

ADVENTIST Review

March 20, 1997

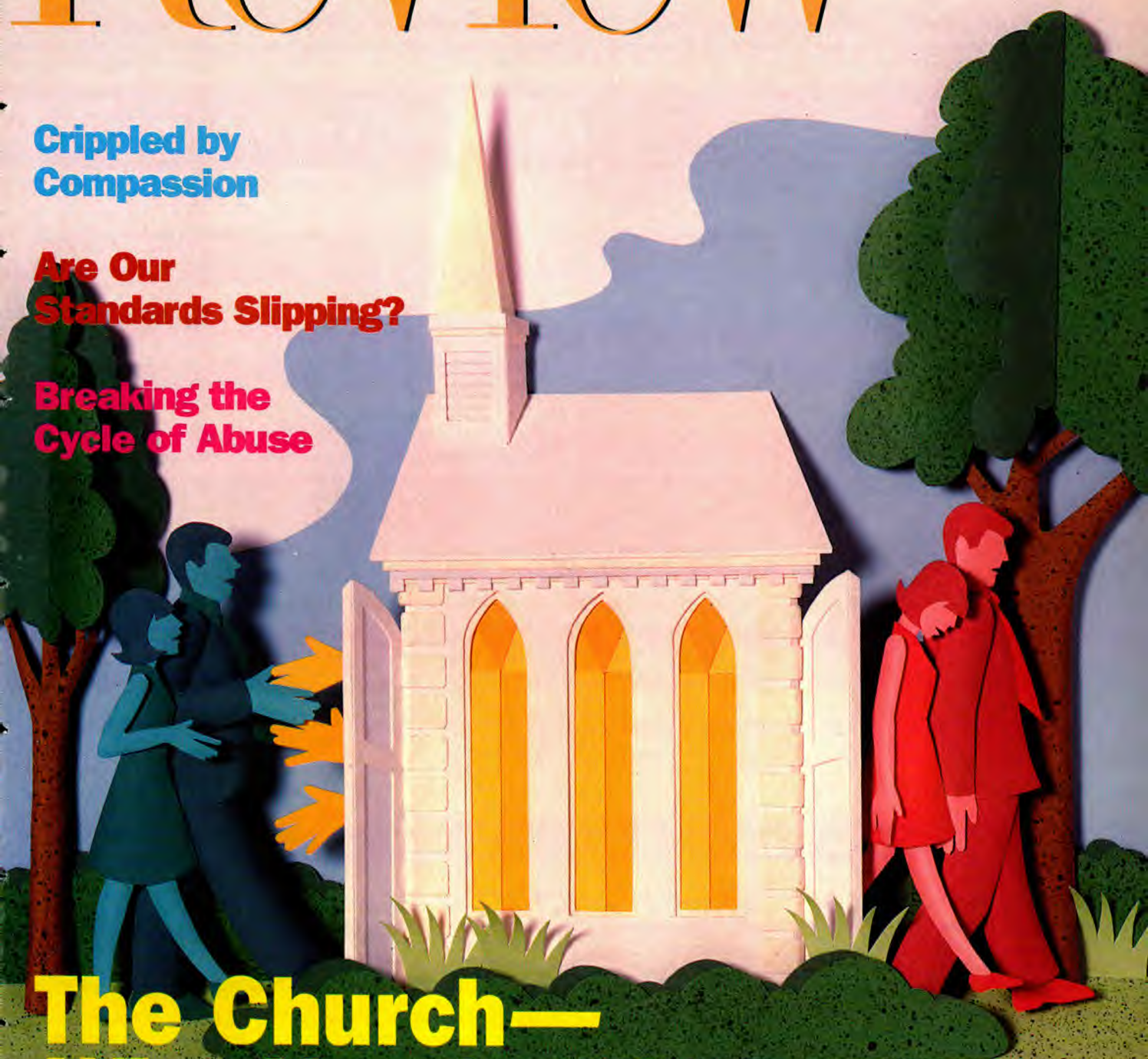
Cutting Edge

**Crippled by
Compassion**

**Are Our
Standards Slipping?**

**Breaking the
Cycle of Abuse**

**The Church—
Who Needs It?**



LETTERS

Encountering God

The January 16 Cutting Edge Edition was extraordinary. It seemed to me that



for many issues the articles were mostly ho-hum, but this one was definitely a “nuke” of fascinating spiritual feast! Is it me, or was that issue just by the grace of

God in warp drive?

—Charles A. Cochran

VIA E-MAIL

This morning I read the January 16 Cutting Edge Edition from cover to cover. Since I was one of the 140-plus persons who submitted a proposal for a new column, I was particularly interested in The X-Change (by A. Allan and Deirdre Martin).

As I read, I realized that my “nearing adult” grandchildren might actually read this. (There is a real question about whether they would read what I would write.) The issue as a whole expressed openness, love, acceptance, hope, and faith—all of which invite the reader to know God. Then I was reminded that the “leaders” of my church had put this together. . . .

As an increasingly chronologically gifted woman, well trained for the ministry, committed to marriage and family, and living in an area not the most open for women in ministry, I have experienced many strong feelings about “church.” Recently I have been asking that God touch that anger and bring it to healing. As I closed the

covers of the *Review* this morning, I realized that God was answering my prayer through these pages. You are meeting real-life needs with relevant and thoughtful articles. I thank God for your wisdom and openness.

—Delcy Kuhlman

VIA E-MAIL

Embrace the Cross

Gloria Bentzinger’s “Embrace the Cross” (Jan. 16) is right on target. To the cross and the cross only we must cling!

Most of us do not realize the necessity of clinging to the cross until our moment of extremity. I did not. But when my marriage broke up, I discovered that Jesus was all I needed. People could fail me, and I could fail people, but Jesus would never fail me. There at the cross I discovered what it meant to be crucified with Christ.

Thank you for printing articles that lift up Jesus and minister to our hearts.

—Vialo Weis

SHATTUCK, OKLAHOMA

“Embrace the Cross” was such an inspiration to me. I get excited when I read about God healing miraculously. So often I hear that God heals today only in developing countries—or that the gift of (miraculous) healing is no longer present in our church.

I too was anointed after being diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis. I too accepted God’s healing. The anointing service was special because it was also a dedicating to serve the

Lord in a special way either through my disabling disease or through miraculous healing. Until now God has chosen to use me with my disability, and I treasure the assurance that someday I will be healed.

—Karen (Downing) Grob

SALMSACH, SWITZERLAND

Breaking Down the Walls

My first reaction to Stephen Chavez’s “A Church Without Walls” (Jan. 16), which told of a divorced and remarried former pastor who was told that he and his wife were not welcome in at least two churches, was to hope that Chavez had not correctly understood the story. But alas, I am certain he did.

Jesus was aware that in the “end-time” the love of many would grow cold. That is why He specified how to identify His *true* disciples (John 13:35). It is sad that love for one another would be so rare that Jesus would call it a test of discipleship.

—Frank Haynes

PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN

Practical Christianity

I felt that two articles in your January 16 issue have great relevance to our members: Ed Christian’s “Surviving on a Secular Campus” and Dick Duerksen’s “Check Out a Video.”

Our area is home to several universities, and I felt Christian’s idea of providing students with a “safe haven,” especially on Sabbath, was great. I have one child in college and

two more approaching. The greatest gift a church could give me would be to reach out to them in this manner when they are away.

Duerksen provides practical principles in an area that many families are dealing with today. In both cases, thanks for the "practical Christianity."

—Mike Simmering

APEX, NORTH CAROLINA

I found Ed Christian's four tips about staying in touch with Christ excellent; however, I feel compelled to confront certain misperceptions about non-Adventist universities.

(Let me provide my credibility. After five years studying at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, then three years working, I am presently attending the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University—it's Methodist, but most will agree that those ties are slim to none.)

The introduction makes secular universities seem filled with atheistic teachers and criminal students. First, I do not remember a teacher ever stating that God and the Bible are wrong (possible exception: biology class). Second, while I do not deny that drinking games and date rape occur, I find that these issues are often overstated. I also find it hard to believe that Adventist universities do not have the same problems.

Fifteen thousand students attended Cal Poly. Finding friends who shared my beliefs was as simple as throwing a penny into a pond of water. An individual on a secular campus can find a Bible study any day of the week, with attendance often running at more than 100 students.

The article also argues that young Adventists attend secular universities to escape God. I argue that, depending on their major, many students attend secular universities because of their superior educational value.

—Duane K. Kakazu

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Radio Witness

Your January 16 Cutting Edge Edition scored high with me.

To bring the work of WGTS and Dr. Gerald Fuller to the attention of the Adventist family was long overdue (see "A Sound Ministry"). His work and that of his colleagues allow people to identify with Adventists in a comfortable setting—a preparing for the possibility of a closer relationship at some future date.

—Milton Murray

BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND

Tithe Policy

Thank you to Carlos Medley for his December 26 report (see Newsbreak) about the actions taken by the North American Division Executive Committee on education and the revision of the tithe policy. If not for his report, we probably would have never known about it.

I have yet to talk with anyone (including four local pastors and three conference officials) who knows anything about this revision.

—Teresa Castetter

ENGLISH, INDIANA

Top 10 Statements: The Rebuttal

Regarding "The Top 10 Statements Pastors Would Like to Hear" (Give & Take, Dec. 19). Here are three of the 10 as they might be revised by laypeople:

9. I would like to hear a sermon so well prepared and delivered that I never noticed it went 20 minutes over.

5. Forget denominational guidelines—let's pay our pastors what they are worth.

2. Oh, sure. All of us would like to have a trip to the Bahamas paid by our employers. Dream on.

—Dennis R. Nord

JAMESTOWN, NEW YORK

ADVENTIST Review

COVER STORY

8 The Church—Who Needs It?

*Don't like what you see in church?
It's worse outside.*

BY VICTOR CZERKASIJ

ARTICLES

12 Are Our Standards Slipping?

Where do we draw the line?

BY STEVE CASE

16 Breaking the Cycle

*He said he loved her. Then why
did he treat her so poorly?*

BY ELLEN NELSON

24 Temptation

*It's a fact of life. But there are
ways to lessen its power.*

BY GARY B. SWANSON

28 Crippled by Compassion

*The needs are great, but our
resources are limited. How should
we respond?*

BY CELESTE FERRINO WALKER

DEPARTMENTS

2 Letters

7 Give & Take

19 Sandra Doran: Dialogues

20 World News & Perspectives

27 The X-Change

30 Children's Corner

31 Reflections

EDITORIALS

5 In Search of Greatness

6 Street Smarts

NEXT WEEK

Swept Off Our Feet

*We asked for columns and column ideas.
We got a stack of manuscripts a foot
thick. Read the submissions that rose to
the top.*

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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To Writers: We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. (Please query before submitting long articles.) Include address, telephone number, and Social Security number, where available. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600. Editorial office fax number: (301) 680-6638.

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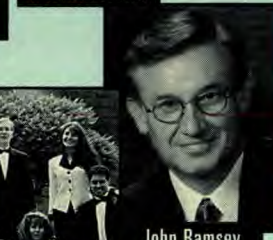
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40 Years of Changing Lives...Healing Hearts

In Search of Greatness

STEPHEN CHAVEZ

Lots of people aspire to greatness. They lobby to be placed on some influential board or commission; they polish the apple with whichever "higher-up" holds the greatest promise of getting them named to a high-profile position with lots of perks and little accountability.

