

ADVENTIST Review

March 27, 1997

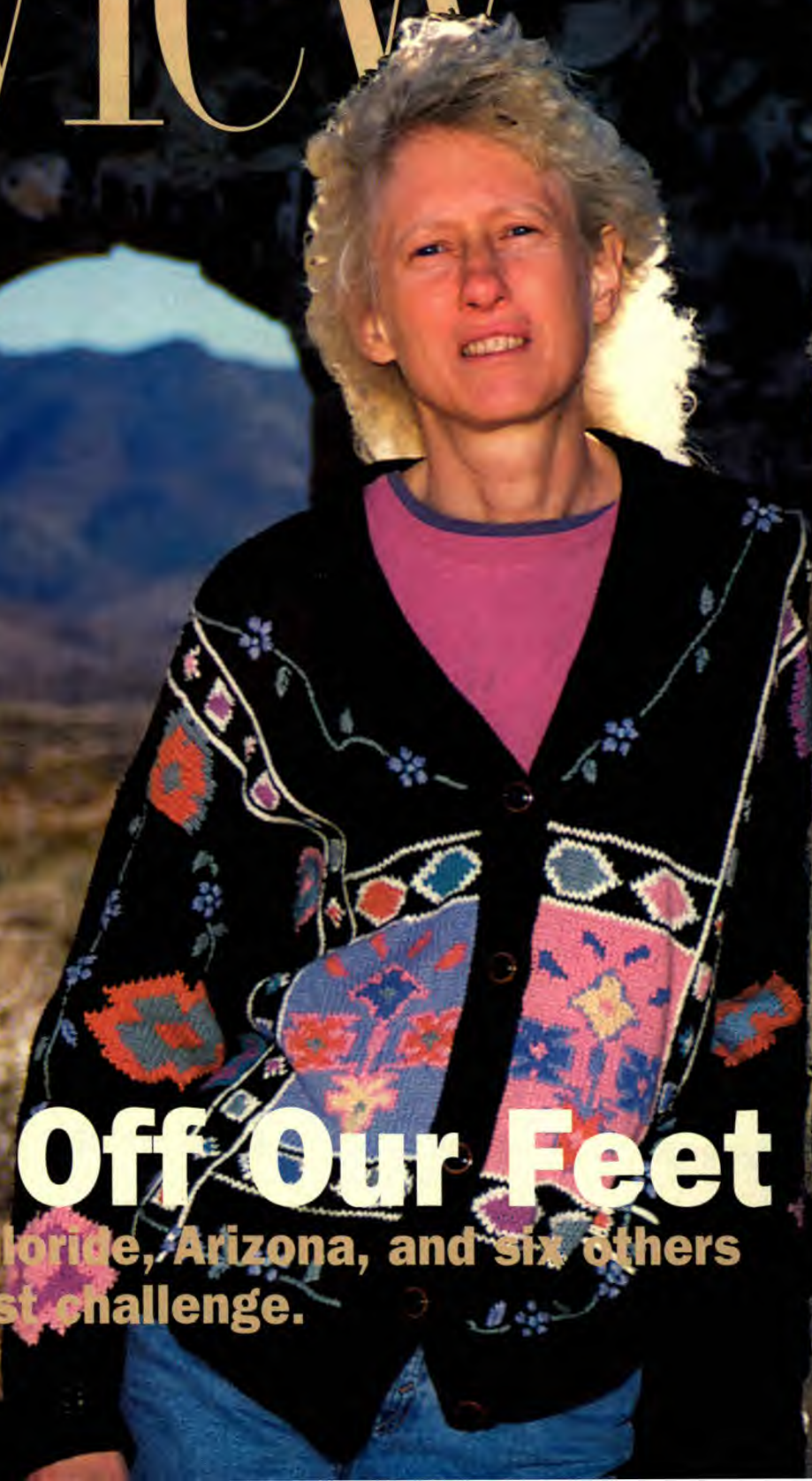
AnchorPoints

**The Message
of Easter**

**The Sermon
I Couldn't Finish**

Swept Off Our Feet

Leslie Kay, of Chloride, Arizona, and six others
met our columnist challenge.



Swept Off Our Feet

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Our mailbag runneth over. Letters—we love them, even though they take effort to sort, select, edit, or answer. These days we average about 100 every week, with as many arriving by E-mail as by snail mail.

And when we invite readers to respond, the stream becomes a flood. Like Herald's trumpet each month—scads of young readers and older ones get back to us with their answer. Or our announcement of the \$25 Club—donations to send the weekly *Adventist Review* to new believers. More than 500 people sent us a check.

Then last September we challenged readers with a really tough assignment—submit ideas, with samples, for a new column. We expected maybe a couple dozen brave souls to take up the task; we got a stack of 140-plus manuscripts a foot high. We expected a couple of top-quality possibilities; we got nearly two dozen.

Suddenly we faced an embarrassment of riches. What to do with so many fine ideas?

One submission jumped off the page. Out of the blue, from Chloride, population 350, in northwestern Arizona, came an idea and writing that swept us off our feet.

Meet **Leslie Kay**, author of *On the Home Front*. Leslie writes from a 20-acre mining claim. Her family, she tells us, consists of "my husband and me, our two young daughters, two dogs, a cat, five chickens, and a guinea hen."

And the column's purpose? "To bring to light, in a readable, engaging format, glimpses into the heart and work of our empathetic, seeking Saviour. To 'see Jesus' in all the large and small transactions of life, and so to be drawn to Him."

When I called Leslie to tell her we were accepting her idea, I had the sense she was trying hard to keep her excitement in check. She was. Later she wrote about what happened after she hung up the phone. "I screamed and jumped up and down, and then I cried. I was so full of emotion when you spoke with me that I was afraid that if I let one of them bubble out, the rest of them would conspire to overwhelm me."

Leslie Kay's first column appears on pages 14 and 15. Look for it every month in the AnchorPoints edition.

We selected six other sample columns for this issue. Although we don't have plans to pick up these columns on a regular basis at this time, we thought that each has great merit.

■ **Tim Ponder**, a pastor in Bel Air, Maryland, originated *Trends in the Media*. The sample we selected takes up the phenomenon of TV talk shows.



■ **Leslie P. Martin**, assistant professor of psychology at La Sierra University, submitted *Everyday Questions*—"current knowledge from the field of psychology, along with ideas for putting this knowledge to practical use." She deals with midlife crisis in this sample.



■ Well-known author **Kenneth R. Wade** suggested a column *Behold the Man*, focusing on Jesus' manhood. You will find "Standing Tall" in this issue.



■ **Harrison John's** idea was *Religion in the Marketplace*, issues facing Christians in the secular world. His sample included in this issue is "My God Is Better Than Your God."



■ **Patti Hansen Tompkins** expressed "a real burden for helping people understand diversity, whether it's physical, cultural, emotional, or spiritual." As a sample of *Common Ground*, you can read her views about "California Adventists and Other Radicals."



■ From Nairobi, Kenya, **Bert Williams** writes about parenting from a father's viewpoint. His sample takes up a topic every Adventist parent struggles with—family worship.



To each of these writers, our congratulations. To each of you whose effort didn't get mentioned, hearty thanks. Keep trying!

LETTERS

Oh, You're Still Here . . .



