners in raising a family, but the career track confronts women

with wrenching choices. I support their right to these choices, but the idea that they can have it all is a delusion.

6. *A homosexual relationship can be a satisfactory alternative to marriage.* I do not cast guilt on anyone with homosexual tendencies—you already have suffered enough. Seventh-day Adventists distinguish between tendencies and practice: we all have inclinations in various directions, but what counts is how we respond to these drives by God's grace. The gospel is about new life, about overcoming old ways.

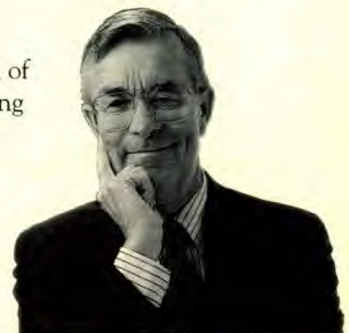
Our times are witnessing something totally new in Christian history: clergy and churches of practicing homosexuals. And now efforts are afoot to legalize same-sex "marriages."

Let's tell it like it is: there is only one biblical pattern for marriage, the one the Lord made in Eden. Any other is a delusion.

7. *Marriage is the end of love.* That's what Hollywood wants us to believe. But all that God makes is good. All that He made that first week was very good, marriage included.

Seven common ideas. All wrong, and all deadly. And back of them all, this one: that everything is relative, that we humans determine what is right for us. That's why we need Jesus, who is not only the Way and the Life, but also the Truth (John 14:6).

The American people have been sold a bill of goods.



Leftover Kids

MYRON K. WIDMER

Just yesterday evening my 10-year-old son and I piled our bikes onto the back of my trusty '86 Toyota pickup and headed to a nearby nature preserve for a few peaceful hours of biking and bird-watching.

As we were getting ready to go, Joel blurted out, "Dad, can Sam come too? He's got his own bike."

Now, Sam's a nice 11-year-old boy down our street, but I just didn't want anyone else along. It was to be a special time of togetherness—not the usual thing we do every week. I had been prompted by author Stephen Covey's urging to work harder at

building strong relationships with one's children. So I replied, "Well, Joel, Sam's a great kid, but I really wanted this adventure to be for just us, father and son, you know."

Joel didn't object, and he didn't pursue the subject again until we had ridden several forested miles on dirt roads and stopped numerous times to find some rather elusive warblers that were singing up a melodious storm—hooded warblers, they turned out to be. Beautiful, with a bright-yellow face and body and a jet-black hood that circles round and down to the neck.

Then Joel piped up again—with the enthusiasm that usually precedes a bit of bragging—or a request. "Dad, I *know* Sam would enjoy this. Why don't we come back tomorrow evening—and let Sam come along?"

Having answered that question once, I was ready with my song-and-dance routine again about nurturing our togetherness as a father and son. My instinctive "No, I've already answered that once" was ready to roll off my tongue, but other words came: "Hey, I bet he *would* enjoy this. This is great! So why should we bring Sam along?"

"Oh Dad, he'd just like being here with us." And with a reassuring tone he repeated, "And he's got his own bike." I needed that reassurance, since Joel outgrew his bike last year and we'd had to patch together a larger, older bike for this ride. "And besides," he added, "his dad isn't home much, and his mom doesn't spend much time with him or his older brother Tony."

"Really?" I responded.

"Yeah, his dad works long hours and usually watches TV most of the evening, and his mother is too busy to spend time playing with them."

At that, my mind began searching for validation of his

scenario. Yes, Sam always seems to be wandering around our neighborhood after school, riding his bike, or asking if Joel can play. And the only times I've seen his parents are when his mother comes driving by asking if we know where Sam or Tony are.

*Many are molded
by a string of
surrogate parents.*

Leftover kids, they are. Latchkey kids. Street kids. Whatever we call them, they belong to people who give birth to children, but choose not to really *parent* them. It happens for many reasons including divorce, separation, following professional dreams full-time. And it's not just

absentee parents who don't parent. Many parents are home, but choose not to parent their children during their formative years.

These kids just about raise themselves, molded by a string of surrogate parents—schoolteachers, neighborhood peers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and, of course, the ever-present television.

When we Adventists want to pat ourselves on the back and think that we're immune from such unhealthy family behavior, we should think twice. It's not so. Most families have both parents working, which places children in the care of others or the television—the all-too-frequent "baby-sitter."

Many Adventists have the additional tendency to leave the spiritual nurturing of their children to surrogate parents—often church school and Sabbath school. Yet no matter how great the schools and churches are, they can never take the place of parents in leading their children to Christ and helping them maintain a Christian worldview.

Such ministry isn't easy (an obvious understatement!). Some days I wish Solomon were around. Yet I know, on my knees, that God is able to supply wisdom far beyond what Karen and I ask for.

I must keep remembering that it was God, when He was creating the world, who chose to create a family as the best place to raise children and to instruct them in the "fear of the Lord." Certainly God will give us—*when we ask*—the help we need.

And by the way, tonight we're taking Sam with us to Bible camp.



GIVE & TAKE

ADVENTIST QUOTES

"You've got to know the Word if you want to sow the Word."

—Pastor Ken Brummel, at the West Lenexa (Kansas) church

"Most people here are slender because they don't eat enough, not because they like being slender."

—Rob and Teresa Ernst, frontier missionaries in Nepal

"If you are existing on flattery, prepare for a drought."

—F. O. Jones, College Heights, Alberta

"Spiritual leadership is God-appointed, not self-assumed."

—Rob Vandeman, at the Triadelphia church, Clarksville, Maryland

108 YEARS AGO . . .

Andrew Cudney, the first Adventist minister to the South Sea Islands, perished in the Pacific Ocean at age 35.

Cudney was sent by the General Conference Committee to Pitcairn Island to organize those converted to Adventism by John Tay two years earlier. Nearly every adult on the island had accepted the Adventist message.

After sailing to Hawaii, Cudney prepared to sail to Tahiti and Pitcairn on a boat a friend purchased at an auction. Cudney named the first Adventist missionary ship the *Phoebe Chapman*.

The day of his ill-fated departure, July 31, 1888, Cudney wrote: "We shall sail at noon today, going first to Tahiti, where I expect Bro. Tay is waiting for me. . . . This is one of the best missionary fields in the world. I ask your prayers, that God may guide in His holy work."

The death of Cudney and his crew seemed a cruel blow to Adventism. Still, two years later the second SDA missionary boat, the *Pitcairn* (pictured), sailed for Pitcairn. Edward Gates and Albert Read baptized the 82 islanders that Andrew Cudney had expected to baptize.

In 1892 the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* published a lengthy poem in memory of Cudney, which concluded:

"In thy surging vastness roll,
O wave of the western sea;
But a Voice shall break thy long control,
And call thy dead from thee!"

—compiled by Bert Haloviak, GC Office of Archives and Statistics



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HERALD'S TRUMPET

July is nearly over, but Herald the *Review* angel couldn't let it finish without dropping by. And you guessed it—Herald's trumpet is once again hidden somewhere in this magazine.

(We're not giving hints, so please do not call William Johnsson at home.)

The winners from our last contest (June 20) were: Thomas Shepherd from Lincoln, Nebraska; Marissa Hagen from Fletcher, North Carolina; and Jacob Gumowski from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Thomas, Marissa, and Jacob received *Guide's Greatest Stories*, a *Review* and *Herald* book compiled by Randy Fishell.

Where was Herald's trumpet last time? On page 14, in the left-hand column.

This time the trumpet is in a completely new spot. If you can find it, send a postcard telling us where to: *Herald, Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Then we'll randomly choose three winners. The prize this time is a colorful *Guide* T-shirt. You'll love it!

Look for the three winners' names and Herald's return in the September 6 NAD Edition of the *Review*. Have fun searching—and don't forget to "trumpet" Jesus' love.



LET'S PRAY

Have a prayer need? Have a few free minutes? Each Wednesday morning at 8:00 the *Adventist Review* staff meets to pray for people—children, parents, friends, coworkers. Send your prayer requests and, if possible, pray with us on Wednesday mornings. Let's share in each other's lives.

WE NEED YOU

Give & Take is your page. Send your "Adventist Quotes," top-quality photos, "Adventist Life" vignettes, "Readers' Exchange" items, and prayer requests to: *Give & Take*, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; CompuServe: 74532,2564.



What My Church Did Right

*One of your former kids just wants to write
and say, "Thanks."*

BY BECKY LANE

At one time I believed that all churches were brimming with old people and young people who not only loved each other, but even *liked* each other. I imagined that all pastors played baseball and told campfire stories; that potlucks were significant events on everyone's social calendar.

That was more than 12 years ago. Do you remember the day I became an "official" part of you? I'll never forget it.

It was summer, of course. Because the church didn't have a baptistry, we had to wait until the Minnesota lakes were free of ice. All the church members drove over to Charlotte Johnson's home on Bass Lake. My friend Jennifer and I giggled as we struggled into the black baptismal robes, several sizes too big. We felt nervous, because we knew you were all so proud of us; and sober, because we knew it was the beginning of something

important. We loved Jesus very much that day.

We saw you beaming as we tripped down the grassy bank in our robes. Everyone sang "Trust and Obey" from yellow song sheets that flapped in the breeze. Mom's camera ran out of film, and the neighbor kids abandoned their floating inner tube and climbed out on the boat dock to watch. Uncle Wilbur led us through the green lily pads and quoted from Ecclesiastes 12, about remembering the Creator in the days of our youth; then he baptized us.

The elders lined up to shake our hands and solemnly welcomed us into the Blackberry church. Grandma kept saying how beautiful it was that three ducks swam by just as we were baptized. I shook my long, wet hair and didn't say anything. I knew that you loved me.

The pastor gave me a baptismal certificate that day, but what I remember even more came a few weeks later.