Yes, many people aspire to that kind of greatness. Those of us who live near the nation's capital are exposed to that mentality often—and in sustained doses. And sadly, I've known a few individuals in the church who are more concerned with titles and prestige than with usefulness and service.

The vast majority of people who serve the Lord in their churches and communities fulfill their duties commendably. But every so often come people who stand head and shoulders above everyone else in using the talents God has given them to serve the Lord and others. Tom Stutchman was one of them.

When I heard Tom had died suddenly, a little more than a week before this past Christmas, I felt deflated, as if a member of my immediate family had died.

I first met Tom and Connie Stutchman when he was the dean of men at La Sierra University and I was one of the resident assistants. I didn't know him well (we worked in different dormitories), but I found him to be helpful and dedicated in guiding young men at an age when most of them resisted guidance—no matter how helpful or dedicated.

About 10 years later I found myself pastoring the Fallon/Hawthorne district in northern Nevada. Tom and Connie were two of my members. By that time Tom had become a successful businessperson, and was a major influence in the Fallon church and community.

Often people in that position tend to throw their financial weight around. Not Tom and Connie. In a low-key manner that not everyone knew about, they contributed to the operation of the church and school in ways both small and large.

We used to copy the church bulletin on the copy machine at his business. When they sold the business, they showed me where they hid their spare house key so I could use the machine in their home office whenever they were away.

When they started a new business about 60 miles away, Tom and Connie moved their family and their membership to Reno.

But fortunately for me (and, I hope, for the Stutchmans), the Reno church invited me to be its pastor a few years after that, and I had the privilege of pastoring them again. If there was any benefit

from that relationship, it was mine. Tom and Connie continued to be sources of incredible friendship and support. Tom was always generous with his compliments, and Connie's hospitality is acclaimed throughout northern Nevada.

Individuals who own and operate their own businesses face a lot of pressure. Not everyone cheers their decisions. A lot of things are beyond

their control—a change of one point in the interest rate can mean a gain or loss of tens of thousands of dollars. Tom's philosophy was simple: "All that I have is a gift God has given me. I try not to lose any sleep over the things I can't control. The Lord is better able to look after my interests than I am."

Maybe that's why he and Connie took mission trips to South America. Maybe that's why, after an unusually heavy snowfall in Reno, Tom showed up in the church parking lot one Friday afternoon with a blade on the front of his pickup and an industrial-strength snowblower in the back.

Soon after I left Reno, Tom was elected chair of the Reno Junior Academy board. I'm told that the improvements to the campus have been dramatic. I'm not surprised. Tom was a powerhouse. He demonstrated his dedication to people and projects by investing himself and his resources in building up the Lord's work however he could.

Nearly a year ago the folks at Reno Junior Academy prevailed upon the city of Reno to name April 28, 1996, Tom Stutchman Day. It was a wonderful (and timely) gesture for a man who had done so much for that community.

I wasn't able to be present when Tom was honored (although I did send greetings), but if I had been there, I would've said, "Tom, for years you've been a marvelous friend and a tremendous support. Many people aspire to greatness, but you've set a standard that those of us who know you will never forget."

We'll see you in the morning.

*"All that I have is
a gift God has
given me."*



Street Smarts

Whenever I'm driving down a street—or even an avenue—and I see roadkill, I look away. I can't handle the gory, mangled images that lean on my liberal-arts mind for days, *weeks*, wrecking my personal peace. *That poor little raccoon—probably trotting home to feed her family.*

My wife, Cindy, on the other hand, is a nurse. And while she sympathizes—*bless your little heart, Ranger Rick*—she doesn't mind taking a nice long look. It might make good conversation the next time she and her nurse friends do lunch.

I used to wonder about the "knowledge of good and evil" that humans weren't intended to have. In fact, I not only wondered about it; I got frustrated over it. Why *shouldn't* we, like "the gods," be allowed to know evil? Why *shouldn't* every form of it just be laid out in front of us? As I get older, I'm finding my answer.

Because I can't handle it. As with the crushed raccoon, I either get repulsed by evil—or worse, it appeals to me. The "adult movie" a friend and I watched secretly at age 9, the addictive arcade games that ate so much of my teenage years, the horse race I impulsively bet \$5 on—I wanted *more* of each of these. I couldn't shake them from my mind.

Do I still want to *know* evil? No thanks. I don't even want to get acquainted with it. Some forms of evil I just can't handle. They either do me in or draw me in. When I behold them, *I change.*

Why, then, don't I board myself in the General Conference, where the temptations will be minimal (unless you can be seduced by old *Reviews* and NET '96 reruns)? Why do I play in a county touch football league when I know the dangers of competition? Why do I go to Orioles games with friends who drink and smoke and swear? Why would I love to work again in a Buddhist or Muslim country?

Because these things don't affect me the same way. I know myself; I recognize my propensities. Excessive competitiveness, drinking, smoking, swearing, anti-Christian teachings—I don't like these environments, but I find them easier to handle. And because I do, I'll continue to frequent them for one reason: the gospel.

Some didn't like it then; some don't like it now: Jesus ate and drank with sinners. Further, He instructed His followers

to do the same (though He provided a safety net—He sent them out in twos).

Since sin entered the mix, we must mix with sinners. We must meet them on their territory and, without compromising, build their trust where they're comfortable. Before we mix,

however, we need to think. We need to monitor our *own* propensities to specific sins—both through that cautionary knot of heaviness in our guts and through dialogue with Jesus, who promises nothing more than we can handle.

Just because one Christian can handle a certain environment doesn't mean that all others can. While we're all equally pathetic, we each have our own strengths and weaknesses. Some can be missionaries

to brothels; others can't. Some can visit prisons, bars, casinos. We should seek out these places and befriend the people there—if we can handle it. If we can't, we should bolt.

Me? I don't desire the police beat with the *Miami Herald*; nor do I plan to vacation in Las Vegas. I can't take either. Cutthroat violence sickens me physically; gambling lures me. At some point God might empower me for such circumstances, but not now. Instead, I'm staying within the boundaries God and my gut have set for me.

A time will come, of course, when we're again separated from evil. On the new earth the lion I'll be riding will never be crushed by the chariot you'll be driving. (Want to race?) For now, though, we're left with spiritual gifts and brains and a commission to introduce those who know only evil to the Source of good.

So be street-smart. Where you see hope for new life, pull over, stop the car, scramble down the embankment, do whatever's necessary to restore life to those who should "surely die." But where you sense nothing but death (namely, your own), look away, keep driving, get on down the road. Because while we're meant to rescue sinners, we're not meant to lose our salvation in the process.

It's the difference between being the salt of the earth and becoming a pillar of it.

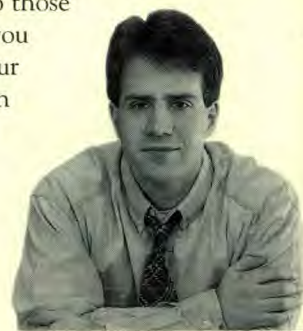


ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

GIVE & TAKE

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 other short contributions to: *Give & Take*, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; CompuServe: 74532,2564.

ADVENTIST LIFE

During our family's evening worship time, which is geared for our 2-year-old son, Michael, we told him the story of Zacchaeus and explained how Zacchaeus had been a cheater. From that point on Michael's prayers have been going like this: "Please help me to be honest. Please help Matthew to be honest. Please help Tyler to be honest . . ." (Matthew is Michael's 5-year-old brother. Tyler is our cocker spaniel.)

—Pastor Lynn Bryson, Dallas, Oregon

We had been reading several stories from the Bible that mentioned idols: Esther, Joseph, Daniel, etc.

One evening I was cleaning out a drawer in my desk, and my 3-year-old daughter, Jessica, grabbed a paperweight with two dogs on it. "Is this an idol?" she asked.

—Deborah Butler, Rio Linda, California



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

FLOAT LIKE A VEGE-BURGER . . .



STING LIKE A BEAN? Did the "Greatest of All Time" meet his match in Andrews University nutrition professor Winston Craig? Not exactly. But Craig was happy to meet—and jokingly spar with—Muhammad Ali, who was on campus in November giving a demonstration for VitaPro, a soy-based product for which Ali is a "goodwill ambassador." The former heavyweight champion is a Berrien Springs resident.

—Photo by Jack Stenger, Andrews Public Relations

HERALD'S TRUMPET

Hey, kids, guess who's back!

In our last contest (Feb. 13) we received 45 postcards. Our three lucky winners were: Tom Wagner from Hudson, New York, Kaitie Ban from Sturbridge, Massachusetts, and Roddy Bollinger from Lincoln, Nebraska. Tom, Kaitie, and Roddy received *A Horse Called Blackberry*, by JoAnne Chitwood Nowack.

Where was Herald's trumpet? On page 24 in the airplane photo. (Hey, what flies faster—airplanes or angels? If you guessed angels, you're right!)

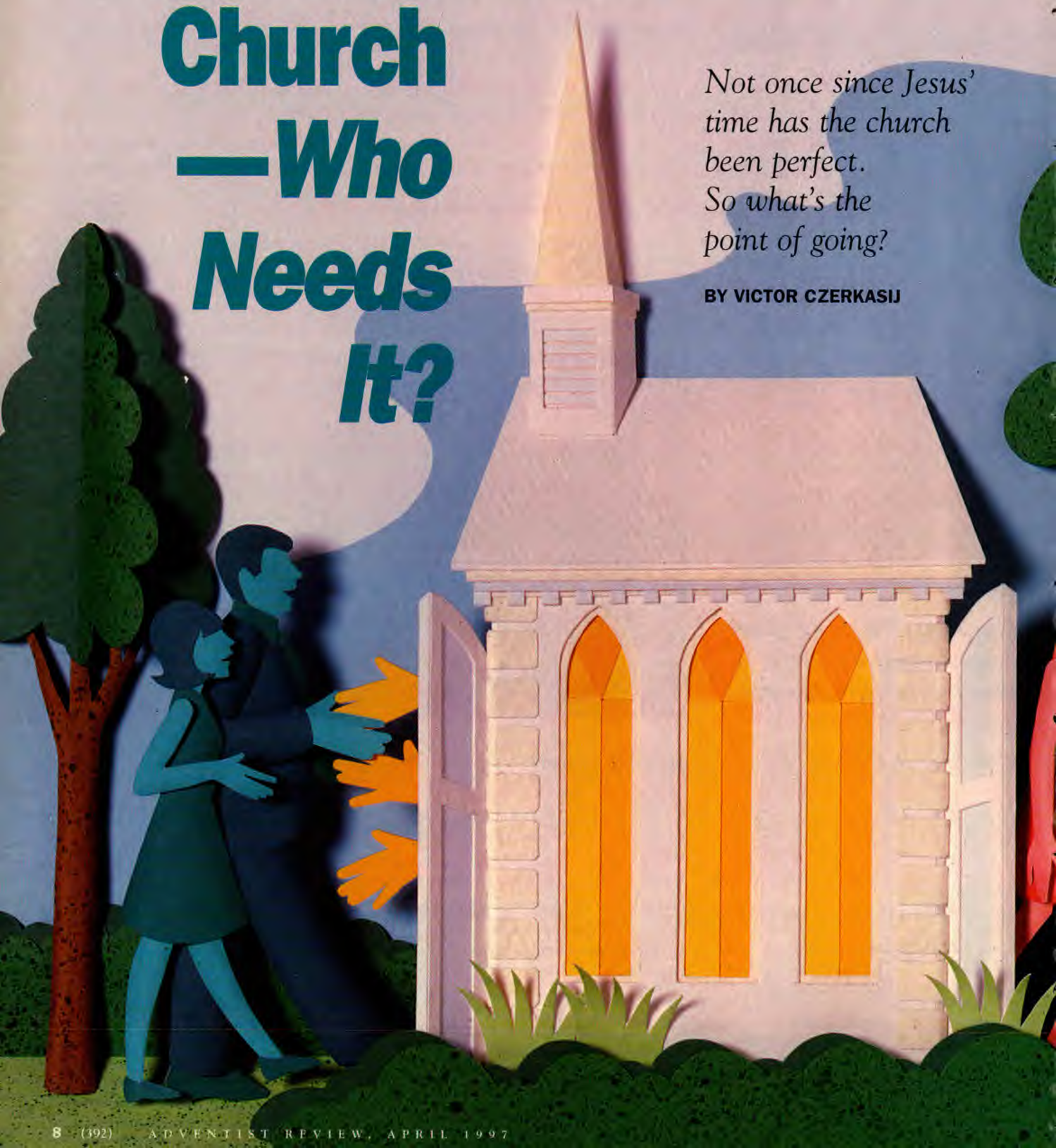
If you can find the trumpet this time, send a postcard telling us *where* to Herald's Trumpet at the Give & Take address at left. The three winners' names will appear in the April 24 AnchorPoints Edition. The prize is *Adventist Family Fun*, by Darlene McRoberts. Have fun—and don't forget to "trumpet" Jesus' love!