Regarding Claudia Foster's "The Unempty Nest" (Jan. 23). My husband and I have recycled not only all of our own children, but those of friends and relatives as well. I believe it keeps one from getting self-centered and is as much a ministry as going to a mission field. How often does God recycle me? Daily.

Of course, it costs extra money and time, but as they finally go on to their professions or schools of higher learning, I can truthfully say

that the greatest blessing has been ours.

—Name Withheld

Graphically Pleasing

Congratulations on the content and appearance of the January 23 *Review*. It is graphically very pleasing, which helps one into the magazine. Agencies like Tony Stone are expensive but, I believe, worth the extra cents.

—David Marshall, editor

STANBOROUGH PRESS
GRANTHAM, ENGLAND

Bad Credit

Kudos to the visionary literature evangelist leadership in New York for abolishing credit sales (see Newsbreak, Jan. 23). The results in terms of sales, souls, and recruitment speak for themselves. The magabook program is another fine example of credit-free selling.

I have long felt that we need to dismantle the cumbersome HHES system throughout North America. It inflates the prices of our literature and causes great discouragement to the literature evangelists. One of my student pastors from Andrews University was frequently required to return to Chicago to service delinquent accounts. That sort of thing should never be part of the colporteur's job description.

—James Hoffer, pastor

BENTON HARBOR AND COLOMA, MICHIGAN

ADVENTIST Review

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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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"Your church can effectively share the gospel through your own Discover Bible School. Write or phone today for information on how to tap into the Voice of Prophecy's 55 years of Bible School experience. Your neighbors and friends will soon complete the lessons and be ready to attend evangelistic meetings."

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— Gordon - London, Ontario

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— Mayola - Port Arthur, Texas

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"These lessons have given me a much greater insight to understanding the Bible. They have also helped me to achieve better daily study habits. I will be baptized next month at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Norco, California."

— James - Riverside, California

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to start a Discover Bible School at your church.**

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Red Rose on Snow

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

It took me many years to realize what should have been obvious—that Christianity shines brightest in the face of death.

I recall vividly the occasion when the light dawned. During my doctoral studies at Vanderbilt University, noted Old Testament scholar John Philip Hyatt died at his desk one afternoon. Scholars and colleagues flew into Nashville, Tennessee, from around North America for his funeral.

Professor Hyatt had foreseen his demise and left instructions. Plenty of singing at his funeral. Loud singing—no dirges. As the packed church joined with full-throated organ, I felt the surge of Vaughan Williams' "For All the Saints Who From Their Labors Rest." I joined the celebration of a life and the celebration of the victory won by Jesus Christ, conqueror of death. I understood for the first time the sweeping power of the message of the first Christians that toppled the gods of Greece and Rome.

One Sunday in January I stood in the snow as the body of a young man was lowered into the earth. My feet and my head turned to ice in the bitter cold; so almost did my heart. It was a moment of infinite sadness and yet infinite beauty.

He was only 40. He died alone—far from his native land, never making the trip back to see his parents. He died without his wife—they had divorced years before—or his son by his side.

His parents traveled halfway around the world for the funeral. They found two seats on an airplane when no seats were available; they obtained visas on short notice. They came in their brokenness, grieving the loss of their firstborn. What could give them—and me—a ray of hope?

First, the community of friends. A huge number turned out, filling the large Adventist church. They came to show their last respects for the dead and to support the ashen father and mother.

Second, the message that first sped Christianity on its way. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thess. 4:14) was the theme of the young preacher's sermon. His earnestness and conviction spread hope across the congregation: Christ died for our sins, He rose again, and those who believe in Him will also rise.

With so much pain there was no way a short service could suffice. So much needed to be said, so many wounds opened up that needed to begin healing. The two-and-a-

half-hour experience became gut-wrenching, but every moment was necessary.

Gradually I became aware of another dimension to the pain—the troubled relationship of father and son. A father who had tried to show his love the best he knew how. A son branded a rebel as a teenager, who longed for the sense of his father's acceptance.

As I sat in the pew, the word came to me: tell every father who reads the *Review* to pick up the telephone and give his son a call. Tell him you love him. Tell him you accept him, even if his hair is long, and he gave up going to church, and he's on drugs, and you've felt ashamed even to mention him to your friends. *Do it now*—pick up that telephone!

The mother spoke last of all. She had much to say, and part of it was about a parable that had come to her a few days before her son died:

"It's about time for the Royal Express to pass by our house. I wondered where my son was. I peeped through the window. 'Oh, dear, there he is as usual, playing on the tracks.' I made my usual call, 'Oh, son, again you are there. You know what I used to tell you. I need not say it again: that is no place for you to play. Anyway, I am praying for you, because I hate to warn you again and again.'

"The son replied, 'Mom, I am a big boy now. I don't want any preaching. I am perfectly all right, because I know when to stop playing.'

"My neighbor shouted, 'Oh, you foolish woman! Can't you hear the whistling of the train? What are you doing there—praying? Go fast, get out, run and grab that boy by his hair, his neck, or anything!'

"What next?

"Only the screeching of the metal will tell you the story."

The service by the graveside was very short—words of hope from Scripture, the committal, prayer. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

Then the young preacher reached into the flowers covering the casket. He extracted a red rose, walked through the snow, and placed it in the mother's hands.

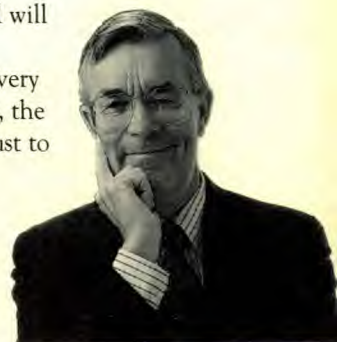


PHOTO © PHOTODISC

The Message of Easter

Westminster Abbey. The Plains of Abraham. The Fil-American Cemetery. The beaches of Normandy. Arlington National Cemetery. They speak to us of loyalty, courage, sacrifice—of brave men and women giving their lives for the cause of freedom and justice.

That's how we like to remember these gallant souls of yesteryear. We sometimes forget, however, that they themselves think nothing. They're dead.

But just before they died, did they think such noble thoughts as those by which we remember them? As they stared down the cold, dark corridor of death, what sentiments crossed their minds? How did they face the impending nightmare of permanent darkness and nonbeing?

The French Foreign Legion has fascinated me ever since my elementary school days. Turks, Britons, Americans, Russians, Slovaks, Chinese, and others from a hundred countries more—these intrepid men come together under a common flag to form one of the most renowned fighting forces in history. “A man comes here completely uprooted,” says French Foreign Legion captain Jacques Delemarle. “The Legion is now his family, his world.”¹ From it he receives a new life, a new identity, a new mission.

But the one thing that this eminent fighting force could never give its men was hope beyond an often bloody death—a fact poignantly captured by the English poet Caroline Norton as she depicts the final moments of a legionnaire on a battlefield in North Africa:

“There was lack of woman’s nursing,
There was dearth of woman’s tears;
But a comrade stood beside him, while his life-blood
ebbed away,
And bent, with pitying glances, to hear what he might say.
The dying soldier faltered, as he took that comrade’s hand,
And he said, ‘I nevermore shall see my own, my
native land.’”²

The apparent meaninglessness of human existence is one of the most persistent problems in the history of philosophy. Many of the dead we eulogize today, attributing to them the noblest motives that human sentiment can ascribe, would eagerly join the ancient sage, if they could speak: “Meaningless!