Thanks for a Place to Work

The phone rang one evening. It was someone from the nominating committee, asking if I would be the Sabbath school secretary. Each week for the next year I picked up offering envelopes, counted the change two or three times (to make sure it was right), and recorded it in my logbook. My sixth-grade classmates served as cradle roll teachers, junior deacons, and members of the social committee. We never doubted that our church needed us.

You found out by default what surveys were just beginning to prove: youth don't want entertainment; they want something to do. So you gave us something to do, expected

us to do it, and we did it. We knew you trusted us.

When you asked me to be the church communication secretary in seventh grade, you didn't laugh as I earnestly marched to the local *Herald Review* with my handwritten news releases. You asked us to read mission stories when we couldn't even pronounce the names of all the countries. You listened eagerly to our first sermons—long before we had ever heard of homiletics.

Somehow you understood that youth want more than a voice in the church's back seat—we want a hand on the steering wheel and a foot on the accelerator. Yes, we've probably caused a few crashes, but at least a church doesn't need collision insurance. We all survived, and we youth knew we were a necessary part of the team.

Thanks for a Place to Grow

But now you're wondering if we still need you. You've heard all the talk about youth leaving the church. You've heard that we have a long list of complaints: that we feel shut out, left out, let down, and turned off. Are you afraid you've failed?

Sure, you may have done a few things wrong, but I'm writing this letter to thank you, the Blackberry church, for *not* failing us. Thank you for doing a lot of things right.

Thank you for your time. There were many things your small church couldn't give—youth pastors, fancy Pathfinder uniforms, a satellite hookup in church. But you gave us your time. You gave your Friday evenings to plan our Sabbath school lessons. You camped in igloos in February, watched the slides (164 of them) from my Maranatha mission trip, listened to the Christmas concerts we performed in, and prayed for us when you could

have been sleeping.

Thank you for your adaptable spirit. True, you've all been sticking to your "family" pews for about eight decades now, but you've adjusted to youthful surprises with patience—even humor.

Remember the Pathfinder boating trip when Amy "caught" the pastor's shirt with a fishhook? She was

*You asked me to
become Sabbath school
secretary, and my
classmates to teach
cradle roll, be junior
deacons, and social
committee members. We
never doubted that you
needed us.*

embarrassed and afraid of his reaction. But he only laughed and suggested that we fry *him* for supper.

Then there was that picnic when Mom told me to bring the forks, but I forgot. No one fussed about the mistake (maybe because you looked so funny using potato chips for utensils).

I've seen you attempt some bold changes. I was proud when you were one of the first churches in the conference to ordain a woman elder. It meant a lot that you supported me when I decided to spend a year in public school instead of going to academy. And if my skirts were ever too short, you never said a word.

Thanks for Still Trying

Are you wondering if you should have done anything differently while we were growing up? Are you searching for a foolproof method for reaching the younger generation? Forget it.

Are you waiting until you can really get the youth program organized? Forget that, too.

Youth ministry isn't neat, time-efficient, or organized. It's exhausting.

But I'm a Seventh-day Adventist Christian today because I discovered Jesus Christ in your church family, and I believed you needed my help to show His love to our community.

I know a youth class still meets every Sabbath morning in the same room with folding metal chairs that scrape on the green and yellow linoleum. There's probably another girl with long hair and braces who sits in my place now. I hope you give her more than a baptismal certificate and a handshake when she's baptized.

Give her a cradle roll class to teach.

Give her a sermon to preach.

Let her know that you

need her.

Kids hate to let people down, especially people they love. If you need them and trust them, they'll get the job done.

Love,



Becky Lane is a graduate intern at the Review and Herald® Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Maryland. She has editorial responsibilities for Guide, Insight, and Women of Spirit magazines.

A Proper Response

I am a White male who isn't angry at anyone. But I am angry at my country for giving preferences to Blacks and other minorities. I do not believe in slavery, but neither do I condone reverse discrimination. Why don't Blacks just help themselves like everybody else? Why do they need special considerations?

You are correct in saying that Black Americans can and should do more to help themselves. The growing Black middle class is evidence that this is possible.

On the other hand, preferences are based upon relevant considerations. One is slavery's residual effects within the Black community. While slavery ended 131 years ago, the debilitating results of centuries of incarceration followed by 90 years of tacit and legal "separate but equal" status are still alive. If the period since slavery had been characterized by more genuine efforts toward equality, slavery's consequences would be far less evident. But *Plessy versus Ferguson* in 1896 (separate but equal) and other laws, not overthrown until the civil rights acts of the fifties and sixties, effectively denied fair access to this minority.

And not to be forgotten are the distinct advantages that slavery provided majority America. A significant percentage of this population benefits from derived materials and traditions that are still muted in the largest element of Black society, its struggling underclass.

Those who say that these individuals should lift themselves by their bootstraps should understand that many have no boots. Those who think the debt of 400 years of oppression has been paid or who point to certain immigrant groups as having "made it" in America faster than Blacks as a reason for denying reparations do not give sufficient weight to slavery's legacy or the fact that even America's former enemies have been better welcomed in the marketplace.

Another viable consideration is that programs that lift the underprivileged of any group toward socioeconomic parity alleviate the heavy burden of our courts and prisons. So America will pay one way or the other. Either we will pay in people development or we will pay an even greater price in crime and the criminal justice system. The former option is not "reverse discrimination"; it is economic wisdom and morally just.

Some of my friends say it is wrong for governments to arm themselves and fight. I think that we should protect our country. Am I wrong to feel that some wars are just?

*Radical passivism
is capitulation
to evil.*

Many Christian passivists believe that if persons must die it is far more consistent with Christ's example that they do the dying rather than the killing. For such individuals it is impossible to harmonize the self-sacrificing love of the New Testament with any kind of war.

What is overlooked in this position is the authority given the state, in Romans 13:1-4, to wield the sword against evil. All Christians should prefer passivism—including disarmament. However, the kind of radical passivism that condemns governmental decisions to resist physical aggression forcefully, not only ignores the passage above but also flies in the face of true concern for human life.

Of course, one hopes that the government's contemplation and use of force will be guided by viable social principles. Among these are the principles of restraint—the use of force only after all other options have been exhausted; the principle of discrimination—targeting destructive weaponry and military installations, not citizenry; the principle of proportionality—the use of no more force than necessary to defend adequately; and the principle of probability—the assessment that the probable good of victory will outweigh the probable evils of the conflict.

Radical passivism (the abandonment of physical self-defense even under attack) is, in reality, capitulation to evil occupation. Gandhi's letter to the British in 1940 urging them to surrender to the Nazis is an example. Fortunately, Churchill and the British Parliament decided otherwise.

The church, the spiritual arm of God's earthly rule, should not promote war of any kind. This makes the so-called religious wars now being fought in many countries particularly reprehensible. However, the state, the secular arm of God's earthly rule, can and should defend its citizens when necessary.

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





Paul's Three Adjectives for the Law

The commandments reflect the One who brought us grace.

BY GOSNELL YORKE

WHEN IT COMES TO THE LAW OF God, 1 Timothy 1:8 takes us to the very heart of the matter:

"We know that the Law is good if it is used as it should be used" (TEV). And except for its mistranslation of the word "law" (rendered as "laws"), *The Living Bible* (a popular paraphrase of the Scriptures) also captures the substance of the Timothy text: "Those laws are good when used as God intended."

Almost a decade before he wrote the letter to Timothy, the apostle Paul had argued the same case in his letter to the Romans, declaring to these Christians in that influential city that the Law of God is *holy* and *just* and *good* (Rom. 7:12).

Let's focus now on each of these three designations.

1. The Law Is Holy

As human beings, we cannot exist in community without laws of one kind or another. Laws help to structure society, regulate human conduct,¹ and make life livable. Even life in the jungle is governed by "the *law* of the jungle." It is for this reason that I always find it strange when some well-meaning Christians try to convince me (and

themselves) that in the life of the redeemed, the law of God has no place; that, like oil and water, grace and law do not mix.

Of course, this idea is never pressed to its logical conclusion, for I know of no Christian of any denominational persuasion who would contend that a born-again believer is free to covet, kill, and commit adultery as she or he pleases. I suspect that more often than not it is really the "forgotten fourth"—the Sabbath—that such claims have in view.

God being the supreme embodiment of holiness, the law itself, as a transcript or reflection of His perfect character, is holy (Rom. 7:12). The Ten Commandments are not just a shopping list of do's and don'ts (or, as a Kenyan student of mine put it sometime ago, a list of do's and don't do's). Rather, they point beyond themselves to a God who is holy and just and good. They articulate fundamental moral and spiritual principles of life in the kingdom—principles that are universally applicable and timelessly relevant in their appeal. For they originated in the heart of our holy God, the Creator and Sustainer of the whole world and all who have dwelt, are dwelling, or will ever dwell in it (Acts 17:24-26).