The Church —Who Needs It?

Not once since Jesus' time has the church been perfect. So what's the point of going?

BY VICTOR CZERKASIJ



WHEN MY PARENTS MOVED TO Tennessee, in an ironic reversal of roles I took my dad to get his new driver's license. After 42 years it was time to hand in the cream-colored New York card for the shiny plastic of Tennessee. "I'm not going to smile," he said, always preferring the serious photo. I decided to wait in the parking lot, where I struck up a conversation with some very nervous men. Curious. They were all fathers.

As we compared notes as to who in his youth had had the most frightening experience with his driving test, we heard over our shoulders a screech and an enormous bang. Here, in all its slow-motion horror, was an airborne sedan piloted by a terrified young girl coming through a guardrail. Clearly seen was the white-knuckled grip of both her and her father, who himself was molding the dashboard into abstract art.

Unbelievably, rather than rolling end over end, the vehicle crashed down on all four tires, blowing out each. Even more incredible was the landing place: a spot just feet from a mass of volunteer fire and rescue vehicles. Like bees to nectar, trained professionals swarmed over their car. The pair's every need was attended to before the last chunk of wooden guardrail had fluttered to rest.

As one paramedic ran by, he shook his head. "Get this," he said. "She was coming in for a *driver's test*. Ha! Can you think of a worse place to have an accident?" We all laughed at the dark humor, but as I watched the gentle care being given to the distraught twosome (neither of whom was seriously injured), I decided that the young woman had actually done a very good job in picking a place to crash.

That entire experience fits my idea of church. *Ekklesia*. Synagogue. "The Lord's house." "A called-out assembly." "To gather together."

The organized body of like believers is a safe place for accidents—and for more pleasant experiences as well. It's where I count friends as family—those who have shared times of joy: baptism, graduation, my marriage to René, our boys' births and subsequent dedications. And it was at church when the wagons were circled as we tasted defeat—sicknesses, injustices, deaths. The finest human beings I have ever known on this green

earth are in the church. I exult with Isaiah: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting" (Isa. 5:7, NRSV).

But along with the sheep I've met goats here too. Not many, but a few. I'm not surprised, though. If I were the devil, I couldn't imagine a better place for them to be. Maybe it's why the church has been called other things as well: archaic, painful, stifling, cynical. "*Where they shoot their wounded*." In our deepest pessimism, an old adage seems to apply: The only certainties in life are death and taxes—and the imperfect church.

Do Paul's words sound familiar? "But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part, *I believe it*" (1 Cor. 11:17, 18, NASB).

The questions persist: Has the organized body become irrelevant? Is it really necessary even to belong anymore?

Far From God's Intent

The church has taken a bad rap since its establishment. In Old Testament times, as today, God's people were not all the shining examples of what a holy community should be. Breathtaking was the speed with which the chosen people would embrace the latest fad in pagan religions. Prophets worked overtime to quell the zealotry for impiety and immorality. Undoubtedly, the needs of many sincere people were never met by the body at large—and unfortunately, they made tracks elsewhere.

The New Testament doesn't see things through rose-tinted shades either. Jesus Himself is hustled out of the synagogue and nearly tossed off a cliff for His particular interpretation of Scripture (see Luke 4:14-30). Was not the religious establishment also a driving force behind the hammer blows into our Saviour's hands?

Yes, it's a sad fact of Scripture that God's church has been far from His intent. The same Book that offers inspiration brings a litany of heartache, too. But between the intrigue of Old Testament kings, indifferent priests, scoundrel prophets, even the seven churches of Revelation ("I have this against you" [Rev. 2:4, NASB]), what really comes through is God's faithfulness to His bride. In the face of blatant infidelity, His commitment to the relationship is presented. Continual, tender care, not papers for divorce.

So if God wants us, what does He want us for? The very first sentence of *The Acts of the Apostles*, Ellen White's detailed history of God's working through this peculiar institution, reads: "The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men" (p. 9).

But hadn't the church already been found corrupt? Did not even God declare, "Yet I planted you a choice vine, a completely faithful seed. How then have you turned yourself before Me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?" (Jer. 2:21, NASB)? Will the church always be imperfect? Won't it ever meet our needs?



Planes crash, and yet we fly. Cars break down; still we buy them. Television carries more than questionable material as its fare, but you'd be hard pressed to find a home without one. We've made a good life adjusting to many things that, though imperfect, serve us in the long run. Maybe somewhere someone suggested that the church was perfect. The Founder certainly is. Me? No.

Christ knew that the people He left behind on Ascension Day were incapable of sorting through the things He Himself dealt with for 33 years. In fact, Jesus Himself did not resolve the problem of sin as faced on a day-to-day basis. We have it all around us. Instead, He left Himself to be shared through people: "this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves" (2 Cor. 4:7, NASB).

People, though fragile and tending toward brokenness, can be united with the Holy Spirit and each other, and make this sojourn more bearable. A

little lighter. Brighter. More salty.

Still Necessary?

Is the church necessary for salvation? No, but for the saved the church is a necessity. As we are drawn to Christ and His love, we find ourselves in the presence of many others, my search often paralleling yours. Other times we've come from a completely different experience, but we share the bond of love with Him and the natural result of love toward one another.

For those quick to credit every problem to the church, please reconsider. The church didn't put Onesimus into slavery or make Philemon a slave owner. Or push Eutychus out the window. Or break up Paul and Barnabas. Even Jesus had Judas and Peter. But thanks to the church, slaves can be reconciled to their masters, those dead from third-story falls are brought to life, and the work continues no matter the workers and their personalities. "Upon this

Rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it" (Matt. 16:18, NASB).

Yes, I'm quite amazed at how Jesus gathers up His believers. After all, I'm here. Go figure! But take it up with Him. He delights in all of us and wishes that above all things we would be one.

"Press together! Press together!" was good advice for the early pioneers and for us in 1997. The tares among the wheat? Live peaceably in the photosynthesis of God's love. It's His garden and His angels will reap between the two. In the meantime I choose not to live in a separate patch of land.

With his F-16 shot out of the sky days earlier, Capt. Scott O'Grady lay mud-covered and shivering in the Bosnian darkness. As he recounts in his book, *Return With Honor*,* he found himself choking up as he heard these broken words coming from his satellite radio: "The whole world's behind you. NATO's behind you, and the UN,

To Come Back, I Would Need . . .

A former Adventist checks in with the church she still cares about.

BY JAIME COOPER

Recently an Adventist asked me what personal needs I would want met if I were to rejoin the Adventist Church. Here is my answer.

First, I would like respect. I would like for the church to assume I have something valuable to offer. I am not a charity case to be convinced of my unworthiness. Furthermore, this valuable thing I have to offer may be different from what the church dreams it needs. I would need for the church to accept my valuable gift and integrate it even if it doesn't meet the church's definition of a need that must be filled.

Second, I want a sense of community. Right now I would never take my child to church regularly. If I started to go, it would be partially for the sense of community it could give my family. I would look for support in raising my son to healthy

independence. Sure, the church has theology, but I'm looking for relationships, spirituality, and positive interaction.

Third, I need music. Music provides for me a more real spiritual experience than any sermon in the world. Just the whole disagreement about what music is right or wrong in a worship service is enough to send me packing. I love the music of high church just as much as

the next person. Then again, to hear *Ave Maria* sung richly, plaintively, in any language is enough to reduce me to tears. Every time I hear this song, the power of the music makes me reassess the relationships I have with everyone, from my son to my God. If *Ave Maria* does it for me, and perhaps the contemporary Christian music group Audio Adrenaline does it for someone else, then who is the church to tell us it is inappropriate?

I think "inappropriate" is a word I have heard just enough times to think it would be worthwhile to be somewhere where at least 70 percent of what I think is considered appropriate.



Jaime Cooper is a pseudonym.

What We Like, What We Don't

Last year a group of Adventists (mostly young adults) met on CompuServe's Adventists On-line forum to critique their church. For the first half hour they listed what they liked; for the second half hour, what they disliked. In order of mention:

What They Liked

The medical and educational organizations
ADRA and other relief programs
The zeal and energy of Adventist youth
Good potlucks
Being able to go anywhere and find other Adventists
Friday night vespers
Saturday night socials
The diversity
Vacation Bible School
Pathfinders
Our values
Sabbath school discussions
Global Village
The unity
The Student Missionary program
Maranatha/Mission Impact trips
Adventists On-line
Mission stories
Inner-city programs like the van ministry in New York City
Friends made in the church
Our heritage—young visionaries starting the church
Spiritual programs at our colleges
José Rojas (NAD youth director)

What They Disliked

Politics
Bad potlucks
Disfellowshipping
Debating proper dress in church
The blue and pink sidewalks
Mediocrity
No amens during a sermon
Being afraid to invite unchurched friends
People who are judgmental
Bickering—and the lost energy that comes with it
Nonconsecrated teachers
Prejudice, racism, hate
Segregated youth conferences
Apathy
Seeing exteriors, not interiors
How people use Ellen White to condemn others
Beast slides at evangelistic meetings
Pulpits
Stifled conversation
Religious censorship
Alarm systems on academy dorms
Long, boring sermons
Long prayers
Pastors who think they're psychologists
Altar calls based on guilt
Emotional appeals to reject emotionalism
Denial
Hypocrisy
Repeated pitches for money
Cold water at Communion

Note: Every other month Andy Nash of the Adventist Review will host conferences on CompuServe's Adventists On-line forum. The topical discussions, held from 9:00 to 10:00 p.m. Eastern time on selected Sundays, target young adults, but are open to anyone. Join us April 27, June 22, August 17, October 19, and December 14. Excerpts will be published in the Cutting Edge Edition of the Adventist Review. (To order Adventists On-line, call 1-800-260-7171.)

and every plane in the world is going to be taking off to come get you. We're working on it. They're going to get you—just hang tight."