Meaningless!’ . . . ‘Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.’ What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun?” (Eccl. 1:2, 3).*

“Out, out, brief candle!” the English playwright said, as if in philosophical paraphrase of the biblical sage.

“Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the
stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
signifying nothing.”³

But shining like a beacon above the darkness and pessimism is the message of the cross, the message of the resurrection.

Without it Shakespeare and the ancient sage would be correct. For “if Christ has not been raised,” Paul said to the new believers in Corinth, “your faith is futile. . . . Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost” (1 Cor. 15:17, 18). If Christ has not risen, we have nothing to look forward to but a dark, bottomless chasm, into which there comes no morning.

No, says Paul, there is a brighter future for those who embrace the cross. “For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed” (verse 52).

Like the soldiers of the Legion, God’s people have “left” their native climes and cultures all around the world to pledge allegiance to a common flag. And like that lonely legionnaire, many have died—and many will yet die—upon the field of battle, far away from friends and home.

But theirs will never be a death that has no meaning. For the words of Jesus send a beam of hope down the corridors of the centuries: “I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades” (Rev. 1:18).

That’s the message of Easter.

*All scriptural references are from the New International Version.

¹ Patrick McDowell, “French Foreign Legion More Foreign Than Ever,” *Caracas Daily Journal: Sunday Plus*, July 18, 1993, p. 3.

² “Bingen on the Rhine,” stanza 1.

³ Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act V, scene 5, line 23.



PHOTO © PHOTODISC

GIVE & TAKE

ADVENTIST LIFE

I was invited to sing for a local Christian variety show held at a local dinner theater. When I arrived I discovered that every other performer was using background tapes; I was the only one with live musicians.

The dinner theater had plenty of room for my background musicians, but the piano was hidden behind the curtains two stories up. While introducing the musicians, I mentioned the pianist as well, pointing up to where she was hidden.

At the receiving line after the show, an elderly woman approached me with the saddest expression, clasped my hand in hers, and said, "It was such a beautiful number. The pianist on the taped part—when did she pass away?"

—Jerry Shoemaker, Springboro, Ohio



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

ADVENTIST QUOTES

"Focus on the Mountain Mover, not the mountain."

—Pastor Morris Venden, to the Azure Hills, California, church

"I will let God do the worrying for me. He stays up all night anyway."

—Sheila Case, Delta, Ohio

"Adventists used to be legalists. Back then it was easier to get people to serve in the church because they thought they had to do good works to be saved."

—Pastor Lynn Schlisner, Madison, Tennessee

"Every person that I meet is superior to me in some way."

—Katheleen J. Kachuck, Saint Helena, California

CHURCH OF THE MONTH: NORTH CREEK, NEW YORK



STILL GOING: Advocates of closing small churches probably won't find much support from the 37 hearty members of the North Creek, New York, congregation. Organized in the Byrnes School House in 1872, North Creek erected its current structure in 1894. Pastor Herb Coe and wife, Marie (front left), lead services each Sabbath morning beginning at 9:30. If you're ever on Bird Pond Road, be sure to drop by.—Photo by Kelly Rose Bishop.

Have a Church of the Month submission? Send it to "Church of the Month" at the Give & Take address below.

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.

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.

The Sermon I Couldn't Finish



I didn't even want a rabbit.

BY DON J. JEHL

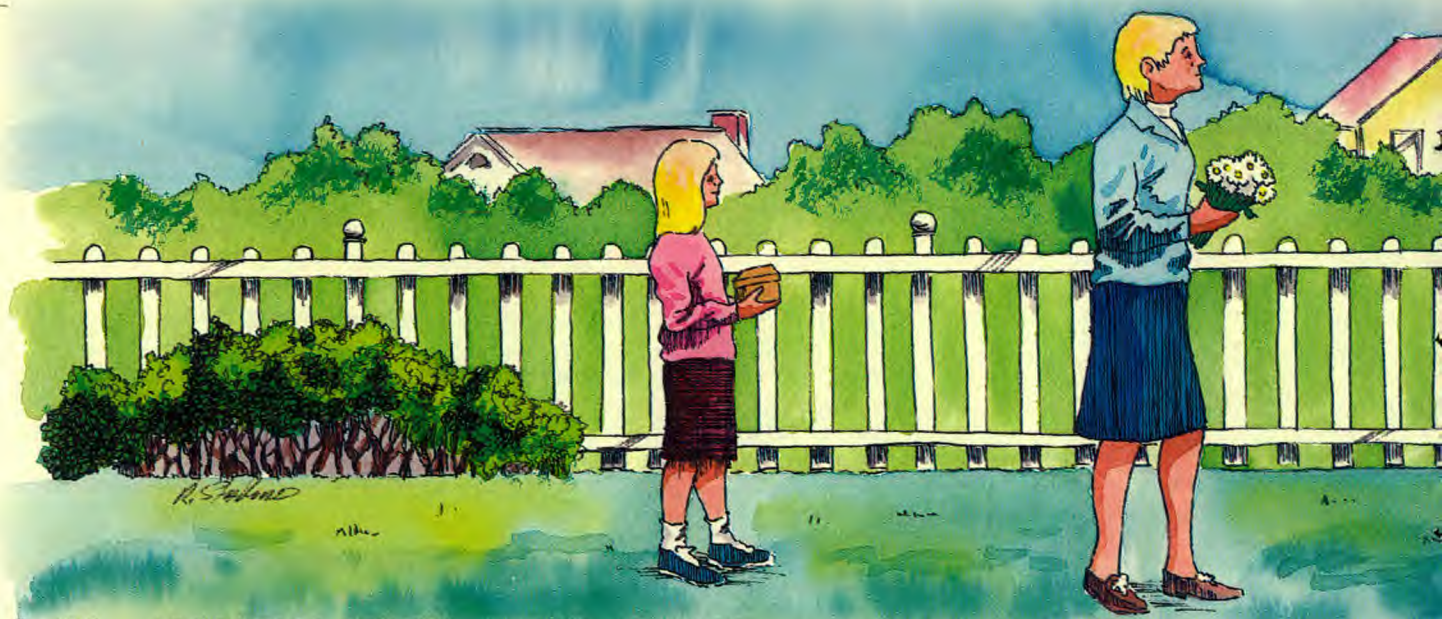
MY DAUGHTER, AMANDA, WANTED A pet rabbit. I wasn't exactly enthusiastic. In fact, I voiced the opinion that it would be cruel to keep an animal created to be wild and free caged and confined to a small area. But Amanda and my wife, Glenda, pretended to be unconvinced by my logic. They still wanted a rabbit.

Somehow word spread throughout the church I pastored that Amanda wanted a rabbit. I don't know if it was also widely known that her daddy wouldn't buy her one, but one day while Amanda and Glenda were away visiting my

parents, a sweet couple from the church came over to the parsonage with a gift. Yes, it was a cute little furry bunny.

We had no cage. We had no water bottle. We didn't even have any rabbit food. I was totally unprepared for the members' generosity, but I knew I couldn't say no. So I took the bunny and put it in the bathtub while I tried to figure out what to do with it. As I set it in the empty tub, it bit my finger. Not the best way to begin a relationship, I thought apprehensively.

For five days, until my wife and daughter returned, the rabbit and I had a standoff in the bathroom. I would bring it



water and the rabbit food that I had purchased, and it would hop out of the tub and hide behind the toilet. It apparently didn't want to see me any more than I wanted to see it.