To recognize the law as holy is to see beyond it and, in doing so, to sense the

*Does the
Adventist
emphasis on the
Sabbath stem
from some sort
of paranoid
preoccupation
with the law?*

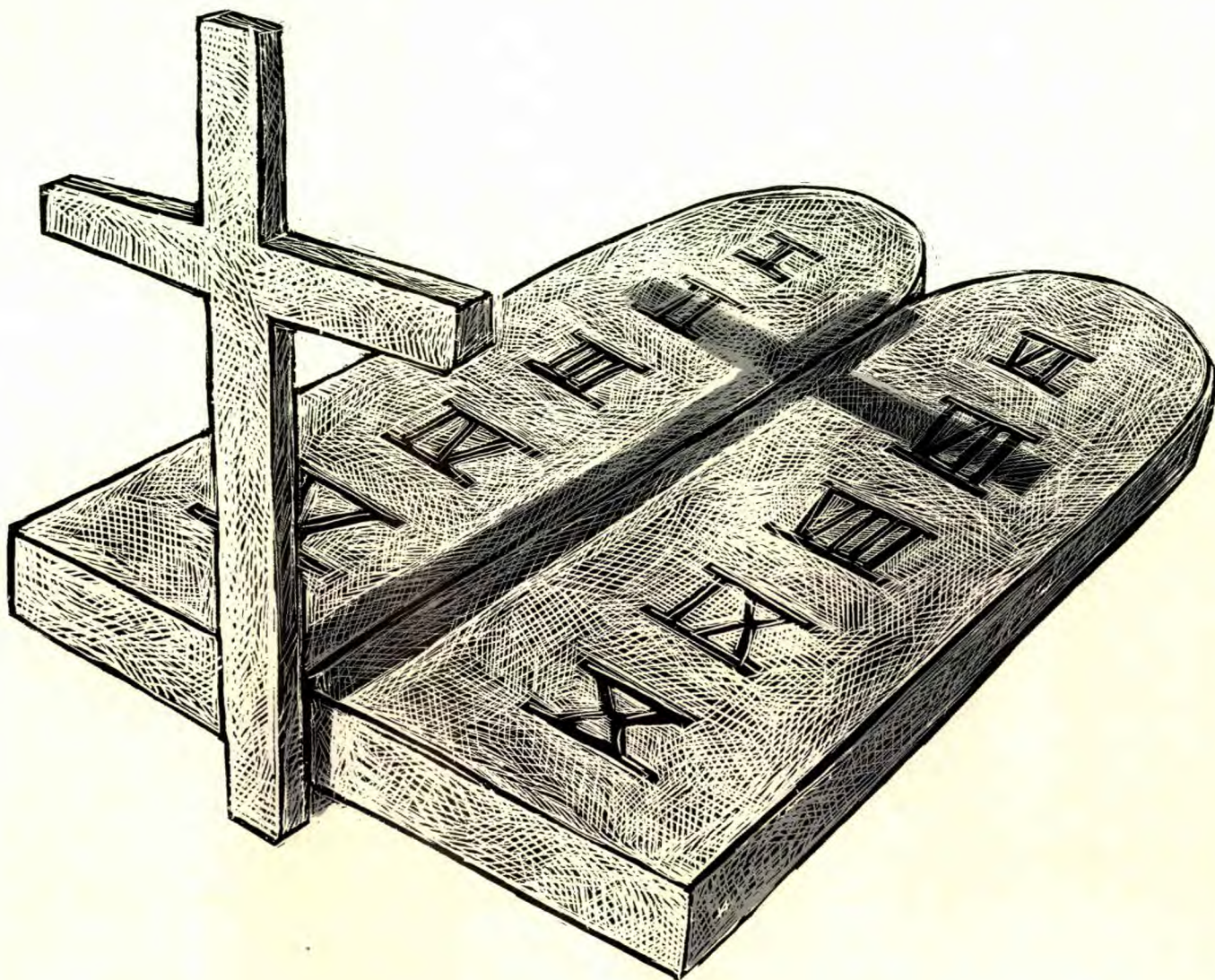


ILLUSTRATION BY NIP ROGERS

holiness of God. But it is more. For it also serves to make us mindful that we are in covenant communion with a God who expects us to be holy, even as He is. Not in our own strength, of course—for that is weakness, but through the transforming grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (Lev. 11:43-45; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 3:14-20).

A high view of God translates into a high view of God's law. How is it really possible to hold a high view of a holy God and have a low view of His law? This would be inconsistent at best, and heretical at worst. A high-view of God

should mean that His holy law takes precedence over every human law—be it legislative, judicial, or ecclesiastical (see Acts 4:18-20; 5:29).

But while we believe, as Adventists, that the law of God is holy, we also know that it is impotent to save. It is a reflection of God's holy character, but it was never meant to be our Saviour.

2. The Law Is Just

The law of God is just precisely because it points beyond itself to a God who also is just.

God's justice has to do with the

manner in which He has dealt with the sin problem from its very inception. Though He forewarned our first parents that there would be a clear correlation between disobedience and death (both physical and spiritual), He nevertheless moved quickly to effect their restoration when they fell (see Gen. 1-3). In His incredible love and mercy, and out of a desire to keep hope alive, He brought them the message of a Saviour who would appear for their deliverance (Gen. 3:15).

Centuries later the apostle Paul would tell the Romans and others

essentially the same thing. For what was mere promise in Genesis had become fulfilment in Jesus (Rom. 1:17; 3:23; 6:23).

The gospel is really about the grand exchange—one in which Jesus

The Law of God

The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Saviour. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, but its fruitage is obedience to the commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is an evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow men. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness. (Ex. 20:1-17; Ps. 40:7, 8; Matt. 22:36-40; Deut. 28:1-14; Matt. 5:17-20; Heb. 8:8-10; John 15:7-10; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 John 5:3; Rom. 8:3, 4; Ps. 19:7-14.)

—FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS, NO. 18.

voluntarily took the ignominious death that was rightfully ours so that we, by faith in Him, can now have the abundant life that was always His. It is a life that is to be characterized by both faithfulness and gratefulness. Gratefulness because of what God in Christ has done for us and is ever doing in us (John 15:4, 5); and law-abiding faithfulness because God,

being who He is, both *desires* and *deserves* that kind of faithfulness on our part (John 15:10).

To be an Adventist Christian is to live with the consciousness and conviction that abundant life in Jesus and obedience to the law are not at all contradictory, but rather are eminently complementary. Under the terms of the new covenant fulfilled in Jesus, God writes His just and holy law in our hearts so that we, through the Spirit, can then obey Him heartily (see Jer. 31:31). Like the psalmist, we are moved and motivated to confess: "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. . . . I love your commands more than gold, more than pure gold. . . . Your commands are my delight" (Ps. 119:97-143, NIV).

The law points to a God who is just and righteous, whose judgment on sin carries with it the death penalty, but whose love and grace spell pardon and power in Jesus. It also points to a people who ought also to be just and loving in all their ways. The law of God calls for a people whose lips and lives express that genuine love upon which meaningful commandment keeping is based.

The Old Testament (which contains two records of the Ten Commandments—Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5), clearly indicates that the sum and substance of commandment observance is to love God wholeheartedly (Deut. 6:4-6) and our neighbor as ourselves (Lev. 19:18). And the emphasis of the New Testament is no different.² The specific injunctions against idolatry, Sabbath-breaking, disrespecting parents, murder, adultery, covetousness, lying, and the like are all grounded in the kind of love found only in God, graciously shed abroad in our hearts through the Spirit.³

And through the Sabbath commandment, moreover, God reminds us continuously of the need to respond to Him in love and to demonstrate that love to all those whom He has created, and especially those whom He has re-created through His Son.

In other words, then, the Ten

Commandments, constituting the law of God and undergirded by the principle of love, take a right-angle turn at the Sabbath commandment, the "forgotten fourth." The Sabbath orients us to both the vertical and the horizontal, to both God and neighbor. In the Sabbath commandment we are summoned to look in both directions, and in the Spirit, live and love on both planes.

This means, essentially, that the consistent Adventist emphasis on commandment keeping, in general, and on Sabbath observance, in particular, does not stem from some sort of paranoid preoccupation with the law in a legalistic sense, or from an anxiety-based obsession with the need to avoid libertinism or licentiousness at all cost. Rather, it stems from the consciousness and conviction that a redeemed life must be lived within the context of the law of love in its totality.

As Adventist Christians, drawn from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, we have the power and privilege to emulate our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and, in doing so, become the most eloquent embodiment of His love and justice in the world.

In her inimitable way, Ellen White had this to say: "In your association with others, put yourself in their place. Enter into their feelings, their difficulties, their disappointments, their joys, and their sorrows. Identify yourself with them, and then do to them as, were you to exchange places with them, you would wish them to deal with you. . . . It is another expression of the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Matt. 22:39). And it is the substance of the teaching of the prophets. It is a principle of heaven, and will be developed in all who are fitted for its holy companionship. The golden rule is the principle of true courtesy, and its truest illustration is seen in the life and character of Jesus."⁴

Little wonder, then, that the apostle Paul, in arguing for the ongoing value and validity of the law in the life of the

Christian, could affirm that the law is holy and just—that is to say, it is good.

3. The Law Is Good

It can be argued that the goodness of the law consists in its holiness and justice. The Greek allows us to translate Romans 7:12 as follows: "The commandment is holy and just; that is to say, it is good." This is not unlike the very heart of the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 6:33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God; that is to say, His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

What Paul later abbreviates in 1 Timothy 1:8 (the law is good), he had more fully developed in Romans 7:12 (the law is holy and just and good). The law is good not only because it points to a just and holy God, but also because it is absolutely good for us.

To those of us who profess to love God wholeheartedly and our neighbor as ourselves, His law of Ten Commandments should be considered not a burden, but a blessing—a blessing that flows from obedience. Such a blessing encompasses several things. Wisdom and understanding, for instance (Ps. 119:98); peace of mind (Ps. 119:65); a life that's pure and moral (Prov. 7:1-5); a sense of well-being in the world, making it possible to monitor one's ongoing growth in grace (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Cor. 3:18); the assurance that God will always hear and answer one's prayers (1 John 3:22); and a secure knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus (John 17:17).

Hubner is right on when he says: "The function of the Law . . . is reduced to that of leading [men and women] to recognize the truth in Jesus."⁵

For some of us, such a blessing, born of Spirit-produced obedience, might also mean protection against disease (Ex. 15:26) and the gift of living in relatively good health to a ripe old age (Prov. 3:1, 2; 4:10, 22).

It is little wonder, then, that the psalmist was driven to make the exultant declaration: Happy are they who not only *talk* about the law, but

who actually *walk* in it.⁶ ■

¹ H. O. Oruka et al., eds., *The Rational Path: A Dialogue on Philosophy, Law and Religion* (Nairobi, Kenya: Standard Textbooks Graphics and Publishing, 1989), p. 17.