As the sky turned pink with dawn, they came barreling out of the sky. Those trained to provide cover flew the F/A-18 Hornets. The Cobras cleared the path for the Hueys. And the Marines took charge on the ground, securing the landing zone and perimeter. True to their word, and united by duty and devotion, they came to rescue *one of their own*.

Though dirty and unkempt, O'Grady was lifted off his wobbly legs

into a helicopter, where young soldiers wrapped their warmer bodies around him, their flak jackets shielding him from ground fire. "Thank you, thank you," he sobbed. The marines, average age 19, grinned back. They were just doing their duty.

Please don't leave. If we're going to the same place, it's time we got acquainted. Other people need us, and we need each other. I can't wash my own feet during Communion, and it's hard to be alone when you hurt. I don't know who you are; I just know that neither of us is

perfect. But as God works the miracle of accepting the two of us, maybe that could lead to one miracle more. ■

* Scott O'Grady, with Jeff Coplon, *Return With Honor* (New York: Harper Paperbacks, 1995), p. 142.

Victor Czerkasij is an admissions adviser at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee.



Are Our Standards SLIPPING?

It's an important question—but not as important as a couple others.

BY STEVE CASE

DURING THE LESSON STUDY YOUR teacher emphasizes her point by referring to a scene from a recent movie. Although you attend theaters (with discretion), you wonder if the teacher should mention a specific movie before it comes out on video.

During the sermon your pastor recounts the familiar story of worshipping the golden calf at the base of Mount Sinai.

The pastor makes a glancing comment about being able to construct a small bull from the ornamentation he sees on any given Sabbath. You chuckle to yourself. Too bad Gladys isn't here today, decked out as she usually is. She could have benefited from that remark. Feeling smug, you genuinely wish she were present, since she's the one who would be the first to appreciate your new silk scarf tastefully completing your

outfit—and not made of metal.

After church you strike up a conversation with the Talley family, who just moved to town and seem to be a nice addition to your church. Mr. Talley invites you and your family to join them for Sabbath lunch at the Olive Garden. You don't eat out on Sabbaths, and you're certainly not prepared to invite the whole Talley family to your house today. How should you respond?

The Standard Question

You've heard others say it before, and now you find yourself saying it: "Our standards are slipping." The urgency of this awareness heightens when you hear that young people who agree with church standards are the ones most likely to stay in the church.¹ What does this mean for your



own children? What about you? Do you believe and practice all of the church's standards—or do you pick and choose?

Perhaps the major cause for disagreement stems from confusion regarding *principles* and *application* of principles. Principles are timeless and cross-cultural. What was true for one generation or group of people is just as true for the next. For example, most people in most cultures have held modesty in high esteem.

But principles such as modesty are theoretical. Applications must be made for principles to be lived. For example, being seen in a swimsuit by someone of the opposite sex might be considered immodest for one generation, but not for another. Both generations might agree

on the importance of modesty, but disagree on its application. One culture might expect women to keep their breasts covered at all times; in another the women are always topless. Some cultures would never let their feet be seen in public; in other cultures the people frequently are barefooted. And all of these think they are being modest.

Although some applications of principles might be the same from generation to generation, culture to culture, we should not expect that to be the case, especially in a pluralistic society in which change seems to be the only constant. When people quote Malachi 3:6—"I am the Lord, I change not"—surely this text should be understood as "the principles of the Lord are unchanging." Jesus Himself changed the application of principles, such as the application of the principle of remembering a significant religious event. He changed the Passover for the children of Israel to the Lord's Supper for Christians.

Principles must be applied. The theoretical must become concrete, but should not be set in concrete. It would be far better to seek universality in principles and allow for some fluidity in the specific actions. (Of course, moving from principle to application requires abstract thinking, which isn't possible until approximately the start of adolescence. Therefore, children—and some youth and adults—will need applications spelled out for them, as such thinking isn't guaranteed simply because a person has reached or passed through adolescence.)

To change the focus from the externals to the motives behind one's actions probably will result in a lack of uniformity of behavior. However, it may be the only avenue by

which people will begin to live what they really believe. It might be dangerous to permit, even encourage, such an approach, but it is more dangerous not to do so.

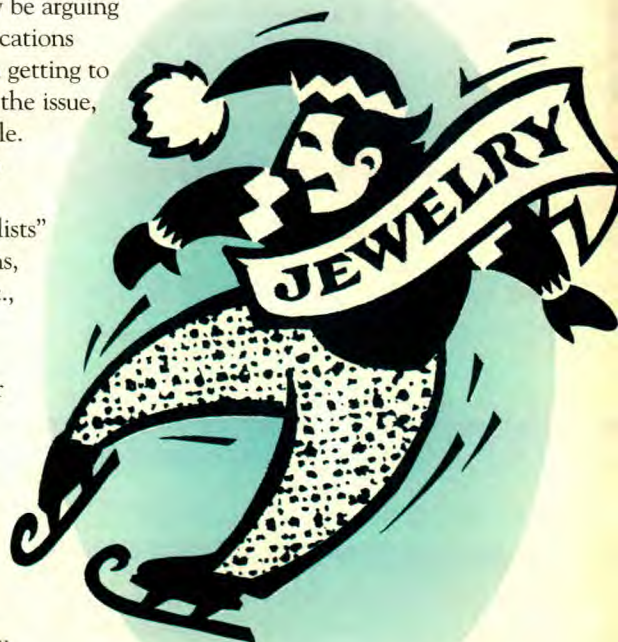
Where We Are

The identification of biblical principles for lifestyle issues has become hazy at best for many Adventists. It's almost as if several generations were taught and memorized specific applications of biblical principles without discovering the principles that formed the bedrock for the applications. When people ask why, those who have memorized only the application lack a satisfying answer. Because times change, the applications of one generation can be expected to be inadequate for succeeding generations. The biblical principles should remain stable, but the application might well change. Such is the issue of relevance.

Many people simply want shortcut answers. For example, they might ask you if a certain musical group, or even a specific song, is acceptable. A simple yes or no might be quick, but it hardly leads the questioner to make a rational decision based upon principles. Rather the questioner is likely to compare his or her personal opinion with your verbalized application. As a result, you could easily be arguing about applications rather than getting to the root of the issue, the principle.

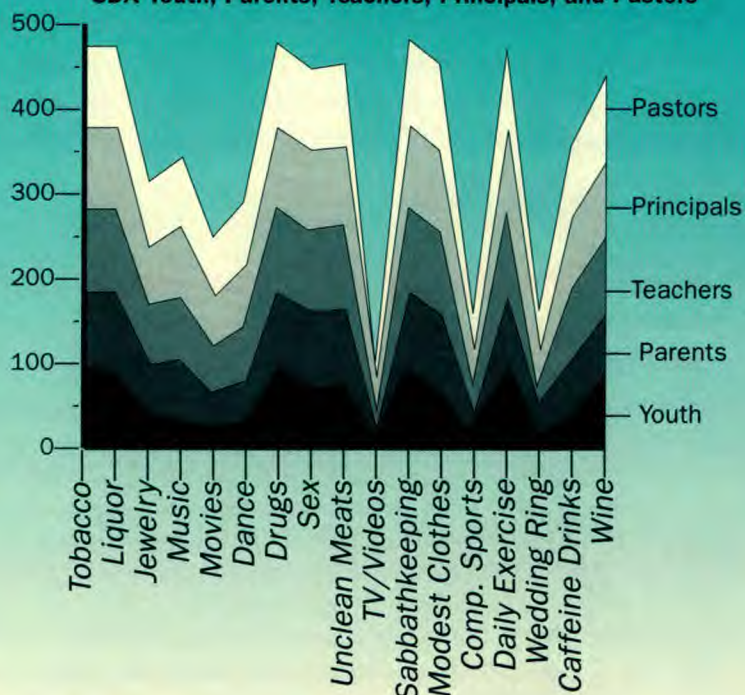
Those who distribute "approved lists" of musicians, movies, etc., feed the shallow demand for answers geared for immature reflectors of other people's thoughts.

To allow flexibility in applications requires a tolerance that few are willing to permit, especially in a large group setting such as an Adventist academy or college, a congregation, or some other



AGREEMENT WITH SDA STANDARDS

SDA Youth, Parents, Teachers, Principals, and Pastors



Note: Results are stacked. Maximum for each of the five groups is 100.

church-related group. To allow freedom for personal application removes the uniformity that provides the false impression that we all think alike. But as long as that image can be maintained, few dare to tamper with the thoughts or motives behind the facade.²

One potential danger is the tendency to do the right things for the wrong reasons. As one Person said: "On the outside you appear good to everybody, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and sin. You make the outside of your cup look like it is spotless, but inside you are full of selfishness. If you would clean the inside of the cup first, the outside will take care of itself."³

As a "squeaky clean" Adventist from childhood, I have found that, without exception, once I discovered the biblical principles behind the lifestyle issues, the applications were far more encompassing than the church's standards ever had been. Admittedly, I found that some of the specific "taboos" weren't necessarily wrong. But I also discovered that I no

longer could participate in some of the "acceptable" activities. It was almost as if I had to choose a nineteenth-century lifestyle of acceptability in the church or a relevant lifestyle of accountability to Jesus in all areas of my life.

What's Wrong With Young People

The hand-wringing associated with our "slipping standards" often focuses on young people. Indeed, the landmark Valuegenesis study revealed that young people (grades 6-12) scored lower than adults on each of 17 Adventist lifestyle standards.

While many would expect this, the surprise element came when the scores between the young people and four adult groups—parents,

teachers, school administrators, and pastors—correlated above the .9 level, meaning that on each standard on which the youth scored high (or low), so did each adult group. When it comes to lifestyle standards, the adage "The apple doesn't fall very far from the tree" seems to hold true.

The accompanying chart shows that nearly 100 percent of the youth agree that one should not use tobacco. Nearly 100 percent of the four adult groups also agree, raising the cumulative agreement to almost the maximum. In contrast, note the low level of agreement with the tenth item—on watching TV or videos. Even the cumulative agreement for all five groups barely extends beyond the minimum.

Does that make these responses right? Of course not. Opinion polls don't determine truth. But with certain behaviors well into habit patterns, commanding a change is more likely to exacerbate the problem than correct it. The better approach is to dialogue about these issues, rather than to pretend our oral tradition represents our current beliefs.

What We Can Do

A few ground rules can prevent some emotional reactions while discussing Adventist lifestyle issues. Once a topic has been identified (such as dancing), brainstorm with others and list the issues,



comments, questions, and inconsistencies related to that particular lifestyle issue. Next, systematically identify the responses you've heard (and possibly given) for each item listed in the brainstorming session. It may take 30 to 45 minutes to get through this—even longer if you get sidetracked.