Amanda was thrilled when she came home and found her new bunny. She would pick it up and stroke its velvet fur, even though the rabbit never showed any affection in return.

We soon bought a cage, and Amanda named her pet Lindy. Every day Amanda fed and watered Lindy. But Lindy evidently never enjoyed being petted or loved. If anyone tried to pick Lindy up, she would always try to scamper away. If anyone stuck a finger into her cage, Lindy would lunge for the human flesh, hoping to bite it.

Looking for a Brighter Tomorrow

One morning before leaving for school, Amanda went to feed Lindy, as she always did. Soon she ran to me, crying. Lindy was dead. I was amazed that Amanda could be so upset about an animal that never was much of a pet, as far as I was concerned.

As I drove Amanda to school, she brushed away her tears and said quite matter-of-factly, "We can have Lindy's funeral when I come home from school this afternoon."

I didn't have the heart to tell Amanda that I wasn't planning on having a funeral service. I was going to

dig a hole in the ground, drop Lindy into it, and cover it up. But Amanda had seen me conduct several funeral services, and even at her young age she knew what was supposed to happen when someone died.

All day long, while Amanda was in school, I wondered what I would say at Lindy's "funeral." I couldn't promise Amanda that Lindy would be raised at the resurrection. And funerals without that hope are usually pretty bleak. So I finally decided that I would speak about God's great love.

When Amanda came home from school, Glenda had prepared a casket for Lindy—a shoe box lined with cloth. As I laid the box in a hole I had dug, I began to read from the book of Isaiah, chapters 11 and 65. I declared that God loved animals so much that there would be many of them in the new earth. I read from Revelation 21:4, that there will be no death, sorrow, or crying on that great day. Animals will neither kill nor be killed.

Then it happened. As I looked at the big tears that rolled down my daughter's cheeks, I began to choke with emotion. I couldn't continue my homily. Words wouldn't come, only tears.

Why am I crying at the funeral of a rabbit I don't even like? I thought. Then I realized that I wasn't crying for the rabbit. I was crying because I couldn't stand to see my little girl's pain and sorrow.

That was when the words of the shortest verse in the Bible took new meaning. "Jesus wept," it says in John 11:35. Jesus didn't cry because He was hurting over the loss of His friend Lazarus. Verse 33 explains the reason Jesus wept: He saw Mary and Martha and others weeping and grieving in sorrow, and He was troubled by the pain and heartache of those around Him.

I had planned to speak on God's love during that difficult sermon. But it was God's love that spoke to me. We have a Saviour who can empathize with us in all our hurts, sorrows, and pain. Ellen White wrote that not a tear escapes His notice (*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 30, 1903).

The resurrection is a precious doctrine for all of us who have ever lost a loved one in death. But just as valuable is the knowledge that in all our sorrow, Jesus understands the pain and will stand by us to strengthen us—until we're reunited with our loved ones and all our tears are dried. ■

Don J. Jehle is senior pastor of the New England Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church in Stoneham, Massachusetts.



ILLUSTRATION BY ROD STAFFORD

Jerusalem!

The tragedy of a nation about to blow its finest hour.

BY HEDRICK J. EDWARDS

JESUS DEFINED HIS mission to Jerusalem in terms of passion and pain. "Now is my soul troubled," He told His followers on the eve of the cross. "And what shall I say? 'Father save me from this hour?' No, for this purpose I have come to this hour" (John 12:27).*

Jerusalem stood for the lifeblood of a nation that was

precious to God. Providence had given birth to this City of Peace. From it would flow streams of healing far beyond the borders of Israel. Its promised glory became the obsession of every Hebrew seer from David to Daniel. That glory too was Christ's own magnificent obsession.

With the presence of Jesus in the city, however, its defining moment had come. This city, over which the Philistines and the Babylonians, the Maccabeans and the Romans, had fought so many bitter battles, was now caught in the stranglehold of a final tyranny that threatened its salvation and destiny, and that of the entire nation.

From this threat of ultimate bondage Jesus came to set Jerusalem's people free, and it was now up to the city to define its own destiny. It must make an essential choice: Would it fulfill its promise and be the catalyst of a righteous world order? Or would it prove to be only an illusive mirage, pretentious but unproductive—an instrument of evil?

Jerusalem was at the crossroads, poised to move forward into the bright sunlight of God's grace or backward into an age of darkness and delusion. As the city drifted inexorably to its rendezvous with destiny, Jesus was moved to tears—tears born of deep anguish. He could see that Jerusalem and all it stood for were at risk.

Christ's tender affection for the city was made more poignant because of His deep insight into the deceptiveness of all worldly power. Looking down upon Jerusalem from Mount Olivet, He could see, dwarfing everything else, the magnificent Temple representing all that the city stood for in Jewish life and thought. But He could also see, rising ominously in the distance, the towers of Herod's Palace, a grim reminder that opposing principles, in subtle ways, were doing battle for the very heart and soul of the city.

The past, present, and future of the beloved metropolis came up before His vision, and He wept over the city's impending moral, spiritual, and political collapse. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," He mourned, "how often

would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" (Matt. 23:37).

Already tragic events had cast awkward shadows over the City of Peace, distorting the ideals and innocence of the dream. Prophets had been murdered in its streets. Wise men had been silenced and discredited by its authorities. Great teachers of truth and courageous moral reformers had been deftly removed from all positions of influence. Jesus Himself had been callously dismissed as unlearned and condemned as in league with the prince of devils. Then, as now, Jerusalem was a city of profound contradictions and violence. Roman soldiers patrolled its uneasy streets, as soldiers do today, to control outbursts of the fierce passions of its desperate people.

Here, it seemed, was the world's soul, the place where all its bitterest conflicts and its most sobering dilemmas converged. Falsehood, having taken a long time to gain a foothold, had at last become entrenched in the ancient city. And even now, in the very presence of the pure light of truth, it remained unyielding.

What could the incorruptible Man of Nazareth do with such a city? He could forgive all its sins and heal all its diseases, but alas, Jerusalem would not be forgiven, would not be healed. Left with no recourse, Jesus could only drink the bitter cup of unrequited love and endure the radical dishonor of crucifixion.

The story of Jerusalem's defining moment, however, was not simply one of abstract principles in conflict. It was a story also of personalities shaped by competing principles: Temple authorities, whom Christ rebuked for allowing the sacred precincts to become converted from a house of prayer to a den of thieves; Pharisees and scribes, who appeared pious and clean on the outside, but whose façade Jesus penetrated, calling them blind guides, a "brood of vipers" (verse 33), "full of extortion and rapacity" (verse

23); Sadducees, priests, and Levites. All these personality types claimed to sit in Moses' seat, defining themselves in terms of their relationship to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. Spiritual leaders of the law, they took pride in being custodians of a religious culture vouchsafed to them through signs and wonders that bore the imprint of Yahweh Himself.

But side by side with this all-pervading religiosity grew an insidious passion for worldly power and aggrandizement. Unwilling to appreciate the fact that the kingdom of heaven does not come with outward show, they dreamed dreams of a kingdom that would guarantee them material wealth and enable them (like Caesar) to exercise power over others, but that would also be secure and last forever, Yahweh Himself being its founder.