² See Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-31; Gal. 5:14, 15; Rom. 13:8-10; James 2:8-12; John 13:31-35; 1 John 2:5-25).

³ First John 3:4; see also *Steps to Christ*, pp. 58-62.

⁴ *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 134.

⁵ See *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New*

Testament, ed. H. Balz and G. Schneider (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981), p. 477.

⁶ Ps. 119:1; cf. Rev. 1:3; 12:17.

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Jesus: Friend of Children

Whenever He was around, children were both seen and heard.

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

ALL THROUGH HIS LIFE, Christ performed acts of love and tenderness for the children. He took the little ones in His arms, and blessed them. On one occasion He called a little child to Him, and set him in the midst of His disciples, and said: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹

JESUS WAS ALWAYS kind and tender toward children, even when but a child Himself. Never was a child repulsed

by Him. Little children were drawn to Him, for His face and eyes lighted up with smiles for them. He loved little children, and soothed their childish griefs and disappointments and injuries.²

JESUS WAS EVER in sympathy with all phases of the life of childhood and youth. . . . He took the children in His arms, and blessed them, and spoke words of encouragement and sympathy to the mothers, and both mothers and children returned to their homes



strengthened and blessed by the divine love of the Master. They loved Jesus, and often repeated to others the story of their visit.³

JESUS LOVED THE CHILDREN. He remembered that He was once a child, and His benevolent countenance won the affections of the little ones. They loved to play around Him, and to stroke that loving face with their innocent hands. When the Hebrew mothers brought their babes to be blessed by the dear Saviour the disciples deemed the errand of too little importance to interrupt His teachings. But Jesus read the earnest longing of those mothers' hearts, and checking His disciples, He said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."⁴

OUR REDEEMER had a broad, comprehensive humanity. His heart was ever touched with the known helplessness of the little child that is subject to rough usage, and He loved children. The feeblest cry of human suffering never reaches His ear in vain.⁵

IN THE CHILDREN who were brought in contact with Him, Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects of His kingdom. . . . In His teaching He came down to their level. He, the Majesty of heaven, did not disdain to answer their questions, and simplify His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth, which in after years would spring up, and bear fruit unto eternal life.⁶

CHILDREN LOVED to be in His presence. He took them in His arms. Christ was an earnest,

thoughtful man, an intense worker for the good of others, but He was never frowning or gloomy.⁷

[AFTER JESUS CLEANSED] the temple, the children were foremost in the rejoicing. Jesus had healed their maladies; He had clasped them in His arms, received their kisses of grateful affection, and some of them had fallen asleep upon His breast as He was teaching the people. Now with glad voices the children sounded His praise.⁸

JESUS LOVED THE CHILDREN; He regarded them as younger members of the Lord's family. He always treated them with kindness and respect.⁹

CHILDREN WERE ATTRACTED to Jesus, for His eyes shone with an expression of that love which led Him to leave the heavenly courts, and come to earth to die in the sinner's place. In His countenance was revealed tender love and sympathy for all children. He pitied and loved not only those who sought to be obedient and loving, but those also who were wayward and perverse. Jesus has not changed; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.¹⁰

These statements, compiled by the Ellen G. White Estate, are from Ellen White's published and unpublished sketches of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Much more than a one-dimensional individual, Jesus personified a unique blend of the human and the divine.

¹ *Review and Herald*, May 17, 1898.

² *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 175.

³ *Bible Echo*, Dec. 15, 1892.

⁴ *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 68, 69.

⁵ *Spalding/Magan Collection*, p. 107.

⁶ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 512-515.

⁷ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, p. 90.

⁸ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 592.

⁹ *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 201.

¹⁰ *Youth's Instructor*, June 23, 1892.

GC Delegates Share Their Vision for the Church's Future

In times of limited resources, what goes, what stays?

BY DUANE MCBRIDE, ROGER L. DUDLEY, AND EDWIN I. HERNANDEZ.

Last year 2,300 Adventist administrators, educators, pastors, and lay leaders gathered for the fifty-sixth General Conference session in Utrecht, Netherlands. They did more than elect officers, hear reports, vote policy changes, and amend the *Church Manual*. The delegates shared their personal vision of the future directions of the church.

These delegates, of whom 19 percent were lay members and 12 percent were women, were predominantly well-educated middle-aged men employed by the church. They participated in a survey we developed at the request of the General Conference leaders. The extended survey listed various ministries and programs and asked delegates where the church should place its resources during the next few years. Areas included in the survey were evangelism and mission, church unity, fundamental beliefs, Christian education, ethnic and gender relationships, public health involvement, social and economic issues, and religious liberty. The delegates also were asked which programs they would recommend for increased or decreased funding.

The survey was developed through a series of focus groups from various world divisions. The questionnaire was translated into six languages and sent to each delegate before the session. Of the 2,341 registered delegates, more than 2,000

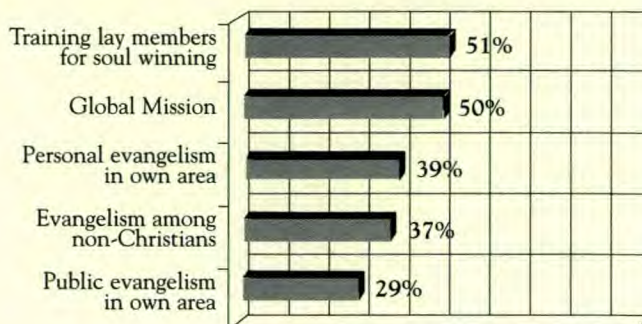
completed and returned the questionnaires, for a response rate of 86 percent.

Evangelism and Mission

Delegates voiced a strong need to involve more church members in the evangelism process, both globally and locally. Of the 31 methods given for accomplishing the church's mission, the training of members for outreach and soul-winning was chosen as the number one focus for the commitment of funds by 51 percent of the delegates. Lay evangelistic training also ranked high in each of the church's 15 geographic regions (11 world divisions, three attached fields, and the General Conference headquarters staff).

The next four choices in order of priority were Global Mission (outreach in unentered territories), personal evangelism in entered territories, evangelism among non-Christians, and public evangelism.

Recommendations for Priority Funding for Evangelism and Mission



Unity in the World Church

With active work in more than 210 countries, the Adventist Church is blessed with a diverse membership. In light of the incredible diversity of cultures and races, the delegates were asked to identify factors that contributed to the church's unity. What is the glue that holds the church together?

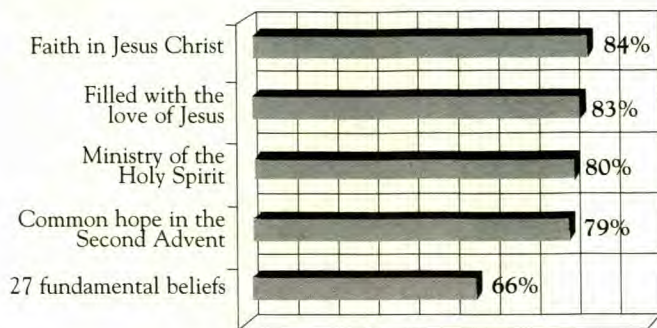
Of the 30 factors indicated, "faith in Jesus Christ," "the love of Jesus," and "the ministry of the Holy Spirit" were identified as the most unifying aspects of Adventism. Next came the distinctive beliefs of the hope of Christ's second coming, the 27 fundamental beliefs, and the Sabbath. Other important factors included a common mission, the writings of Ellen White, the Adventist understanding of prophecy and end-time events, a shared vision, and the Sabbath school lesson.

The most important factors holding the Adventist world church together are not organization, structure, or common practices, but Christ-centered *experience* and *beliefs*. Indeed, organizational factors did not appear until number 12 (the *SDA Church Manual*) and number 13 (universal system of church organization).

Fundamental Beliefs

As the Adventist Church grows around the world, a new generation is emerging with ever-changing needs. The delegates were asked which of the church's 27 fundamental beliefs should receive significantly more emphasis

Recommendations for Most Important Factors Promoting Unity in the World Church



during the next few years. They chose the experience of salvation, the second coming of Christ, stewardship and tithing, marriage and family, the remnant and its mission, and unity in the body of Christ.

By their responses, the delegates were not rating the *importance* of these doctrines, but the *emphasis* needed in each delegate's respective field.

It is noteworthy that the delegates felt that the doctrine of salvation needed the most emphasis. This may indicate a concern that people may become Adventists without understanding basic Christianity. It emphasizes the conclusion of the previous section that core Christian doctrine needs to take precedence over denominational specifics—important as the latter are.

Adventist Christian Education

In the area of Adventist education, delegates voiced a strong desire to use Christian education as the context for teaching the gospel and Adventist beliefs and values to youth. In addition, the authority of the Bible was seen as needing to be integrated into every level of the educational process.

Following these two issues was the desire to develop programs and materials to meet the spiritual needs of Adventist youth in non-Adventist schools, colleges, and universities. The results of this section show a reaffirmation of the mission of the Adventist educational system.

There was also an increased realization

are seeking education outside the denomination's system. These students are in need of spiritual contact and community.

Ethnic and Gender Issues Within the Church

How does the church create a community of believers whose commitment to Christ incorporates and yet transcends their own cultural concerns, commitments, and values? This is a vital question church leaders face as they travel throughout the world.

Overwhelmingly, delegates believe the power of the gospel is the most potent force in resolving national, ethnic, tribal, and gender relationships within the church. The group also said there is a need for more sermons and programs emphasizing God's love for all and the sinfulness of hatred. They gave strong support to equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender or ethnicity. However, there was low priority given to developing further opportunities for women in the church.

Delegates also expressed interest in developing

that many Adventist youth will obtain education outside the Adventist system. Delegates want to increase ways to meet the spiritual needs of these students. This does not denote declining support of Adventist education, but rather reflects the reality that increasing numbers

programs and training individuals to address ethnic and gender issues and help prevent conflicts and tensions.