These two steps allow people to share all the questions, answers, and hearsay in their repertoire. Until people feel listened to, dumping the "right answers" onto them rarely leads to acceptance and personal application—unless they already agree with you.

Once those involved have shared their perspectives, they can take a fresh look at biblical principles. Identify the issues that still have unsatisfactory responses. Take some time with a concordance to study what the Bible has to say on the given topic. Be broader than the

texts that simply mention your topic by name. For example, some of the biblical principles about the issue of drinking wine might not even mention the word "wine." Many have found the book *Shall We Dance?*⁴ helpful in identifying biblical principles for Adventist standards.

After identifying biblical principles, individuals must make personal applications of these principles to their lives. Periodically we need a retreading on what we believe and how to live it, especially as we continue to mature in our spiritual journey. It helps to have a small group of fellow believers with whom you can be honest and accountable regarding these principles in your life. Such people would not be police dogs, but humble fellow travelers who can provide encouragement and "holy nudges" as you live out the life to which you have been called and

convicted. In fact, that's the very thing our Adventist pioneers did. ■

¹ See Roger Dudley and Janet Kangas, *The World of the Adventist Teenager* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1990), p. 59.

² See Matt. 15:1-20, TLB, for a similar situation 2,000 years ago.

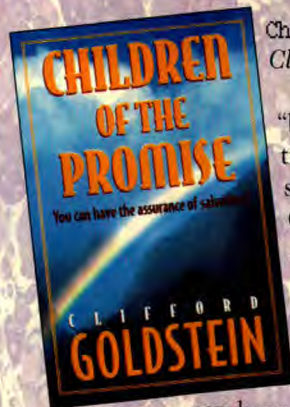
³ Adapted from Matt. 23:25-28.

⁴ *Shall We Dance?* can be obtained at Adventist Book Centers or by calling Piece of the Pie Ministries at 916-944-3928.

Steve Case, Ph.D., has been involved in Adventist youth ministry for more than a dozen years. Currently he is president of Piece of the Pie Ministries, a company that seeks to draw young people into the life of the church.



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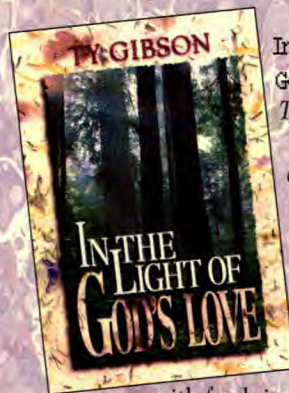
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BREAKING THE CYCLE

I wasn't "desperate,"
so why was I locked in an
abusive relationship?

BY ELLEN NELSON

THE FACES ON THE TELEVISION SCREEN seemed to reflect my own past. As I watched the women on the talk show tell their stories of abuse, I felt myself begin to shake. For a moment I longed to be part of the studio audience. I wanted to stand up and tell the women something that would help them break that cycle of abuse.

But even if I'd been there, even if I'd been a part of the audience and the host had recognized my hand and let me speak, I'm not quite sure what I'd have said.

All I know is that I was once there, and now I'm not. It's not an easy story to tell, for as I type the painful words, the memories return and the pain haunts me once again.

What Did I Do Wrong?

There is a picture in my mind that I cannot forget. It replays itself every time the word "abuse" is spoken. In slow motion I see his backpack full of books hurling toward me just as my feet leave the ground. The front flip I am practicing is interrupted as I crash down onto the gymnastics mat.

This was the first time Jonathan tried to harm me. I remember pulling my shaken body up from the mat and running into the locker room, where I sat alone and cried. I had promised that I would never let myself be hit by a man who claimed to love me. I knew what I needed to do. I had to break up with him.

I left the gym that day determined that the relationship was over. Then Jonathan drove by. "We need to talk," he said, pulling over to the curb. We did need to talk. I needed to break up with him. I climbed into the car, and he drove to an empty parking lot, where he stopped the car. Turning to me with tears in his eyes, Jonathan apologized. "It will never happen again," he said.

I tried to force myself to remain strong, but he continued to plead with me until I finally reasoned that he hadn't really "hit" me, so I could give him one more chance.

The cycle began, and the "one more" chances continued until I was blind to the abuse I was receiving. When he shoved me, I reasoned, "That wasn't a hit." When he hit me, I reasoned, "It wasn't that hard a hit." And somehow there was always a way for Jonathan to place the blame on me.

After all, I did have a terrible temper. My parents had warned me

that a temper like mine would push away potential husbands, and Jonathan stayed with me—though he had seen me at my worst. Sure, he tried to control my temper by physically grabbing me and shaking me until I was reduced to tears. But he was just trying to help, I reasoned. I figured I deserved it.

Under His Control

Perhaps worse than the physical abuse was the emotional abuse. Jonathan kept his thumb on me, trying to control every move I made. When I selected a dorm room where I wanted to spend the next year, he insisted that I choose a different one. When I had a soda with my lunch, he lectured me about the unhealthiness of drinking soda—and then drank it for me. When I wanted to change to a religion major, he threatened to break up with me, saying that he just didn't feel comfortable around Bible teachers or pastors and didn't want me to be one. Jonathan was dependent on my being dependent on him. I was constantly fighting for the right to make my own decisions.

When things got really bad, when I expressed doubt about the relationship, he promised that things were going to get better. "Think of the good times," he'd say. "Don't the good times outweigh the bad?"

When that didn't work, he'd bring out his strongest weapon: "Let's pray about it." Then after a tearful prayer in which he'd ask God to forgive me for the things I felt guilty about and to lead us in the direction we should go, he'd say, "I feel that God wants us to stay together." And I would obediently nod my head. After all, who was I to argue with God?

Though one might wonder whether my desire to follow God's leading was what kept me in this abusive relationship, I would have to argue that had I not been earnestly searching for God's leading in my life, this article's title would have been "How I Survive as an Abused Wife."

It wasn't until after we became engaged, however, that I put our

relationship completely in God's hands. "God, if there is any reason You don't want Jonathan and me to marry, please let me know," I remember praying. "And make it obvious" (I can be kind of dense sometimes).

Wise Counsel

I didn't realize just how dumb I was. Only when a friend was kind enough to step in and tell me what she saw were my eyes opened to what was happening to me. "You're a completely different person when you're around Jonathan," Brenda mentioned one day.

"How?" I questioned.

"When you're away from him you're confident and secure. As soon as you get around him, that changes completely, and you become like a child who would do anything he asked."

Had she told me this only a few months earlier, I probably wouldn't have listened. But I had been reading through Proverbs and was especially impressed by the verses that describe a wise person as one who listens to reproof. Remembering that, I let her words sink in.

Slowly the blinders were pulled away from my eyes, and I began to see how Jonathan was controlling me. I didn't want to be controlled. I wanted to be confident and secure always.

Once my eyes were opened, there was no way I could stay in the relationship. Jonathan didn't let me go easily, however. Weeks after the break-up he came by my house, saying we needed to talk. I agreed. We sat on the back porch as he begged me to come back to him.

"No," I kept telling him. "I can't."

"No one else is ever going to love you," he said, putting words to my biggest fears. I weakened.

Momentarily I agreed to get back together with him. Suddenly I had the unexplainable urge to run through the yard. Something inside me, screaming to be free, made me jump to my feet. "What are you doing?" he asked, grabbing my arm and pulling me down next to him.

"I want to run!" I exclaimed.

"Come, run with me."

He held on to my arm, keeping me next to him. "I don't want you to run." He insisted, "I want to sit here and hold you."

It was as if those words opened the floodgates to my memories of all the other times he tried to control even my tiniest move. "I'm sorry," I said, pulling my arm away, "but we will never get back together."

Repairing My Dreams

Even after ending the 2½-year nightmare, the effects of the abuse remained. My self-confidence had dropped. I often felt guilty for allowing myself to be abused, and it took a while before I could trust men again. Whenever I met someone new, I would say to myself, "Well, he looks normal—but he's probably just like the rest of them." In my mind all men were abusive.

The worst effect, though, was the fear that followed me—the fear that I would never be part of a normal, healthy relationship. Everywhere I turned, it seemed, the statistics would slap me in the face: "If a woman has been in an abusive relationship, she will most likely be attracted to someone who will abuse her in her next relationship."

"Dear God," I prayed whenever that statistic invaded my thoughts, "please don't let me fall into that category!"

It was a long time before I could understand why I had allowed myself to be abused in the first place. I came from a good family, and my previous boyfriend had never hit me, so why did I allow myself to become a victim of abuse? What had I done wrong?

As time passed and this question continued to haunt me, I reflected on my previous relationship. Though Mike had never hit me, the emotional abuse had been overwhelming. But had it begun there? Was it because of a foolish mistake I had made in high school that I was caught in this violent cycle?

For years I couldn't bring myself to admit there was any abuse within my family. After all, my dad was a pillar in our community, a man I greatly admired. I was a fourth-generation Adventist. How could

there be abuse in our family?

It wasn't until after I became engaged again that I learned there had been abuse in my family in each of those four generations. I remembered that sins could be passed down from generation to generation. In learning this, part of me was relieved that I wasn't the one who began the cycle, and part of me was frightened, knowing that a cycle this entrenched would be difficult to break.

Beginning Again

God helped me to begin breaking the cycle by providing me with a loving, patient, gentle husband who would never hurt anyone.

But God didn't just bring Bill into my life right away. I had to be patient. I had to wait and trust. And I had to learn that as a child of God I am valuable. I don't deserve to be abused—no one does.

God sent others into my life to help me heal—other women who broke the abuse cycle in their own lives, men I learned I could trust, and church members who loved me unconditionally.

By God's grace, I was able to begin breaking the cycle of abuse. I say "begin," because this isn't a perfect world, and "happily ever after" don't happen overnight. Just as the abuse didn't begin with Jonathan, it didn't end when he left.

There's another statistic that frightens me. It says that those who have been abused often become abusers. I see abusive tendencies in myself, and I know that without God's grace this is a statistic I can't beat.

But there's a promise I cling to daily: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). With God's help, I know this cycle can be completely broken. By His grace, my children will never need to know what it is like to be a victim of abuse. ■

Ellen Nelson is a pseudonym. All the names in this story have been changed.

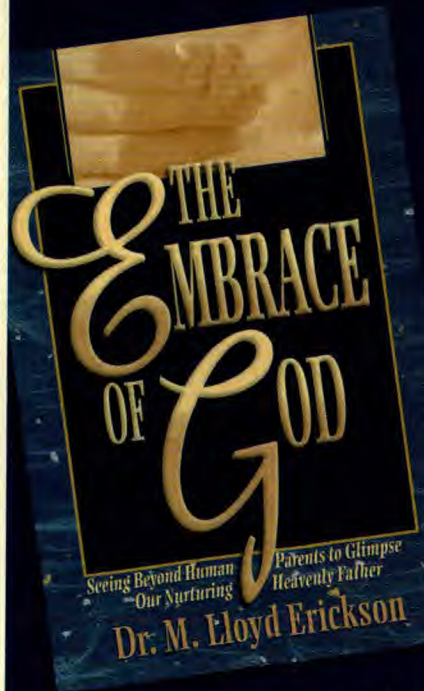
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Deliverance From Despair

SANDRA DORAN

Some of the letters that arrive in my mailbox are stained with tears. "I'm so lost from everything, and I just don't see a way back. I've come to the conclusion that maybe I don't belong in church anymore. I can't pray at night, as I don't feel it goes past my pillow. I feel strongly that my name has come up for review, and I didn't make it. I bet I've broken at least half of everything Adventists believe in. I sit in church, and I feel like a fake. I feel like I've lost it all."