These opinion leaders would set the tone that would determine the true character of Jerusalem's soul. They themselves must come to their own moment of truth. Powerful egos struggled against truly noble impulses. And the one issue that brought them to this moment was Jesus. There was something authentic and inescapable about Him and the new kingdom He represented and proclaimed. One has to suspect that in moments of sober reflection, even the most villainous of these leaders must have confessed in his heart, as the Roman centurion was later to confess with his lips: "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

But it was risky business to entertain such noble impulses for very long. How could such superiority be clothed so unpretentiously? They reasoned against their better judgment. Jesus of Nazareth a prophet! A Galilean Messiah-King! "Blasphemy!" Caiaphas shouted (Matt. 26:65). "Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee, said the authorities" (John 7:52). To acknowledge that Jesus was the Christ, or even a prophet, would mean abandoning their vested self-interests, and that was too big a price for Jerusalem's leaders to pay. They squirmed and rationalized, twisted and misapplied Scripture in order to

accommodate their own pride and passions.

Rejecting the evidence that majesty could ever be present in such meekness, these leaders began to slide rapidly down the slippery slope of personal and corporate pride, that flaw from which all the great tragedies of history are born. The kingdom Jesus would establish was for the poor in spirit, the merciful, the meek, the pure in heart, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Clearly such a kingdom was a threat to everything they'd come to hope for and represent. For if Jesus was indeed the anointed one, then all the vaunted dignity and authority in which the chief priests so safely trusted would suddenly lose their substance and become hollow and irrelevant. Such a kingdom must not be allowed to stand.

Had it been the Romans who had despised and rejected Jesus, it would have been understandable. After all, they were pagan imperialists who had no king but Caesar. But no, it was the chosen people of Yahweh who, under the influence of their religious leaders, turned their backs on Him. "We have no king but Caesar," those leaders told Pilate in the end (John 19:15). They were right, for the principles of Caesar's kingdom had become enshrined within their souls.

Among the religious elite in Jerusalem was a small group of leaders possessing intellectual and moral integrity: Nicodemus, Gamaliel, Joseph of Arimathea, among others. Perceiving that something truly significant might be unfolding before their very eyes in the Man from Nazareth, they looked for His glory behind the dusty feet, behind the gentle countenance, behind the plain tunic. And they were rewarded with a vision of something transcendent—majesty in meekness, strength in brokenness, gain in the loss, God in human flesh.

What a discovery! Truth so profound that it could only be expressed in paradox, yet so simple

that the pure in heart, even though but children, can appreciate it.

"How can these things be?" Nicodemus had earlier wondered. Now he was convinced. With other secret disciples of Jesus, he would come out into the open, declaring his allegiance to the Saviour in this defining moment

*Jerusalem's
missed opportunity
contains a
powerful
message for us.*

for Jerusalem. These honest, sensitive men and women tried to honor Christ in life without offending those who would only dishonor Him (John 7:48-52). But they were allowed to pay Him full homage only at the hour of His death. Joseph begged Pilate for the body of Jesus and with Nicodemus gave it an honorable burial.

At that moment of commitment and kindness, if Jesus were only half conscious, He would have spoken words of deep gratitude to these men. Probably He would have told them openly, as He told the notorious thief, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

As for Caiaphas and his clan, Jesus would speak neither good nor bad. As for the Roman agents and the hysterical crowd who cried out for His death, He expressed only deep sorrow and disappointment: "Forgive them," He prayed, "they know not what they do" (verse 34).

As for His 11 disciples, Jesus felt their pain and deep distress. For they, above all others, had stood with Him. After His resurrection He would appear to others, to lift their spirits and revive their faith. And He would empower them to go to the ends of the earth to

declare His triumph.

Jerusalem's defining moment and its promised destiny are now matters of history. Many in our times still look to it with great hope. But that beloved city, coveted by Israelis and Arabs alike, has become little more than an illusive mirage. It still

promises peace, but for nearly 2,000 years it has been unable to deliver. Here where the Majesty of heaven walked those cobblestone lanes in humility and compassion, here where He wept in anguish and died in bitter agony—here Palestinians and Israelis still weep and bleed and die.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Heartrending words of pathos and compassion. Words that continue to haunt and challenge us in our times. For we too find ourselves unable to avoid engagement in the struggle over the soul of our world, our nation, and our church. Christ's anguish at Jerusalem's missed opportunity contains a powerful message for each and all. We must come to grips with our own defining moment.

But there is hope. For the light still shines through the world's darkness, and Christ has triumphed. He is risen from the dead. And He is Lord. The destiny of peace and glory (which still eludes Jerusalem) is assured to those who have eyes to see majesty in meekness, mercy in misery, and order in apparent confusion.

The darkness, however dense, could never extinguish the Light of the world. ■

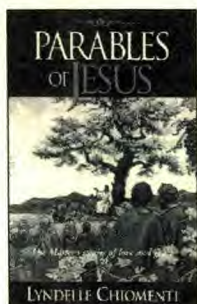
* Scripture references in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

Hedrick J. Edwards is coordinator of the Masters of Public Health program at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines.



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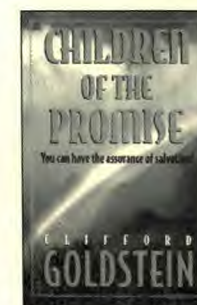
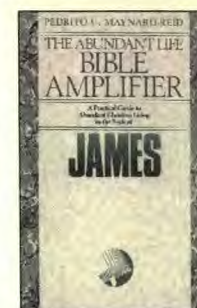
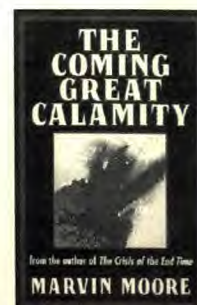
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The Day the Cow Fell Into Our Mine Shaft

We weren't home the day the cow fell into our mine shaft. Our neighbor Seth heard her piteous bawlings and extracted the poor creature with his bulldozer. Seth later told us she had stumbled into the shaft in her frenzy to escape some chasing boys. I wish we had been here. We could have prevented it.

But we weren't here, because we hadn't appreciated our inheritance. We were 300 miles away, at the opposite end of the state of Arizona, working ourselves to death to pay for a house we couldn't afford, propped up by credit cards we had vowed would never control us.

We received our unique inheritance eight years ago, upon the death of my husband's father. Located two miles west of Chloride, a decrepit northwest Arizona mining town, the Tuckahoe was an exhausted silver mine—20 acres of creosote and unfenced mine shafts. It became our private joke. Whenever one of us

bemoaned the outrageous price of California real estate, the other would say, "Well, there's always the Tuckahoe. We could put up a tent and move right in!" We laughed it to scorn. We couldn't wait to unload it.

We left California for Tucson, where we hoped to find affordable housing. Instead, within a year we found ourselves deeply in debt. And we were miserable in the city.

When I took the children to camp meeting that year, I was consumed with two concerns: how to resolve our financial dilemma and how to realize our dream of raising our children on our own country acreage. I ate, slept, and prayed these two themes incessantly. I shared them with an old acquaintance at the Adventist Book Center, and she responded with very wise words: "What do you and your husband already know how to do? What resources do you already have in your possession? The Holy Spirit

will show you how to make use of them."*

This was the only sermon I was able to attend that camp meeting season. I was otherwise detained in the cradle roll room with my daughter, Jenny. But I treasured that counsel and brought it home to my husband.