Public Health

In this area, delegates were asked to rate the public health initiatives to which the church directs funds. More than 42 percent of the respondents indicated that the church should have heavy involvement in basic public health education. Other areas with high priority were improving nutrition and operating hospitals and clinics.

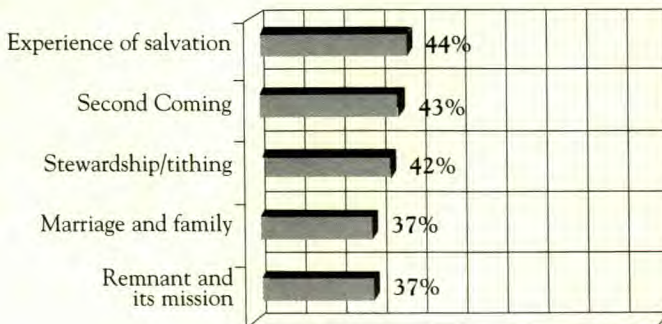
Generally, very specific public health areas, such as family planning, preventing substance abuse, and caring for those with AIDS, did not receive as much support as the more broad-based health roles.

The data suggests that less than half the delegates believe the church should have great involvement in public health issues. This may indicate that the delegates were more focused on church involvement in the areas of soul winning and evangelism than they were on public health issues.

Social and Economic Issues

When asked what social and economic issues the church should give leadership and resources to, 44 percent of the delegates chose preserving the family. Disaster assistance programs and initiatives advocating biblically based sexual and family relations ranked second and third,

Fundamental Beliefs Needing Much More Emphasis—5 Highest



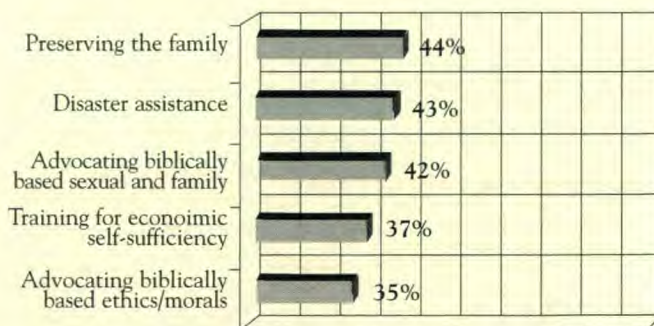
respectively. The respondents also indicated strong support for training in economic self-sufficiency and programs advocating biblically based ethics and morals.

The delegates appeared to view the church's role in social and economic issues as emerging from a strong biblical base. Social issues with a less clear biblical base (at least as currently interpreted by Adventists) received less support.

Religious Liberty

Religious liberty has always been a crucial issue for the church. As a small religious minority, Adventists have often suffered economically, socially, and legally for their beliefs. As a consequence, Adventists have been in

Recommendations for Greater Involvement in Social and Economic Issues



the forefront of advocacy for legislation to protect minority religious views and practices. Adventists have traditionally sought such protection not only for themselves but also for others.

In addition, the majority of delegates thought the church should be involved in preventing the establishment of a state religion. Most delegates also believed the

church should have great involvement in protecting the believers' rights to worship publicly, witness for their faith, and hold evangelistic meetings.

Recommendations for Funding Changes

The delegates were asked to pick five programs for which they wanted to see funding increased and five programs for which funding should be decreased. The top five programs for increased funding included Global Mission, training lay members for soul winning, teaching Adventist beliefs in the church's worldwide educational system, public evangelism, and increased distribution of Sabbath school lessons. The delegates clearly recognized the

NEWSBREAK

Historic Meeting Held With Worldwide Church of God Leaders

For the first time since the founding of the Adventist Church and the Worldwide Church of God, leaders of the two denominations met at the Adventist Church world headquarters on June 26.

The historic dialogue came about because of a desire on the part of the leaders of both denominations to discuss their mutual beliefs in light of recent doctrinal changes made by the 750,000-member Worldwide Church of God. These changes in beliefs included dropping observance of the Sabbath, observance of the annual feasts, and the distinction between clean and unclean meats (see Newsbreak, Jan. 18, 1996). The changes were sufficient to cause tens of thousands of members to form a new denomination that still holds to its original historic beliefs.

General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg and Worldwide Church of God pastor general Joseph W. Tkach led the delegations, which included representatives of both churches' departmental and administrative staffs.

In welcoming the guests, Folkenberg said, "It's with a great deal of Christian compassion that I view what the Worldwide Church of God has gone through."

He also said, "We have appreciated your willingness to come and so openly share with us. We have a better understanding of the depth of changes in the Worldwide Church of God and how it sees itself in the wider Christian community."

"We've always thought of the Seventh-day Adventists as spiritual cousins," said Pastor General Tkach, "but now we see you as brothers. We share a mutual church history, and we have been appreciative of the welcome and the fellowship we have had with you."—*Adventist News Network*

First Missionary to American Samoa Dies

Pastor Tini Inu Lam Yuen, 79, the first Adventist missionary to American Samoa, died May 10.

Tini, who was a schoolteacher in the coastal village of Satomai, Western Samoa, entered American Samoa in 1944 and worked on the staff of the Vailoa Training School. He established the American Samoa mission headquarters at Satala, Pago Pago, with the first baptisms coming in 1946. Tini then worked as a departmental leader and administrator until he retired in 1977.

"His contribution to the advance of the message in the South Pacific was outstanding," says David Hay, president of the Kiribati Mission, who worked with Pastor Tini for approximately 15 years in the Samoa Mission.—*South Pacific Record*.

distinctive role of the church as a remnant people emphasizing the immediacy of the Second Coming.

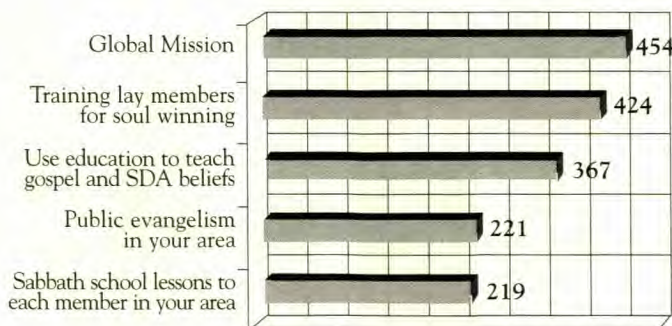
Areas for reduced funding included teaching the church's historic position on military service, English language schools, initiatives directed at reducing the availability of guns in society, joining coalitions with others for a common purpose, measuring ethnic and gender relationships, and interdivision workers.

A Few Conclusions

Overall, the survey paints a portrait of a church leadership that is deeply centered in Jesus Christ. It shows a constituency that recognizes its remnant calling to evangelize the world while addressing basic

Five Things for Which Funding Should Be Increased

(number of times mentioned)



temporal human needs. This priority was seen clearly when the delegates cited Global Mission and training lay members for soul winning as the top two priorities for increased funding.

The group also sees a public role for the church in society, a role that is born out of biblically based ethics and morality. Within this framework, the

delegates gave strong support to the advocacy of religious freedom, disaster assistance, and preventing the establishment of religion.

By **Duane McBride**, chair of the Andrews University Behavioral Sciences Department and acting director of the Institute for the Prevention of Addictions; **Roger L. Dudley**, professor of Christian ministry at Andrews University; and **Edwin I. Hernandez**, an associate professor of sociology at Andrews University.

NEWS BREAK

Adventist Leaders Dedicate Inter-America's Second TV Station

Government officials, church leaders, and members participated in dedicatory services for the second Adventist-operated TV station in Inter-America.

The June 22 ceremony inaugurated the Cayman Adventist Television Network (CATN-TV30) in the Cayman Islands. The station will produce programs featuring Adventist artists, personalities, and human-interest stories and was financed through donations from lay members. Inter-America's other church-operated television station is in Puerto Rico. —*Cayman Islands Mission*



BEAMING THE GOSPEL: From the nerve center of the new TV station, the Adventist message will be broadcast to the Cayman Islands.

Hungary Sends First Missionaries

The Adventist Church in Hungary recently joined its sister countries in sending its first three missionaries to foreign fields, reports Leo Ranzolin, a General Conference vice president.

Laczo Szabol, a student missionary, went to Tanzania, **Tibor Szilvasi** works with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency in Pakistan, and **Petre Zarka** was elected president of the Egyptian Field.

The church has already selected a site for a new seminary to train future missionaries.

News Notes

✓ **Cyberspace registration** has started at Andrews University in a pilot program. More than 100 students, mostly from the Science, Computer, and Physical Therapy departments, registered for their spring quarter classes using the World Wide Web.

The students were guided through the process in their advisors' offices, eliminating the need for standing in long lines and making repeated cross-campus trips, says university registrar David Penner.

A large number of students are expected to use the on-line registration in 1997.

Olympic Heroes, Eternal Prize

BY KERMIT NETTEBURG, NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNICATION

The Olympic philosophy is not just about winning. It is about finishing what you start, representing your country faithfully, doing the best you can, whether that means victory or not.

In 1928 Lasse Vieren, nicknamed the Flying Finn, came to the Olympics with a virtual lock on winning the 5,000- or 10,000-meter race, perhaps both. But in his first race, the 10,000-meter race, he was tripped near the halfway mark. Sprawled across the track, he had two choices: Get up and continue, and at least finish; or pound his fists and conserve his energy for the next race.

He chose to get up and run. With seemingly superhuman strength, he closed the gap and won the race. Incredible!

It was 1968. Mamo Wolde had just won the marathon in 2 hours 20 minutes 26.4 seconds. Other runners came into the stadium, each struggling to complete the 26.2-mile race.

NEWS COMMENTARY

An hour after Wolde had finished, John Steven from Tanzania limped into the stadium. Hobbling from sore feet and aching calf muscles, he nevertheless completed the circuit of the stadium track and crossed the finish line.