Sometimes life is like a deep chasm closing in on us with claustrophobic darkness. David felt that way when he wrote: "My soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves" (Ps. 88:3-7).

No way out. Dark. Remembered no more. Cut off. Low. Afflicted.

Paul felt that way when he wrote: "I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I can't. I do what I don't want to—what I hate. I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience proves that I agree with these laws I am breaking. But I can't help myself, because I'm no longer doing it. It is sin inside me that is stronger than I am that makes me do these evil things. I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn I can't make myself do right. I want to, but I can't. When I want to do good, I don't; and when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway" (Rom. 7:15-19, TLB). "Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death?" (verse 24, NEB).

Evil. Rotten through and through. Miserable. Doomed to death.

Twentieth-century Adventists, David, Paul—we're all in the same boat. Looking to ourselves, we find there's no way out. Praying alone in the darkness, we hear our pillows mocking us. *You're no good. You've failed. You're out of the loop, outside of the circle, out of the ballpark, a poor excuse for a human being. The tobacco on your breath betrays you. You can no longer play the*

game. Your number's up. You might as well admit it. Step aside. Make way for those who are serious about their Christian walk.

Looked at from an earthly perspective, things can be pretty bleak. The rewards go to the brave, the strong, the mighty. Some of us just don't cut it. We're on the wrong side of the bell curve, the broken side of the tracks.

It's so hard for us to see that God's way of looking at things is as different from ours as the east is from the west. We don't have to be good enough. We don't have to earn anything. We don't even have to *feel* like we're being heard when we say our prayers. We

have only to lift our eyes.

David, after bemoaning his fate, lifts his eyes and sings: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. . . . For who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?" (Ps. 89:1-6).

Faithfulness. Mercy. Magnificent power.

Paul, after commiserating over his condition, lifts his eyes and proclaims with boldness: "The power of the life-giving Spirit—and this power is mine through Christ Jesus—has freed me from the vicious circle of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2, TLB).

Power. Life. Freedom.

It's not about feeling worthy. It's not about "making it." It's not about "belonging in church." It's about lifting our eyes above our own paltry, wretched condition and praising the Father, basking in the grace of the Son.

Tonight, before you go to bed, read Psalm 100. Then thank God for His goodness and mercy and go to sleep. Tomorrow read Psalm 103. The next night turn to Romans 5.

Lift your eyes. Rejoice in the hope of God's glory. Receive His abundant grace.

*Looking to
ourselves, we
find there's
no way out.*

Sandra Doran is currently conducting research on families with difficult children for her doctoral degree in special education at Boston University.



Moldovan Student Takes Spiritual Journey Through Florida

BY MICHAEL YANCEY, CORRESPONDENT WITH THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Dina Grimailo, a former engineering student in the country of Moldova who is now in her first year at Southern Adventist University School of Nursing in Collegedale, Tennessee, has only recently been baptized.

The road she took to reach this victory is lined with many Florida Adventist Church members, including retired pastor Merrill Enright and his wife and Orlando physician Julius Garner and his wife.

Dina's hometown is practically on the other side of the world—in Beltsy, Moldova, a country nestled between Romania and the Ukraine. Here many follow the Greek Orthodox faith, and here the Enrights and Garners conducted evangelistic/health meetings in 1994, 1995, and 1996.

"I had never studied the Bible," Dina says. "I didn't know why I believed what I did. Our Greek Orthodox minister told us that other churches were from Satan." In spite of this perception of other Christians, her parents, through a family friend at the Moldova Conference, wrote a letter to Enright and Garner in an effort to get her younger sister, Natasha, to the United States for leukemia treatment.

Enright and Garner were moved by the Grimailo story and quickly went into action. As a result of their interest, many church members in

central Florida became involved in raising money for the operation and making the arrangements for Natasha to come to North America.

Dina was later flown in to determine if she could donate her bone marrow. She agreed to the long, painful surgery. While in Orlando, Dina began to study the Bible. As her knowledge increased, so did her faith.



NEW BEGINNING: some of the 180 persons baptized at the Beltsy Crusade.

However, she was not yet ready for baptism. "I wanted to wait until everything was clear to me before I was baptized," Dina says.

Natasha's condition did not improve, even after intense chemotherapy. She was sent home to Beltsy, where she died 10 days later. The money raised for the operation was no longer needed; perhaps it could be used as a college fund. And when asked if she would like to go to school in the U.S.,

Dina jumped at the chance.

Nursing proved to be the right major for Dina. "Medicine is my goal," says the 19-year-old. "I want to help others like I helped my sister. God has a plan for my life, but I don't know what it is. I can make my own plans, but God will ultimately decide."

She enrolled at Southern Adventist University, where she immediately plunged into her studies.

One of her courses, Teachings of Jesus, helped to develop her spiritually. Then came Discoveries in Prophecy: 2000 and Beyond (NET '96). Dina thoroughly enjoyed Mark Finley's presentations. "I was impressed," she says.

Soon Dina was ready to make a decision. "I wanted to be a part of Christ's body," she says. She called Dr. Garner, who had baptized her parents in Beltsy, to ask if he would baptize her. Garner agreed. Dina was baptized in the Adventist church in Winter

Springs, Florida. Her faith continues to grow and inspire others today.

"God knows why things happen," Dina says; "we don't. He has the reasons and the answers, and I am looking forward to heaven so that I may know these answers." She adds, "I appreciate everything everyone has done for me and everyone who has been praying for me. I am glad to be here in school so that I can learn to help other people."

Loma Linda University Heart Team Brings Expertise to North Korea

By Beth Schaefer, ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY
INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION OFFICER

The 17-member Loma Linda University Overseas Heart Surgery Team, headed by Dr. Joan Coggin, a cardiologist and assistant to the president for international programs at Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC), recently returned from Pyongyang, North Korea, at the end of a highly successful two-week trip.

According to Dr. Coggin, the team was well received by their counterparts in the republic. She expressed how beneficial it was for everyone. "Even being total strangers before, and not knowing much about

each other, we all worked together very hard," Coggin said.

She commented that the North Korean side was very interested in learning the latest techniques in this type of surgery, and LLUMC surgeons could provide just that. "Before we went, there was much apprehension, but when we worked together, we became friends. The Korean side looked after our needs very well," Coggin added.

Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, which is involved in humanitarian programs in the country, originally introduced the

heart team to North Korean leaders. The team worked at the Kim Man You Hospital, performing open-heart surgery on 12 patients and vascular surgery on four patients.

Twenty diagnostic cardiac procedures were also done, including two coronary interventions, the first use of such a procedure in the country. A heart-lung machine and other supplies and equipment worth more than US\$250,000 were left with the Korean Cardiac Society.

According to Coggin, the team has repeatedly been urged to return next year. "Our Korean colleagues urged us to come when the weather is much nicer. We are considering a return visit next year," she said.

The Loma Linda heart team has performed as the "ambassadors of open-heart surgery" in more than a dozen countries of the world, including Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, and Nepal.

NEWS BREAK

Tennessee Adventist Led Medal of Honor Study

When United States president Bill Clinton honored seven Black American soldiers in January for their acts of valor in World War II, a Seventh-day Adventist played a key role in making the awards possible.

More than 50 years after the fact, the long-delayed citations of gallantry were finally conferred on the seven soldiers (six posthumously) as a result of research conducted by Daniel Gibran, an associate professor of history and head of the History, Geography, and Political Science Department at

Tennessee State University, in Nashville.

Gibran, active member of the Raleigh Adventist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, directed the 15-month study to determine why none of the 433 Congressional Medals of Honor conferred for World War II combat were received by African-American service personnel.

Commissioned by the U.S. Army in 1993, when Gibran was teaching at Shaw University, in Raleigh, North Carolina, the study revealed the widespread racial bias of the then-segregated army and recommended that several recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross, the second-highest military honor, be reevaluated for an upgrade to the Medal of Honor.

Adventist Review Concert Set

The *Adventist Review* Unwrapped II concert will be uplinked via satellite from Loma Linda University in California on March 22, 6:00-7:30 p.m. Eastern time.

The program will feature the *Review's* Take a Stand columnists Gina Brown and Loretta Spivey as concert hosts. Music will be provided by Faith First, Jaime Jorge, Polished Pipes, a Peruvian flute quartet, and other artists.

General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg and *Review* editor William G. Johnsson will be the featured guests on the program.



WELL DONE: President Clinton (right) congratulates Daniel Gibran for his landmark research.

Hello, Dolly! . . . Hello, Dolly?

BY ALEX BRYAN, PASTOR IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Dolly the sheep made national headlines February 24 when she became the first clone of an adult mammal. Scientists at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, Scotland, used DNA from a 6-year-old sheep to create "a genetically identical lamb" (*USA Today*, Feb. 24, 1997). The unveiling of Dolly reinvigorated a longstanding debate in scientific and religious circles on the ethics of cloning humans. (While biologists say it is theoretically possible, most think it would be decades before science could "copy" a human being.)

So what if we could clone humans?

Just think of the basketball team that some rich owner could produce. "Starting at point guard, shooting guard, small forward, power forward, and center . . . Miiichael Jorrriidan!" What about a young entrepreneur looking for board members to start her new company? . . . Bill Gates, Bill Gates, Bill Gates, Bill Gates, Lee Iacocca, Lee Iacocca, Lee Iacocca, Lee Iacocca, Michael Eisner, Michael Eisner, Michael Eisner, Michael Eisner. Talk about some great

NEWS COMMENTARY

genetic CEO material. And what about that dating scene? At your favorite restaurant you find that everyone else is dating their Tom Cruise or Demi Moore, too.

How exciting this would be for the church. I could stock mine with another Dwight Nelson and Hyveth Williams to preach on the weekends, another Take 6 for special music, and nine George Knights and Alden Thompsons to teach our Sabbath school classes. Three Bill Johnssons would produce our church newsletter, and 100 Chan Shuns would grace our membership roles. Other churches could do the same.

And the church would die really quick.

God created billions of unique human beings. Your community and church are filled with people unlike any other. Therefore your ministry is unlike any other. Mexico City, Kansas City, and New York City each have their own exciting ministry possibilities. And the Christians God has placed in each of those cities can reach them best.

NEWS BREAK

The Concert will be televised via Adventist Communication Network at Galaxy 9, channel 2. You can also see the program live at LLU's Drayson Center.

Leprosy Hospital in Sierra Leone Attacked Again

On February 14, Masanga Leprosy Hospital, operated by Seventh-day Adventists for the Sierra Leone government, was once again attacked by what appeared to be a group of rebel soldiers.