We wrestled with that concept all summer. What in the world did we already know or have that the Holy Spirit could show us how to make use of? By the end of August, after earnest, searching prayer, the Lord was

able to open our eyes. He showed us that in the title to this unlikely piece of real estate He had provided us with a foundation upon which to grow our young family, build that home business Don had been yearning to start, and realize our dreams of country living—all within our means.

We sold our house, bought a mobile home, and packed our Ryder truck to the gills. While the mobile home was installed on the property, we stayed in a Kingman Motel 6, where we made a money-

saving discovery. Situated as we were next to the railroad tracks, we didn't need to drop a quarter into the Vibra-bed. The "magic fingers" were provided nightly, courtesy of Amtrak.

After four rollicking, thunderous nights, we trailed into our new home, a lonely gray double-wide perched on a dusty patch of caliche (the crust of calcium carbonate that forms on the soil of arid regions)—with no electricity, water, gas, phone, or sewer.

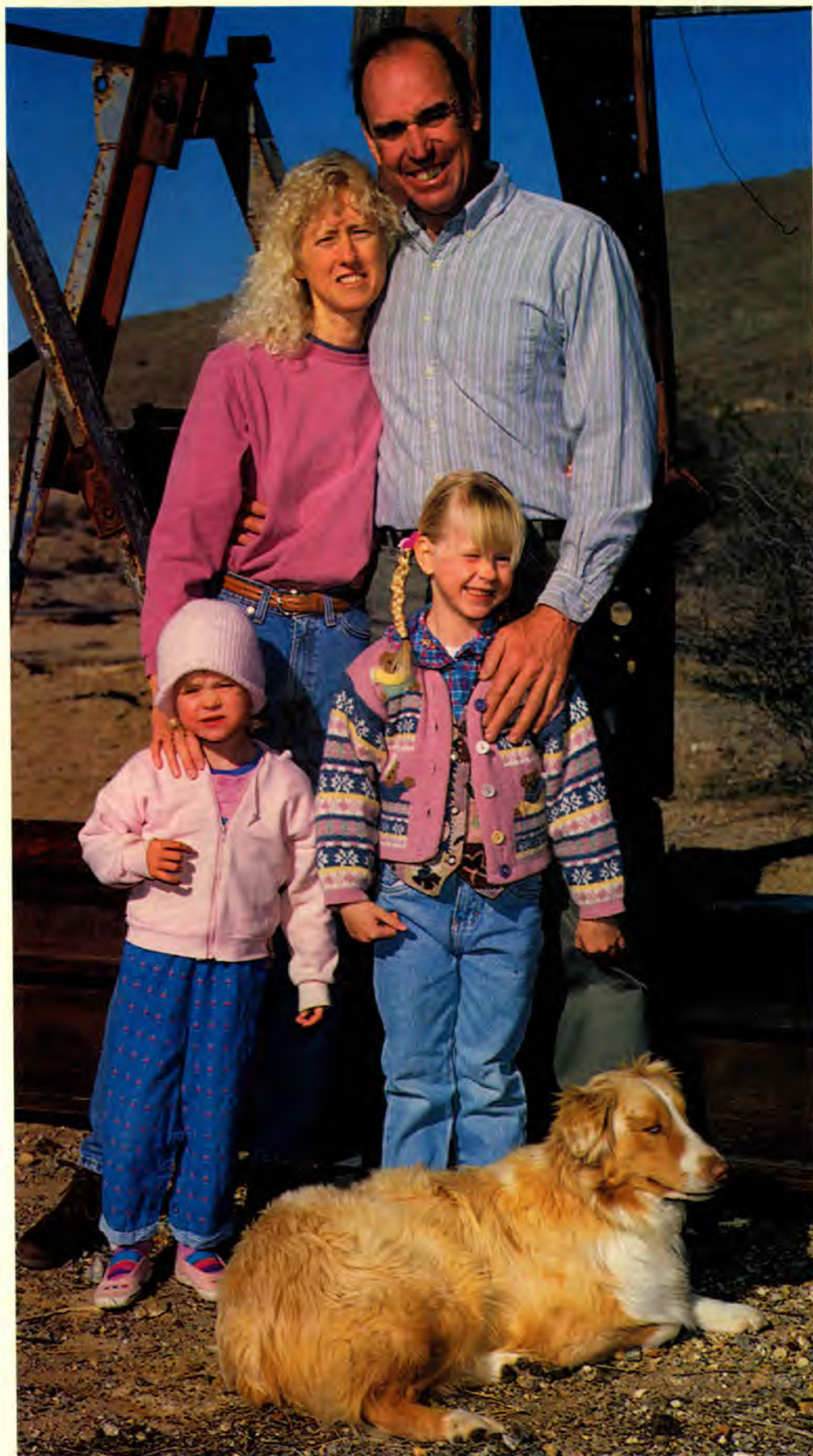
"Was it really my idea to live here without utilities?" I muttered to no one in particular.

"It was your idea," my husband affirmed.

"And you went along with it? You're supposed to be the practical one."

"I tried to talk you into renting until the utilities could be connected, but you wanted to live on your own land."





So we made do with the Coleman stove and the porta-potty, and in six weeks we could flush and watch Barney on television, just like regular people.

And now, a year later, we survey our inheritance and its possibilities—a greenhouse there, fruit trees over there, a well in the largest shaft, horses for the kids—and we're excited yet subdued. So excited and grateful to be given this opportunity to live the free and open life we really love. And subdued by the knowledge that we almost missed it—we almost sold it—because this land, like the Lord Himself, was at first glance too shabby, too bland, and not refined enough for our tastes.

Sadly, our change of heart came too late for the cow, who did not survive her trauma. We thank God it was not too late for us. And we yearn for Him to develop within us a greater appreciation for our most precious eternal inheritance, Jesus Christ, who is also the portion of every human being. Our wonderful, seeking Saviour who continually labors to draw our distracted gaze to Himself, that we may more fully discern and embrace Him by faith.

* Thank you, Linda Volkov.

Leslie Kay is a stay-at-home wife and mother who lives in Chloride with her husband, Don, two daughters, Rebecca (right) and Jennifer, and dog, Bo. The Kays attend the Adventist church in the big city of Kingman, Arizona.

Standing Tall

KENNETH R. WADE

Betio. On November 20, 1943, this tiny island in the Tarawa atoll was hell on earth, both for the Japanese who garrisoned it and for the Americans who stormed ashore. Tough U.S. marines—young, strong men who just hours before had been laughing, joking, boasting of what they would do on the morrow—cowered now behind the doors of their landing craft, praying that there would be some malfunction, that the door wouldn't open, that their craft would have to return to the ship.

Men, real men, who had stared death calmly in the face a thousand times in imagination, a dozen times in reality, hunkered down and vomited on themselves.

Their craft ran up to within a hundred yards of the beach, and the terror-stricken pilots cut the engines and dropped the ramps, screaming at their human cargo, "Go! Go! Go! Get off!" And men whose only wish was to be anywhere else in the world jumped into the reddening water and swam, waded, and slogged their way, dodging bullets and mortar shells, watching buddies and strangers being cut in half, and listening to the screams of the dying.