Someone asked him why he did it, why he kept running when he couldn't win any medal. "My country did not send me 5,000 miles to start the race," he said simply. "They sent me to finish the race."

That's what Jesus said in Gethsemane. Limping and hobbling, He knelt to find strength to finish the race. He had not come all the way from heaven just to start the race. He had volunteered to finish the race.

And that's what Jesus wants from us. Not starting the race alone, but finishing the race. Finding grace on our knees to allow God to mold us and shape us and to finish the molding of our character. In the process we will reflect Him and represent Him around the world.

NEWS BREAK

✓ **Student enrollment at River Plate Adventist University** in Argentina has nearly doubled in the past four years, says Humberto Rasi, General Conference education director.

From 1993 to 1996 the school grew from 569 to 1,083 students. Argentina's Ministry of Education has selected River Plate as one of five centers of excellence in the country. It is the only private university to be granted this distinction.—*Adventist News Network*

✓ **Morocco's public school system** will use a six-volume series of books designed to help prevent the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. The books are authored by Roland Fayard, an Adventist physician, and produced by the Life and Health Publishing House in France, reports Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference president.

✓ **Correction:** Betty Holbrook, the long-time family life leader who died on May 23 (see Newsbreak, June 27), is survived by her husband, Delmer, and two sons.

What's Coming!

Aug	3	Global Mission Evangelism emphasis
Sept	7	Lay Evangelism emphasis
Sept	1	Missions Extension Offering
Sept	14-21	Adventist Review emphasis
Sept	21	Family Togetherness Day

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Religion by Law

At 14 I spent a summer in the Florida Keys at a scuba diving camp, where on Sunday morning everyone was required to attend worship. The complaints of Robert Gewanter and me, the only Hebrew campers, were brushed aside with the answer that the services were "nondenominational." Whatever that seven-syllable word meant (I didn't know at the time), it did little to assuage my discomfort at being forced to attend worship service on Sundays, where the name "Jesus Christ" was freely used.

However, because I was determined to spend that summer among the coral reefs of the Keys—even if it meant enduring a "nondenominational" homily every Sunday morning—I never complained to my parents who, had they known, would have instantly returned me to the kosher cloister of Miami Beach.

Now, let's contrast summer camp to public school. Unlike the camp—which I voluntarily attended—children are forced, by the weight and power of the law, to be in public schools (at least those kids whose parents can't afford private ones). Any public school-sponsored religious activity, therefore, particularly during class hours, employs the power of the law to impose religion upon all students, even those who, for whatever reason, don't want it. That's why—in order to protect these children—the courts have placed limitations on certain religious activities in public schools.

Yet, even with these limitations, children in public schools have many constitutionally protected religious freedoms.

First, children are allowed to pray before, during, and after class. No law stops them from praying at lunch, recess, or gym class. They can pray alone, in groups, and, if they don't disturb the class, even out loud.

What has been forbidden, instead, is *school-sponsored* prayer activity, which would put coercive pressure on any child who, for whatever reason, doesn't want to partake of that religious exercise.

Second, nothing in the Constitution forbids a child from reading a Bible in public schools, nor does anything forbid public schools from teaching about religion. As the Supreme

Court has ruled: "It might well be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion." What has been forbidden is *school-sponsored* religious indoctrination, which, to repeat, always comes with the power of the law behind it. What Adventist parent

wouldn't object, for example, if their child were taught that Jesus changed the Sabbath to Sunday, or that the dead are in heaven and hell? To avoid these problems for children of any—or even of no—faith, the courts have wisely banned public school-sponsored religious exercises or indoctrination.

*Children are
allowed to pray in
school.*

Third, in public schools children are allowed to express their religious beliefs in reports, homework, or art; at the same time they are protected from any coercion by the teacher to modify those views. Students have the right to distribute religious literature (subject to the same reasonable restrictions imposed on the distribution of all nonschool literature on school grounds). Provided it doesn't become harassment, students are even allowed to witness for their faith. Religious garb, or T-shirts carrying a religious message, are also constitutionally protected. And, thanks to recent federal legislation, if the school receives federal funds and permits any noncurricular club to meet during noninstructional time, religious clubs can use school property as well.

Of course, there is the occasional story of a child hassled for saying grace over lunch, or for silently reading a Bible in class, but these incidents no more represent true church-state separation than Nazi medical experiments represent the Hippocratic oath. Instead, they are aberrations of a policy that, while hardly flawless, does protect children who otherwise would have religion—in one degree or another—forced upon them by law.

Public school is not summer camp. Be thankful, for freedom's sake, that the courts understand the difference.

Clifford Goldstein is editor of Liberty magazine—published six times a year by the North American Division.



Heaven's Grocery Store*

Winning friends, touching lives

By **ROY ADAMS**, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW

I went to the office of the auto dealership and explained my business to the man in charge. Later that day I walked away with a truck, *free of cost.*"

That was the story I heard as I sat in the church sanctuary on the campus of Oakwood College some three years ago during an evangelism council. The speaker was Carl Nesmith, pastor of the New Covenant Adventist Church, in Savannah, Georgia, and founder of

the program known as Heaven's Grocery Store (abbreviated below as "Heaven's" or "HGS").

The idea captured my imagination, and one Monday last April, I finally got the chance to see it in operation for myself.

"What is Heaven's Grocery Store?" I asked Nesmith as we drove to our first food pickup in Savannah's early-morning traffic. "It's a mobile, feed-the-hungry program, with a wholistic

educational/spiritual component," he responded.

Indeed! Tapping the expertise of leading individuals in the community—doctors, bank presidents, police, and other professionals—Heaven's conducts 15 seminars in such areas as money management, conflict resolution, parenting, and self-esteem. And at the time of my visit, Nesmith and his church were about to complete a 13-week Bible study seminar with a

graduation banquet and a baptism.

How It Started

The idea for this community venture came to Nesmith about eight years ago, while he was pastor of the Lithonia church in Atlanta. Out grocery shopping one day with his wife, Carol, he noticed a grocery clerk gathering produce and throwing it into what looked like a trash bin. Upon inquiry, he learned that all that food was for dumping, because of bruises and other minor defects—or simply to make room for new supplies. A dialog ensued—first with the grocery clerk, then with the manager, then with the store's corporate office. A pilot project to distribute that food to the poor commenced, and from it Heaven's Grocery Store was born.



STUFFING BAGS: Savannah Housing Authority public relations officer Sandy Glicken (second from right) was on hand to observe and help in the distribution of groceries to a long line of elderly apartment residents.



COUNTING THE COST: Nesmith says that within a couple days or so, these vegetables (now fresh) would have to move if they did not sell. The per-pound prices posted indicate what it means to the poor to receive such items, almost as good as fresh, free of cost.

The program thrust Nesmith's Atlanta church into the limelight, and he became a regular invitee to community functions. So strong was the influence of the program that even the Atlanta Boy Scouts would organize fund-raising efforts and donate the proceeds to Heaven's.

Nesmith is finding the same level of community interest and support in Savannah. No one can estimate how many thousands of dollars the program has had in free publicity—on radio, on television, and in the local press. Three years ago, in a Community Award television special, Nesmith was among 12 outstanding community

leaders honored for their contribution to some aspect of public life in the state. The list included former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young, honored for bringing the 1996

Olympics to Georgia's largest city. The program recognized Nesmith with the Outstanding Community Service in Volunteerism Award for his work with HGS.

What the Locals Think of Heaven's

I heard nothing but appreciation as I accompanied Nesmith and his helpers on their rounds that Monday morning—at both pickup and delivery points. "One of the things I appreciate about HGS," said an official at a Publix grocery store, "is the consistency and reliability of its personnel. In the grocery business everything's got to move on a pretty regular basis—you're dealing with perishables. So the promptness and consistency of HGS's personnel helps me to know how to plan."

I heard similar sentiments from Wal-Mart's claims representative Nan Brewer. "What I like about the program," she added, "is the fact that it serves everybody—the elderly, the children, the poor, people in crisis."

There was appreciation too on the receiving end. When I asked Ivory Benton, an elderly resident of an apartment complex served by Heaven's, what she thought of the program, she was ready with her answer: "Marvelous!" And she was not alone. "Wonderful!" said another elderly woman standing nearby. "We appreciate everything they do for us."

As more than 75 of these seniors lined up to receive food outside their building, Savannah Housing Authority public relations officer Sandy Glicken discussed their plight with me. There are 200 seniors living here, she said. Everyone pays approximately 30 percent of his or her meager monthly

income for rent, and by the end of the month they're down to the wire.

"Senior citizens," she said, "generally are among the most responsible people in our society, and they take paying their bills very seriously. . . . [HGS], together with other welfare programs in Savannah, is a great help to them, because we know that many of them will not eat toward the end of the month [when their money runs out]."

The Story of the Truck

As we drove together, Nesmith refreshed me on the story he'd related at that Oakwood meeting three years earlier. "As the program got under way in Savannah, I felt the need for a vehicle." Arriving at the office of an auto dealership one morning—without appointment or letter of introduction—Nesmith presented his request to the manager for a truck, *free of cost*. "I'm not on drugs," he said to the gentlemen "and I'm not crazy. But I believe in

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**NET '96 Reignites
Evangelism.**

Pendleton, Oregon: Finding Bible Studies for NET '96

The Pendleton, Oregon, church has 20 teams going door to door, looking for Bible study interests in order to make sure there is a receptive audience for the NET '96 meetings that begin October 5.

The teams have met with so much success that they've covered only 10 percent of the town. But they have 235 Bible studies in progress.

Doug Cline from the Upper Columbia Conference office has been helping to organize the work. He says if you put an enrollment card on the door, less than 1 percent begin studies.

"But if you go to the door and hand them the lesson, 80 percent will accept it. There is some attrition with the second lesson."