The attackers shot open metal doors to gain access to hospital supplies. The materials that were not stolen were destroyed, and most homes on the campus were looted.

The country has experienced civil unrest for several years. The hospital area has been under attack several times, resulting in evacuations. In 1995 a nurse employee was killed when rebels opened fire on a hospital vehicle. In 1996 the hospital was evacuated, but resumed its functions in midyear; however, the staff was evacuated again in October 1996.

While waiting for the situation to change, the hospital's expatriate workers and their families are living in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and are assisting in aid activities with refugees under the auspices of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, says Lowell C. Cooper,

an associate General Conference secretary.—*Adventist News Network*.

Sanctuary Model Comes to National Mall

A full-size model of the Old Testament sanctuary will be exhibited in Washington, D.C., March 21-30, on the National Mall between the Washington Monument and the Ellipse, reports Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference president.

Along with the full-size model, smaller replicas of the sanctuary and Ezekiel's temple will be displayed.

For several years an Adventist church in San Diego, California, has erected the sanctuary, called "The King's Castle," in several cities in the United States and Canada. According to Pastor Ted Tessner, project director, the large crowds attending each showing have been impressed with the clarity of the plan of salvation highlighted in the sanctuary tour.

Church Leaders Search for Adventist Jews

The Adventist Church in North America is seeking names and addresses of all members who have a Jewish name, heritage, or family connection by marriage.

The North American Division is planning an organized outreach program focused on persons with a Jewish culture or faith. Church leaders are seeking those who would

For Your Good Health

Wine's Flip Side

Much of the media today seems sold on the health benefits of wine. But alcohol's many negative effects include increasing blood triglyceride levels, increasing risk for rectal and bladder cancer, weight gain from empty calories, and impaired judgment and coordination, leading to many motor vehicle accidents. Persons at risk for heart disease should focus on losing weight, reducing dietary and saturated fat, increasing dietary fiber, and becoming physically active.—*Environmental Nutrition*.



Pressure High? Get Some Z's.

Italian researchers tested volunteers with normal blood pressure after nights of varying lengths of sleep time. The results? Compared with blood pressures measured after a full night's sleep, the volunteers showed exaggerated increases in blood pressures the morning after a night of just four and a half hours of sleep.—*Health and Fitness News Service*.

Too High C?

A new National Institutes of Health study shows that for most people, consuming 200 milligrams of vitamin C each day is sufficient to keep the blood almost fully saturated with the vitamin. Many supplements contain 500 to 1,000 milligrams. And while 200 milligrams is more than triple the current recommended dietary allowance, that level can be reached by many people without supplements simply by upping their daily fruit and vegetable consumption from the current national average of three servings per day to the recommended five daily servings.—*Tufts University Diet and Nutrition Letter*.

Compiled by Larry Becker, editor of *Vibrant Life*, the church's health outreach journal. To subscribe, contact your ABC or call 1-800-765-6955.

NEWS BREAK

actively support a prayer fellowship for such a ministry.

Names and addresses should be sent to Cyril Miller, Office of Global Mission, North American Division, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904.

Uruguay Stamp Commemorates 100 Years of Adventism

Near the end of 1996 the Uruguay postal service issued a commemorative stamp celebrating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Adventist Church in the country.



This is one of the first stamps issued by a national government commemorating an Adventist centennial.

The growth of Adventism in Uruguay has been slow. In 1896, 18 persons—mostly German, Swiss, and French immigrants—were baptized,

and organized into the first church. Since then, church membership has grown to approximately 7,000.

News Notes

✓ An Adventist physician was among those appearing in the Public Broadcast Service television series *Knife to the Heart*.



Leonard Bailey

Dr. Leonard Bailey, chair of the Surgery Department at Loma Linda University Medical Center in California, was interviewed in the series' fourth and final segment. Bailey performed a historic operation 13 years ago, transplanting the heart of a baboon into Baby Fae. The infant survived for 21 days.

The operation led to LLUMC's infant heart transplant program, which has performed more than 200 transplants on babies under 6 months of age.

Hosted by veteran journalist Connie Chung, the series examined the history and controversies of heart transplants, reports the *San Bernadino Sun*.

What's Upcoming

Mar.	15-22	Youth Week of Prayer
Mar.	29	Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Eastern Africa Division
Apr.	5	Missionary Magazines Emphasis
Apr.	12	Youth Spiritual Commitment Celebration
Apr.	19	Literature Evangelism Emphasis



TEMPT

How to cope when it's all around us.

BY GARY B. SWANSON

MARJORIE HAS ASKED GOD'S help in her weight-loss program. About 25 pounds overweight, she knows she's going to have to make some sacrifices—give up some things—if she's going to succeed. But Marjorie has a particular problem with ice cream. Whether it's fudge ripple, strawberry swirl, or rocky road, she loves ice cream in massive quantities.

Tom's biggest temptation is pornography. Even though he's a faithful churchgoer, he can't seem to pass up a copy of *Playboy* on the newsstand. Then when he's finished with it, he tosses the magazine in the dumpster with a sickening feeling of self-disgust. *What's the use of trying to quit buying this stuff?* he thinks. *I'm so weak that I always cave in!*

Temptation has a way of doing that to you. It makes you feel hunted, defeated, helpless. As Oscar Wilde said, "I can resist everything except temptation!"

With the support of the World Wildlife Fund, the number of Sundarban tigers in West Bengal—once near extinction—has doubled. This success story, however, has had its drawbacks for a while. With the number of these fearsome tigers growing, reports of attacks on humans in the area became more numerous, and wildlife management authorities were obliged to come up with a creative way to protect both humans and tigers.

Noting that tigers attack people only from behind, honey collectors and mangrove forest workers began to venture into the tiger reserves wearing rubber masks tied to the backs of their heads. In the three years that followed the intro-



ATTENTION

duction of this two-faced technique, not a single worker wearing a mask was attacked.

The Bible says that the devil is like another fearsome predatory cat—"a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8).^{*} When you consider his great power, you almost feel like giving up any hope of resisting his attack.

But the Bible tells us what to do: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

There is hope after all. Like the honey collectors and mangrove forest workers, with God's help you can find ways to protect yourself. One of the most encouraging promises in the Bible is that God "will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will

also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

With a promise like that, you may feel almost invincible—until the temptation returns. "Wait a minute," you say, "I thought God wouldn't allow me to be tempted!" Sorry, but the Bible doesn't promise that you won't be tempted; it *does* say God won't allow you to be tempted beyond what you can resist. And if you study carefully what the Bible says about temptation, you'll come across some practical steps to overcoming anything the devil sends your way:

1. Make a conscious decision not to give in. It's important to state prayerfully, "With God's help, I choose not ever to drink again," or "to gossip about others," or "to tell off-color stories." This may

seem like a ridiculously obvious step, but too often people put off moral decisions till they are already being tempted. By then it's usually too late. They're in hostile territory and surrounded by the enemy.

Without hesitation, Daniel decided exactly what his position would be regarding the diet in the king's court. He "resolved not to defile himself with the royal food" (Dan. 1:8). If he had shown any sign of wavering, he may well have given in. But because he courageously chose to follow God's leading, he was able to witness to those about him in unexpected ways.

2. Avoid going to places where you know you may be tempted. The first step in the direction of a place where you know you may be tempted is really

the first step toward giving in.

The alligator is the most feared of all the animals in the swamps of Florida. Storytellers say that the dangerous reptiles can actually grab people by their shadow and drag them into the water for a meal.

Alan Woodward, who works in the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, says there may be something to the fearsome reptile's ability in shadow-grabbing—sort of. "As a rule of thumb," Woodward says, "if you're close enough for your shadow to touch the water's edge, then you're close enough for an alligator to grab you."

This brings to mind Eve's mistake in talking to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. She should never have left Adam's company and allowed her shadow to fall anywhere near the reptile in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When she did, the serpent was able to snare her with his malevolent lies. If you don't want to be grabbed by an alligator, stay out of the swamp.

3. Consider the impact of your actions on others and on God. This is what Joseph did when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife. He said, "My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9). Joseph realized that giving in to the seduction of Potiphar's wife would adversely affect his relationship with his master and with his God.

Usually when we face temptation, we're thinking about ourselves and how gratifying it would be just to go ahead and do it. If we're thinking about God and others first, we will recognize that giving in to temptation usually has consequences in the lives of our loved ones and *always* affects our closeness with God.

4. Make sure your commitment to God is not halfhearted. A cow appeared one day in the parking lot of Hangar One, a company that services airplanes at a suburban airport in Miami, Florida. It had lost its way from

a nearby field. Several employees positioned themselves to herd it back to greener pastures. But the cow charged the employees (perhaps because their uniform included brightly colored shirts), activating an automatic door and chasing one of them through the lobby and into the manager's office.

The employee escaped through a back door and trapped the cow in the boss's office—without an appointment—and phoned for help. For the next three hours the 650-pound cow demolished a coffee table, dented a desk, kicked holes in the walls, and crushed a plant. Finally help arrived, and the uninvited visitor seemed ready to leave. She taxied out of the office and into a waiting livestock trailer.

Sometimes when we attempt to overcome temptation, we do it only halfheartedly. As Robert Orben points out: "Most people want to be delivered from temptation, but would like it to keep in touch." We cling to some values and behaviors that actually attract temptation. This is like wearing a loud shirt and trying to shoo off a cow. Before you know it, the devil has ignored the "Employees Only" sign and is firmly entrenched in your manager's office.

Overcoming temptation is no easy matter. If you're really serious about it, you'll make a commitment to resist *completely*, to "not give the devil a foothold" (Eph. 4:27). Marjorie's taste for ice cream and Tom's problem with pornography may seem overwhelming, but there is hope. Through God's leading they can learn to resist temptation if they keep these four steps in mind and remember that "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). ■

* All biblical references in this article are from the New International Version.

Gary B. Swanson is editor of the Collegiate Quarterly. He writes from Silver Spring, Maryland.



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Adornment and Commitment

A. ALLAN and DEIRDRE MARTIN

What's the difference between engagement rings and watches? It seems that many Adventists are uncomfortable when jewelry is discussed. Do we place too much emphasis on this subject? What does the Bible say?

Deirdre answers: It does seem that many Adventists are reevaluating this topic. What is the difference between rings and watches? Rings go on fingers; watches tell time. Rings versus watches, necklaces versus neckties, friendship bracelets versus anklets—it all seems rather silly to spend so much time discussing such an apparently insignificant issue. Maybe we do place an undeserved emphasis on jewelry. But isn't that one of the purposes of jewelry, to put undeserving emphasis on yourself?

Worried about what to wear? Peter suggests, "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5, NASB).

Throughout the Scriptures there are examples of what happens to those who adorn themselves pridefully and those who clothe themselves with humility. And it seems that if our "stance" is based on the Bible, it ought to focus more on humility and not so much on pretentious adornment.

It's reckless to single out jewelry and not caution against the pride that might go along with a pricey car, an extravagant home, a prestigious degree, or an impressive church sanctuary.

Adventists encourage humility, as opposed to pride, because with humility comes God's grace. With pride comes destruction (see Prov. 16:18).