Amid the terror and the carnage a few men stood tall, seemingly unafraid. Lt. William Deane Hawkins was one of these. They say he rode his amtrac into the battle standing tall, like the legendary Hector of Troy in his chariot. Friends said he never expected to survive the war. On the twenty-first, after destroying several gun emplacements, he was nailed by a mortal round and died. After the battle the Betio airstrip was named Hawkins Field in his honor.*

As the son of a World War II soldier, I grew up with certain images of what a real man is: tough, strong, ready to fight and kill to defend his country. The boys in our neighborhood played soldiers, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians, killing and wreaking mayhem by the hour. We had little time for the girls, who played house, inviting their dolls to tea parties, picking up their toys, hugging and kissing them, and telling them, "I love you."

My mother started taking me to Sabbath school, where the women in the kindergarten class talked about Jesus and love and other things that didn't interest me. They taught me to sing "Jesus Loves Me." (Men never went into that room. They didn't talk or sing about loving anyone, as far as I knew.)

I soon discovered that other children in our neighborhood knew the song too. And sometimes they would sing it as we played on the swing set in our backyard. But the boys—who were all older than I was—always sang the last line of the first stanza, "He is *weak*, but they are *strong*."

I didn't think it was right to do that. But it helped confirm in my mind that being a boy and growing into a man was about being strong, not about loving people. This Jesus must not have been a real man; certainly not someone a real man would want for a friend.

Even after I gave my heart to the Lord at age 18, I spent much of my time reading about the Old Testament God—a man's kind of God, who spoke by fire and sword—who taught David "to make war," and

strengthened his arms so that he could "bend a bow of bronze" (Ps. 18:34, NKJV).

Only recently have I begun to focus more on Jesus and to discover in Him the manliest of men. He too left the ship standing tall, going to a battlefield where He knew the best possible outcome would be a painful but victorious death, where He knew the worst could happen—losing the kingdom forever.

But He chose to go, not as a tough, strong, well-armed warrior, but as a defenseless baby. He rode up the beach to storm the bastion of the enemy, not inside an armored vehicle or high-tech helicopter, but sheathed in the womb of a defenseless virgin.

Jesus stood tall until the enemy drew Him into his sights and nailed Him.

That took courage. Real courage. And Jesus was a man's man. He dealt with such things as lust, greed, pride, and fear—things that still war against men and destroy them. He stood through it all, and He wants to help real men and women today stand through it all.

* Lieutenant Hawkins' story is told in *Reader's Digest Illustrated Story of World War II* (Pleasantville, N.Y.: Reader's Digest Association, 1969), pp. 237-248.

Kenneth R. Wade is acquisitions editor at Pacific Press Publishing Association in Nampa, Idaho. His oldest son recently graduated from Marine Corps boot camp.



PAINTING BY ROBERT AYERS

My God Is Better Than Your God

One of the most baffling issues facing us as religious beings is the existence of God. No matter where you go, whether in the darkest wilderness of primitive societies,

or to the bright, brash, glittering cities of our most sophisticated civilizations, you'll find people who seek or believe in the Divine.

The outward manifestation of their beliefs in God will be dramatically different. For example, on any given Sunday you may find well-dressed Californians driving by the thousands to an ultramodern crystal cathedral for a chance to hear a charismatic, refined preacher deliver a perfectly modulated sermon televised to a national audience.

At the same time in the hills of Appalachia a small band of simply dressed Christians may be gathering for a most unusual kind of worship. They may be handling live rattlesnakes in an attempt to prove that their belief in God is so powerful that even such venomous creatures can do them no harm.

In another part of the world, perhaps thousands of miles away, is an entirely different group of believers. Dressed in white and exclusively male, this group faces east toward Mecca and prays in Arabic. The building is devoid of any furniture, artwork, pictures, banners, signs, or symbols.

Across an ocean devout Hindus may be entering an exotic temple carved out of massive rocks. After removing their shoes, they enter into the main part of the temple, and ring a bell to alert their god that they have come to worship him or her. They may have brought coconuts, flowers, incense, or perhaps some money. They spend a few moments performing various rituals thousands of years old.

And then there are the millions who go about their day with nary a thought about the Divine. They may not be atheists or unbelievers; merely what we would call secularists. Perhaps they have some vague idea of a god, but religion is not central in their lives.

Which of all these people have a true fix on "God"? Whose God is the real God? Is one person's God better than the other's?

These are difficult questions to answer. When the apostle Paul went up to Mars Hill in ancient Athens (Acts 17:16-34),

he faced the same issue—the multiplicity of gods. Fortunately he came across the notion of the "unknown God," giving him an opportunity to explain his God. It was a brilliant strategy on Paul's part.

Paul leaves a fine example for modern-day Christians.

Capitalizing on the Athenian sense of logic, he captivated his audience with a detailed explanation of his version of the Godhead. In so doing, he spoke to them in their language and idiom. He even quoted Grecian writers and poets who, he said, believed as he did.

Was Paul successful in this approach? The politically correct answer is that he was. But in reality

it wasn't that easy. The Athenians on Mars Hill were no dummies. They saw the weaknesses in Paul's arguments; that is, from their point of view. They were especially skeptical when he preached the doctrine of the resurrection.

These were hard-headed realists. How were they going to believe the words of this unknown orator? Some heckled him. Others were eager to question him further about such radical matters. Dead people rising had as much credibility among the Athenians as the six-day creation theory has in Harvard's Biology Department.

Did Paul's approach work? Not with a majority, but certainly with a few. A dent had been made. A blow had been struck for the unknown God, the God who created us, the God who loves us, believes in us, lives in us. The God who died for us, who rose from the dead for us, and who will come again for us.

Paul made a very conservative apology for the gospel. But he did it in a local, up-to-date (for his time) context. And he got results, meager though they were. In that sense Paul leaves a fine example for modern-day Christians. We cannot afford to witness in silence. We can do it in a reasonable, contextual manner.

Not everyone will believe, but some may. And who knows—that someone may be a future Paul.

Harrison John belongs to a multicultural, multi-ethnic Adventist congregation in suburban Washington, D.C.



California Adventists and Other Radicals

PATTI HANSEN TOMPKINS

Oh, he's one of those California Adventists." I've always been somewhat irritated and amused when I hear this phrase. Irritated because I'm not always sure what it means. Amused because it means different things to so many different people.

What exactly is a California Adventist? I'm a lifelong Adventist. And I'm a native Californian. Does that make me a California Adventist?

One person who has lived in geographically diverse parts of North America said a California Adventist is "the kind of person I'd probably like to know," meaning a progressive, intellectually open-minded person. A Southerner (a sweeping generalization in itself) said it's an Adventist from the northern California vineyard country who takes a little wine with meals "for the stomach's [or heart's] sake." A Midwesterner who admitted that his own default setting is firmly stuck on "conservative" grew up thinking California Adventists were those who broke accepted taboos by wearing wedding rings, eating out on Sabbaths, and drinking coffee.

Obviously the expression "California Adventist" may be a convenient label, but its connotation depends on who you are, where you live, and what your particular experience has been. The label actually says more about the labeler than the labelee.

We like labels, though, because they help us identify people. We prefer to be around people who are a lot like us. We're suspicious of anyone who is different or about whom we don't know enough to label.

The problem with labeling people according to their differences is that it results in an attitude of "us against them." By inference, "I'm right; you're wrong." Once we label someone or something, we define it. And our definitions are often unjust.

We're not simply California Adventists, conservatives, liberals, blueprinters, fundies, or any of those other labels we stick on one another. We are so much more

than any one or two characteristics. We have far more in common than we know, and it's time we started taking notes instead of making labels.