DRESSING ON THE RUN: After helping to pack and deliver groceries from 6:30 to 10:30, Chaplain Anslem Springer dons more formal attire by the side of his car for his regular job. Another helper on the beat the morning I visited was garage owner Luvanus Scott.



DOING WHAT THEY CAN: On my way to Savannah, I stopped over in Tallahassee for the Sabbath and attended the Tallahassee First SDA Church's annual Festival of Nations program. Coordinated by Barbara White (inset, speaking), the program sought not only to showcase the diversity of the local Adventist community but also (through the use of skits, videos, and special sound effects) to tell the simple story of redemption.

what I'm doing, and I know that if you understood it, you'd love to have an opportunity to help us."

"That contact," Nesmith said, "led to the truck we're driving in now. I drove it away from the dealership later that very afternoon."

"Our God is a God who knows how to open up opportunities, how to open up windows, how to open up doors," he reflected at the end of the story. "If you do His bidding, don't try to figure it out. Just be about the Father's business, and He will make a way; He will provide you with the resources."

Today that truck carries help—bread, produce, pastries, clothes, home appliances—to low-income neighborhoods and to the down-and-out on the streets.

How has the program impacted the local church itself? "Heaven's Grocery Store," Nesmith said, "will take a church and produce a revival and reformation. Because there's so much work to be done, the focus moves away from politics and internal problems to people in need."

The three Adventist churches in Savannah—two belonging to the South Atlantic Conference, and one to the Georgia-Cumberland

Conference—are involved in HGS. And though this report necessarily focuses on Nesmith as the principal player, he himself constantly talks up the dedicated team of helpers from all three churches who support the effort. He also gives due recognition to his conference president, Ralph Peay, without whose understanding and support he could not carry on that kind of time-consuming program as a minister.

Now in its eighth year, HGS has mushroomed into some 38 independent entities in seven states. If


Nesmith's getting tired, I saw no signs of it.



RUN DOWN: Our last visit of the day was to the brother of the late "Aunt Jemima" of pancake syrup fame (left). The portion of her wealth passed down to him has long since evaporated.

"People need to know," he said, "that ministers don't just wear three-piece suits and flashy ties and drive pretty cars, but actually work. Whenever you're doing God's business, you'll never go without. You'll always prosper. I feel as if God has called me to do this work."

* For more information on how to start a Heaven's program, call 912-897-9662.



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Bulletin Board

At Rest

MOSBY, Fannie—b. July 14, 1911, Boise, Idaho; d. Dec. 28, 1995, Apopka, Fla. She served 34 years as a Bible instructor in the Florida, Gulf States, and Southeastern California conferences.

NIGRI, Maria (Alida) Baar—b. 1904, Riga, Latvia; d. Oct. 24, 1995, São Paulo, Brazil. She served as dean of women at Brazil College and with her husband in the South American Division. Later she went with him to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists until his retirement. She is survived by her husband, Moyses Salim Nigri; two sons, Rejane and Elmano; two daughters, Cássia and Hélivia; and 11 grandchildren.

NUTTER, Robert L.—b. Jan. 20, 1922, Boston, Mass.; d. Nov. 5, 1995, Maui, Hawaii. He began his teaching career at Pacific Union College and then taught microbiology to medical, dental, and nursing students at Loma Linda University for 30 years, retiring to Washougal, Washington. In recent years he assisted with meetings in Russia and Siberia. He is survived by his wife, Eileen; two sons, L. Dennis and David L.; and seven grandchildren.

OLSON, Elmer H.—b. July 31, 1905, Atwood, Fla.; d. Oct. 10, 1995, Riverside, Calif. A general practitioner in Riverside, Calif., he also worked as a medical missionary in Japan and relief doctor in Guam. He is survived by his wife, Winona; one son, Ted; one daughter, Ann Smith; one brother, Virgil; one sister, Fern Christian; and five grandchildren.

PETERSON, Signe Nelson—b. Feb. 10, 1916, Halfway Lake, Alta.; d. Dec. 23, 1995, Medford, Oreg. She worked in the library of the General Conference in Washington, D.C., and then went to Singapore, where she spent 15 years as a secretary in the Far Eastern Division. Later she worked in the Illinois Book and Bible House. She and her husband, Eric, later served on many Maranatha trips. She is survived by one stepson, Larry Peterson; and four sisters, Greta Royal, Helen Leschert, Elizabeth Parker, and Anna Powell.

RESPESS, Ila—b. 1914, Warren, Pa.; d. Nov. 12, 1995, Avon Park, Fla. She served the church as a teacher for 40 years. In Florida she

taught at Forest Lake Academy and Walker Memorial Junior Academy. She is survived by her husband, Carl; one son, David Deerwester; one daughter, Anne Ramey; one stepson, Bob Respass; two stepdaughters, Carol Wolfe and Betty Skeoch; 11 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

SPEAR, Eric S.—b. May 6, 1893, Chicago, Ill.; d. Apr. 6, 1995, Loma Linda, Calif. She was a member of the St. Helena, California, church. Her husband, H. Leslie Spear, was an employee of the Pacific Press Publishing Association for

more than 38 years. She is survived by a daughter, Muriel A. Fischer.

TURTILL, Sylvia Winifred—b. Feb. 22, 1924; d. Oct. 30, 1995, Radcliffe, England. She served as nursing supervisor/tutor at Ile-Ife Hospital, Nigeria, from 1950 to 1965, and Stanborough Hydro Watford, England, from 1965 to 1966. She is survived by three brothers.



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This Is Living?

How Adventist teachers spent their "spare" time.

BY MIRIAM WOOD

When Amy Messenger started teaching in 1941, her salary was \$34 a month, an amount that could hardly be called a "living wage," even then. So Amy, and many teachers of that era, were "boarded and roomed around," meaning that she lived in different homes and in different circumstances for periods lasting from a few days to a few weeks or months.

"I think I've slept in almost every room a house has," she recalled. "I slept in the living room, where the davenport made out into a bed; I slept on a folding cot in the kitchen; I slept in the same bedroom with the children. In some places I was given a bedroom, and children slept on the living room floor.

"In one place I slept with the baby, who was only a year old. She always wanted to snuggle up very close to me. I would keep moving over; then she moved also. Finally I'd get out of bed and get in on the other side, and the cycle would start all over again."

R Is for Rustic

For some reason, it seemed, teachers were considered creatures of a different sort, who needed few of the "necessities" that most people considered essential. And the fact was that even if schools *wanted* to provide better accommodations, often the only way they could afford a teacher was by providing some of her or his food and lodging, instead of cash.

"I thought boarding around went out in 1899!" said

Helen Hudson, who was informed that part of her wages would come in the form of room and board. At Helen's first teaching assignment, in the foothills of the Colorado Rockies, she boarded with a family that was "nice" but not at all affluent. They lived in a home in which there was no electricity, no indoor plumbing (just a pump in the kitchen), and a space that they described as a "room of her own," which consisted of a curtain that separated one corner of the living room from the rest of the house. As she went to bed that first night, Helen must've had the disquieting sensation of being swallowed by a time warp and conveyed back to the past century.

But at least Helen had shelter, and a place to call "home." In Michigan a young teacher named Jancy told how she survived, staying at the YWCA.

L Is for Lonely

Jancy found herself being responsible for providing her own meals. But there were no cooking facilities, and no refrigeration. "Most of my meals (breakfast and lunch) were purchased at the corner grocery store. I'd buy a piece or two of fruit, a small cake or cookies or a candy bar. For supper I'd sit at the lunch counter in the basement of the Y and order a vegetable plate (boiled potatoes, peas or beets or green beans—all canned), salad, and milk."

Food became Jancy's obsession. "How tantalizing the sandwiches that students brought in lunch bags and shiny lunch pails looked!" she remembered. "But Wednesdays were worst of all. That was 'Dorcas Day,' and from the other part

of the church I smelled the marvelous odors of the food brought by the Dorcas ladies who met for quilting and other sewing. I got so hungry I could hardly teach."

Another problem was isolation. Jancy had been carefully warned about the dangers of becoming friendly with "worldly people." So she often kept to herself, imagining that she had little in common with any of the other young women who lived at the Y.

Jancy remembered many long, lonely evenings, her only companionship being the piles of school papers she graded. But Sabbaths and Sundays were sheer torture. "My favorite church family had three children in school. But I was told they wanted to spend Sabbaths as a family." They didn't invite her home. In fact, no one did.

"After church I usually returned to my tiny room for a 'feast' of canned baked beans and soda crackers."

Jancy realized later that she probably could have made a friend or two among some of the other women who lived in the building. "I thought then it was a sin to sit around with girls who drank coffee. But I could have taken a cup of Postum and learned to know a few of the girls," she reflected.

E Is for Entertainment

If Jancy suffered from isolation, Carolyn Seamount must have wondered if she had become part of a three-ring circus when she went to live with her first family.

Dropped off at curbside by a taxi, Carolyn was met in the yard by twin boys, about 4 years old. One of them asked, "Who are you?" and "Why do you have a suitcase?"

Then, flying up the front steps, they shouted, "Mother! There's a lady with a suitcase. It looks like she's going to stay a long, long time!"

The two boys were only a fraction of the six children and two adults who already inhabited the house. On the first night the woman of the house explained to Carolyn, quite unsolicited, "I never expected to have any children. I was rather frail. I told

Jim when we married that I didn't think we should have children. He said, 'Oh, don't worry about that; we won't have any children.' And I believed him. But you can see how things turned out."

It took Carolyn a few moments to recover from such a frank confession from such a relative stranger—particularly since she was so young and modest, and that type of conversation wasn't usually discussed in such a public manner.

As the weeks wore on, Carolyn witnessed a lot of conversations that thrilled and terrified the woman who had planned *not* to have a family.

Apparently at some time in the past the mother had asked her twin sons what they wanted to be when they grew up. "Preachers!" they had responded spontaneously. This answer delighted their mother, who often repeated the question, reveling in their automatic answer.