So why are so many uncomfortable when the "jewelry issue" comes up? I can't speak for most Adventists, but for me, I think it's a superficial nonissue. Banter about jewelry is uncomfortable for me, because it usually revolves around (a) someone trying to justify it, or (b) someone trying to condemn it. No fun.

There's no time for me to be eyeing your compass ring or necklace pen holder or engagement watch. I need to make sure my own wardrobe is in style—with God. And on His runway, humility is in and pride is out.

I hear that crowns are making a comeback too.

I can understand why adultery is a sin, but what makes living together a sin? If we're really in love, and we both respect each other's body and soul, why must we have a piece of paper saying we can have sex? Is there any command against that in the Bible?

Deirdre answers: Living together is not a sin; sex before marriage is. Why? Think of it as "future tense adultery." You are committing adultery with someone's bride/groom-to-be. You are stealing a holy portion of that person's future marriage. And further, you

are endangering that person if you've had past sexual relationships with other partners.

Living together is fine. Many friends share housing costs, and some find it an economic necessity. But it doesn't sound as though you are "sharing" just rent. The type of living together you seem to depict here is far from the platonic split-the-utilities arrangement.

Don't kid yourself. Saying you "respect" your sexual partner without commitment is just cheap talk. However you phrase it, what you're talking about is lust, not love. And your "living together" is sin.

It's sad that so many view a marriage certificate/license as simply a nonessential permission slip for sex. Sex is only one component of marriage. Marriage is more than a piece of paper. It's two people becoming one: legally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Forever. A complete commitment. Marriage is holy and held sacred by God, your spouse, and you.

When you use the words "love," "respect," and "sex," please don't omit a most crucial part of the picture: commitment.

Don't lie to yourself. The apostle Paul wrote that the acts of the sinful nature are obvious. And heading the list are sexual immorality and impurity (see Gal. 5:19). Take a real look at what you are doing. The Bible is clear. Love and respect your partner—and make the commitment.

*"Respect" without
"commitment" is
just cheap talk.*

A. Allan and Deirdre Martin are husband-and-wife co-founders of dream VISION ministries, empowering young people for Christian lifestyle and leadership.



Crippled by Compassion

How do you balance helping others with trust in God? The world's poverty with making personal sacrifices? A young adult shares five suggestions.

BY CELESTE PERRINO WALKER

IT WAS A SIMPLE PURCHASE, AND YET I agonized over it as if I were about to spend an amount equal to the national debt. I oozed anxiety from every pore.

Was there a better use of my money? I was sure there was. In my mind, playing as a guilt-inducing background to my agony, were memories of every child who had ever stared forlornly into my living room from my television set, every picture I'd ever seen of starving people, and the highlighted words from hundreds of letters I had received, begging for financial help before all was lost.

Finally, my simple purchase made, I crept out of the store to my car, relieved that my task was over, but secretly feeling condemned for my "frivolous" use of money. It was a feeling that would remain to haunt me until the next time I had to spend money.

I was, literally, crippled by compassion. It wasn't only in areas financial that I was afflicted.

I couldn't run water in the kitchen sink or take a bath without thinking of the poor people of Somalia who had to walk eight hours a day to fetch water. I couldn't eat a nice meal without remembering how many people had been days without a bite to eat. I couldn't hold my child without recalling the picture of a mother holding her starving infant or feeling a great sadness for those whose arms were empty.

Yet when Jesus said, "The poor you will always have with you" (Mark 14:7, NIV), I don't think He had my kind of reaction in mind.

Guilt Sundae

What really put the whipped cream on the guilt sundae I had concocted was when I realized that my attitude revealed a lack of trust in God. My anxiety was a way of accusing God of mismanaging resources by entrusting them to me. My fear denied His incredible ability to "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

I don't think it makes God happy for me to agonize over every little purchase. I don't think God is pleased that no matter how much I do to help others, I continue to be weighed down with guilt for what I *didn't* or *couldn't* do. I gave, but it never seemed like I could give enough.

One day I realized that what I gave *could never be enough*. It was then that I began to relax. Jesus is the only one who has enough to give. He isn't asking me to give everything. Jesus is asking me to give generously, as God gives generously to me. To be a good steward.

Today I'm convinced that more than anything,



PHOTO BY JOEL D. SPRINGER

stewardship is an attitude. It is a wholistic, encompassing spirit of generosity. And it begins in the heart.

Many times we hear the word "stewardship" and think only of the monetary aspect, but true stewardship takes in more territory than that. It's an attitude that translates "What can I do right now, this very moment, with my resources to make an eternal difference in the lives of God's people?"

As human beings we put a lot of emphasis on money. The value of our material possessions, goods, and

services, even our time, is determined monetarily. Nearly everything, from the time we spend talking on the phone to the amount of gas we put in our car to get from here to there, is evaluated by how much it costs.

What we tend to forget is that money is only *one* of the gifts God gives us. How we use all of God's gifts, whether money, resources, or talents, reveals the true condition of our heart. Do we love the gifts more than the Giver? And do we trust the Giver's judgment?

After all, God doesn't actually need our cash to finish His work on earth.

God could make \$100 bills out of acorns if that's what it took to spread the gospel.

What God needs is His loving, generous, compassionate Spirit to be reproduced in us. That doesn't take any money at all. It also doesn't manifest itself as crippling guilt. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7).

A person whose sound mind is full of the power and love of God doesn't question every penny spent or agonize over every financial decision. That's not to say that we

have permission to squander our resources carelessly, whatever they may be.

Yet in this world, where most things are labeled yours, mine, or ours, we sometimes forget that everything we have, from the house we live in to the car we drive to the toothpaste in the tube, belongs to God. Everything has been lent to us to use responsibly.

Five Suggestions

As I have discovered, there is a fine balance between carelessness and paralysis when it comes to our resources. That balance can sometimes be hard to find. Here are five things that help me keep my balance.

1. Present your giving plan, financial and otherwise, to God and

ask for His blessing on it. Then *let it go*. Do your best and pray for a feeling of adequacy.

2. Ask God to bring to your attention any further ministry He has designed for you. Ask God to show you if there is something above and beyond what you are already doing that He would like you to do.

3. Pray that the resources you are giving will be multiplied to meet the need. You have only so much—so much money, time, energy, etc.—but God's resources are endless. If you are doing God's will, God can multiply what you give to meet the needs, however vast they are.

4. Praise God for the resources you have. He knows what you can handle and what you can't. What better Advisor could you ask for? Trust God to lead you to do the

very best with what has been entrusted to you.

5. No matter how much you do, there will always be more that you *can't* do. To meet needs that are beyond your resources, pray. Prayer is free, accessible to everyone, and "avails much."

Compassion is a valuable trait. We don't want to drive it away. But we need a compassion that will not cripple or paralyze. Let compassion strengthen you for a life of service and a promotion into eternity. ■

Celeste perrino Walker is a professional writer living in Rutland, Vermont, with her husband, Rob; son, Joshua; and daughter, Rachel.



Busy as a Bee

ROSY TETZ

Have you ever been stung by a bee? It really hurts. Bees sting because they want to protect their home. The most important thing to a bee is its home and family.

A bee family can be very big—it can have thousands of bees in it. In a family that big, it is important for everyone to help out. So every bee has a job to do.

Each family has one mother. She is called the queen, and all she does is lay eggs. Some of the family members have the job of taking care of her—they feed her and groom her and keep her safe and happy.

Other bees have household chores. Some help build the home or keep it clean. Some work in the nursery, taking care of the eggs and the baby bees. Some bees guard the home (with their stingers!). Others provide air-

conditioning by fanning with their wings to stir up a breeze.

Many of the bees have the job of gathering food. They fly off in search of flowers, from which they collect nectar and pollen. They bring it home, and other bees turn it into honey.

We humans might think that the bees who help make honey are the most



important ones (because we really like honey), but in the bee family all the jobs are important.

Humans understand this. We have families too, although not nearly so big. In our families we all work together to take care of each other. You are an important part of your family.

We also are a part of a bigger family—the family of God. The Bible says, "The Father has loved us so much! He loved us so much that we are called children of God" (1 John 3:1, ICB). God is the Father, and all of us are His children. We are brothers and sisters in the family of God.

Each of us is an important member of this family, and each of us has a job to do. We all must help take care of each other. This means that when you go to church you can't just expect the people there to take care of you—you've got to help take care of them. You can't just say, "Tell me a story; sing to me." You've got to participate; you've got to sing along. You can watch for people who look lonesome and find a way to help them remember that they are a member of this family too.

Because families take care of each other.

Junkyard Jaunts

BY ELAINE DODD

Somehow, it doesn't fit. A well-groomed, sophisticated woman executive driving a dusty pickup truck laden with trash?

But once every month or two I venture onto the highway, with neatly coiffed hair, perfume, and jeans for anonymity!

Piled into the truck bed are stacks of cardboard boxes filled with food boxes and other cartons or magazines, plus sacks full of junk mail, newspapers, or bottles—all efficiently held in place with stretchy tie-down ropes. On the seat beside me and behind the seat in the king cab space are bags brimming with plastic containers and beverage or tin cans.

You guessed it. I'm heading for the recycling plant! My husband loves to recycle. Not for the money (the most we've ever made on one trip is \$20, but we average less); we both draw adequate paychecks. (Of course, he may have inherited a thrifty streak from his Depression era parents.)

Committed to Caring

Yet week after week the trash collection in our garage expands. You'd think that a physician who works 13 hours a day wouldn't take the time for tediously tearing things apart and separating *stuff*. But he does. Since Duane loves to save and sort all this junk, why am I hauling it to that smelly, noisy place?

That's the very reason for my periodic expeditions, however humbling. I love my self-sacrificing husband, and I want to support his passion for improving our little corner of the environment. If he cares that much, then I choose to share his fervor. Since he has no days off, this distasteful task falls to the one with Fridays off—me!

After driving 15 miles, I reach the recycling plant, where hefty laborers swiftly heave my burdens into bins and barrels. The clank and hum of the conveyor belt

carrying cans to the crusher is punctuated by roaring front loaders scooping up mountains of debris. My nose wrinkles at the sickly sweet stench of unwashed beer

bottles and fermented juice and soda.

In a matter of minutes it's over! My truck is empty, the cab is clear, and my view is unobstructed. Pulling back onto the road, I take a deep breath; I feel so free! Soon I'm at my husband's office, where I exchange his phlegmatic Ford pickup for my sanguine Buick sedan.

Pondering my range of emotions after my latest triumph over trash, I perceived at least one lesson here: the Great Physician

cares passionately about my living conditions.

As rubbish accumulates in my life, I pretend not to notice. But God patiently sorts it out for me, and gently reminds me it has to go. When I can hardly find space to walk with God, I finally admit God is right. Because God loves me, I desire to live in harmony with that love. So I humble myself to surrender my neatly stacked sins. How hard it is to be unmasked, to realize that no matter how good I try to appear, I gather junk!

Once I've acknowledged and surrendered my trash, how quickly God heaves it away, leaving my view of Him unobstructed. Once again I negotiate the road of life. Once again, I can breathe deeply of His Spirit.

And I feel so free! ■

Elaine Dodd is assistant director of public relations for the It Is Written telecast. She lives in Thousand Oaks, California, with her physician husband, Duane.



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