One Sabbath, when the pastor had been invited to dinner, the woman decided that he must hear this declaration of commitment from her twin sons. So, looking directly at them, sitting side by side at the dinner table, she inquired in her sweetest voice, "Boys, what do you want to be when you grow up?"

"An elephant!" the first one shouted, to her horrified disbelief.

Pleadingly, she turned to the other twin, and a note of pitiful cajolery crept into her voice: "Now, be Mommy's sweet boy. What are you going to be when you grow up?"

Alas for her well-laid plans. "I'm going to be a monkey and ride on the elephant!" was the summary of his life's ambition.

Later the woman groaned to Carolyn, "Why did I let their father take them to the circus this week?"

F Is for Frugality

Often it was the case that a family would "board" the teacher in exchange for tuition for its children. But a family that didn't have enough money to pay tuition was unlikely to have enough money to

feed another person comfortably.

Amy Messenger recalled that food was plentiful at the first of the month, just after payday. But by the end of the month the food supply was so low the woman of the house prepared only pancakes for herself and her family, and sent Amy to another Adventist home in the community to get her meals.

"One evening I was in my room when I overheard the man from the neighborhood grocery store," she related. "She apparently owed \$10 on her account, which, in those days, was a very large sum."

"I had painstakingly saved \$10 during the school year, and I knew she would never take it from me, but I really wanted to help her. So I got a money order at the post office for \$10 and sent it to the grocery store. I never wanted her to know who had done it. But the lady was determined to find out, and she wormed a confession out of me. She was neither happy nor grateful, and she told me so."

M Is for Mansions in Heaven

In spite of the misunderstandings, the loneliness, the primitive living conditions, most teachers' memories are mostly fond ones. Said one, "Boarding around was an opportunity to be part of a family for a few months, and it was the beginning of many long-lasting friendships. I couldn't even complain about my small room in the attic, with no closet, where mice would dig between the floorboards for oat kernels from the days when oats had been stored there. I just swept the floor every morning, thankful for the room."

Undoubtedly there is one group that will have no complaints about the housing arrangements in the New Jerusalem: they are the teachers who lived in Adventism's golden rule days. ■

Miriam Wood, better known to readers of the Adventist Review as *Dear Miriam*, is a retired teacher, author, and columnist. *Golden Rule Days* is a regular feature of the monthly *AnchorPoints* edition.



BY BETTY REEVES

Learning Not to Say "Uncle"

I used to be a quitter, but I thank God I quit that. It was a half existence, really. Waking up in the morning and checking my feelings to see if I could or would go on. Bad weather? Then I'd cut back on this; avoid that. If I felt low enough from a late night or overindulgence in whatever food sparked the most depression, I might just call in sick and pull the covers up for some catchup sleep. Bad hair day? Don't even ask.

When I was growing up, "Say uncle!" was the expression my brothers always used for quitting. They'd be wrestling or duking it out, one nearly breaking another's arm by bending it to some painful angle, all the while screaming, "Say uncle!" Some kids would resist for a while, determined not to give in and admit defeat, but would usually cave in rather than hear something snap or be brought to the humiliation of tears. "Uncle!" they'd scream, and they entered into the bittersweet relief of defeat with all their bones still intact.

End It All?

Those playtime surrenders to tough challenges are long gone; swallowed up in a time when I began gravitating, lemming-like, toward my own surrenders with potentially far more devastating consequences than any bone fracture. I literally owe my life to God's compassionate love and patient teaching during some dark days. I will be forever grateful that, on one day among the many when the ultimate quitting option—ending it all—was winning out, God gently reminded me that my habits of relying only on my feelings about quitting were not only setting me up for failure, but were denying God's ability and willingness to help.

"I died for you," God reminded; "I love you." It was a foreign language, at first, for an on-again, off-again church member with little or no self-value deep down. But the reality of Christ's blood shed on the cross for the world, in which I, one of millions of "whomsoever," had to admit I live, hit home.

I learned to claim that sacrifice by faith daily. I *know* Christ died for me, even if I don't *feel* saved or worthy of such a loving sacrifice, because of the Bible's clear

testimony, and because God has proved to be eminently trustworthy. He has walked with me through every exigency in my life, lifting some, shielding me from many, sustaining me through the heat of others.

For a while it seemed I might have graduated from "Intense Trials 101," because life was going quite smoothly. Not perfectly, but nothing I couldn't handle without turning to God for help and guidance. I was enormously thankful to be a survivor, and happily busy in God's work.

*When things went
bad
I was tempted
to quit—
and end it all.*

The Omnipotent Partner

Then a string of "Say uncle!" times set in with a vengeance. My work, which had become a large part of my personal identity, seemed about to end by a natural course of events. When I consulted my Partner instead of my feelings about it, it became clear to me that I, like all other human beings, am on a daily contract basis with God. I rested in that thought, and sought God's renewal every day. The clouds lifted, then returned with much thunder and lightning, shaking me. I began to wonder if perhaps my daily contract was going to involve more upheaval in my life than I could handle.

Sheepishly, I remembered my omnipotent Partner. I'd been so intent on the storm I'd encountered, I'd nearly forgotten the One who commands angry seas. This difficulty—any of the difficulties each of us may face in the days ahead—is not about our puny strength. It's about God's omnipotence, which we can take hold of whenever we reach out to Him.

Whenever we say "Father!" instead of "uncle!"

Betty Reeves is a pseudonym.

The Rules of the Game



ROSY TETZ

Did you know that whenever you play with a ball, it obeys several laws? It's true. Balls are very law-abiding. If they weren't, we wouldn't like playing with them nearly as much.

What if you were trying to play miniature golf and sometimes you would barely tap the ball and it would sail off into space, while other times you would whack it with all your might and it would barely roll an inch?

What if you tried to play baseball, but every once in a while (for no good reason), when you hit the ball with the bat, the ball would shatter like glass? What if, when you kicked the soccer ball, sometimes your foot would go right through it as if it were made of water?

Playing with a ball would be a lot different if the ball didn't obey the law.

When you drop a ball, it always falls—that's the law of gravity. Then, if the ball is made of rubber, it bounces back up—that's because of elasticity. The rubber is bouncy, but mostly the ball bounces because it is full of air. When the ball hits the ground, the air inside it gets squashed together. The air wants to go back to its regular shape, so it pushes against the ground, which makes the ball bounce back up. That's the law.

When you're playing ball, it works better if people follow the rules too. The basketball has to remember to bounce, and people have to remember to bounce it whenever they are running. Baseball works best when everyone runs around the bases in the same direction every time. Games

work best if people take turns and are good sports.

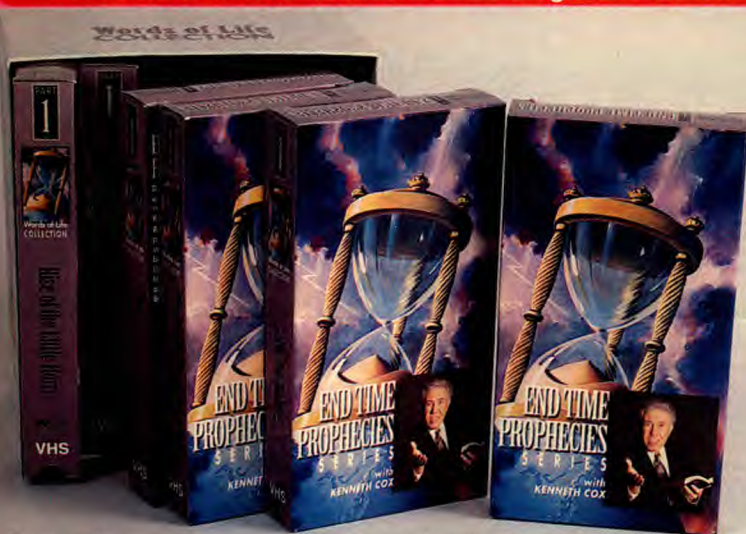
Life works better with laws—laws about gravity and laws about taking turns and all kinds of laws. That's why God made laws and tries to help us understand them and use them.

People don't follow laws as well as balls do—that's because we are free to make choices. A ball would never

dream of trying to defy the laws of gravity, but people try to do stuff like that all the time. We have brains with which we make choices—but we've got to use them to think about those choices, or else it could be like trying to play catch with a ball that might explode at any moment or melt or simply float away.

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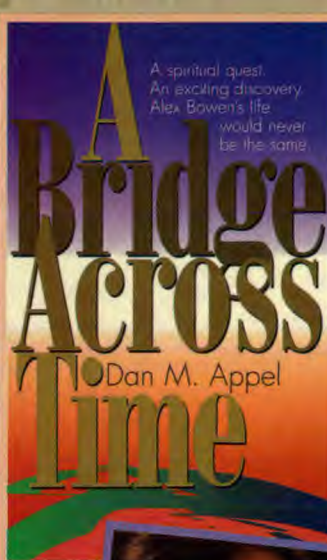
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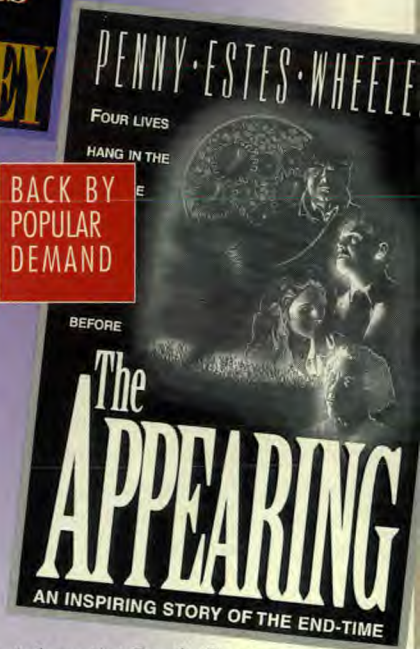
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