*It's time we started
taking notes
instead of
making labels.*

I believe passionately in individual uniqueness. Each of us is an extraordinary, a mind-boggling combination of physical characteristics, feelings, ideas, hopes, gifts, talents, experiences, and possibilities.

Because God created us this way and designed our planet with such an infinite variety of colors, textures, shapes, etc., I find it incomprehensible to believe that He would desire all His human creatures to look, act, or think alike. I don't believe God demands absolute conformity, but rather gives

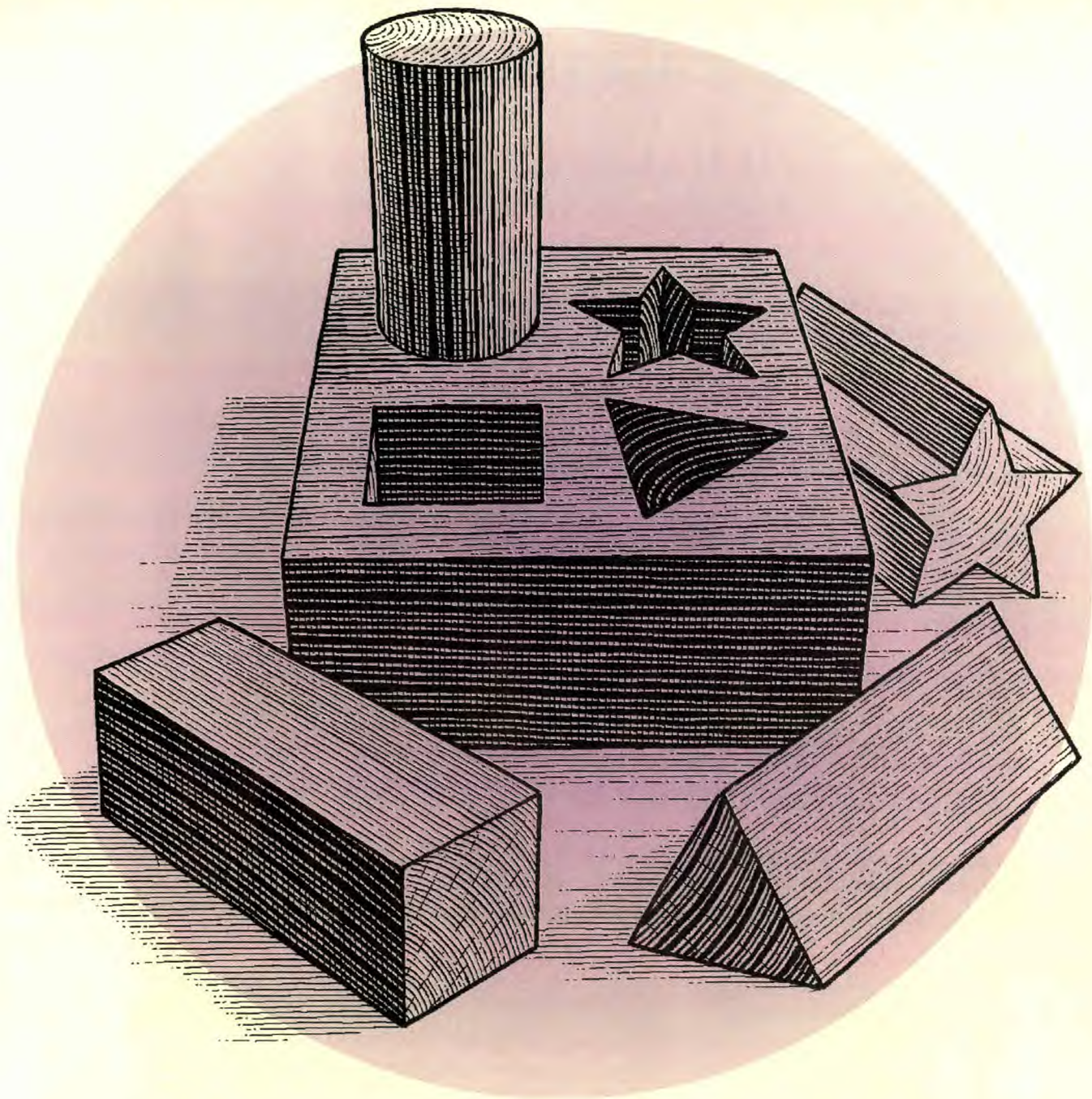
us a lot of leeway through our freedom of choice.

This inevitably leads to all kinds of differences. These differences can either divide us up among neatly labeled boxes, or they can be a catalyst for learning more about each other, about God, and about truth. Searching for truth requires opening our minds to the voices of others; if we have no options, what's the point in searching? In our spiritual journeys we meet others traveling along the same or parallel paths. We see or hear something that clicks. It's a moment of "Aha!" A light comes on, illuminating what we already know to be truth in a watershed of profound meaning.

This will never happen if we stay inside a box, avoiding any potential light from outside, letting our fears turn "different" into "wrong." We appreciate the comfort of our box. It's familiar and safe. But it keeps us from doing what we were meant to do, which is to change the world. We can't change the world unless we're in it, and we can't change anything unless we know what we're up against.

Staying in our own boxes, or putting others in theirs, keeps us from seeing the big picture. And it keeps us from connecting with each other.

When Jesus Christ walked on this earth, He was labeled. He was called a heretic and worse. He truly was a radical. His ideas were literally out of this world. He knew what He



was up against, and He wasn't afraid of the challenge. His love reached beyond all limits to connect with the helpless, the ignorant, the outcasts—people who had very different ideas from His own. Talk about diversity!

So all you self-proclaimed or other-person-labeled conservatives, liberals, California Adventists, whatever, get really radical. Peel off those labels and the limitations they create. Step out of your boxes and celebrate the freedom you have as children of God. Make friends with your fellow travelers along the path to truth.

If you think heaven will be populated with people just like you, think again. You might find yourself living next door to one of those California Adventists.

Patti Hansen Tompkins is a wife, mother, and freelance writer who currently lives in Longwood, Florida.



The Many Facets of Family Spirituality

The truth is, our family has had a hard time with family worship.

There, I've said it. I'm not proud of it, but it's the truth; and it may be that other Christian

families have the same little secret.

There have been stretches when we've done well. But then someone's schedule would change, and we would try to readjust. Maybe it would work; maybe it wouldn't.

The problem is not television. TV isn't much of a temptation here in Kenya. Before Kenya we lived in central California. We didn't have cable, and we didn't have a good antenna, so we went for months with no TV at all. Then came October and the World Series. But you get the idea: our family is not addicted to TV.

It's just that we're involved in a lot of things. And family worship sometimes falls by the wayside. I don't offer a defense, only a confession. We keep trying, but it's a hit-and-miss affair.

Despite this fact, we do have spiritually minded kids. They are comfortable opening up with us and with their peers about spiritual matters. Their conversations reveal a maturing faith and a growing interest in important issues facing them, the church, and the world.

I know families who have done better at regular family worship, but who seem to have less spiritually motivated kids. So I've tried to figure this out. What are the factors within the dynamics of a family that help children to develop a relationship with God? This is not the definitive last word, but these things have been important for our family.

Making the Lord a priority. Even though we haven't been entirely successful in having regular family worship, we've continued to try. The message is probably not lost on our kids.

Openness to unscheduled spiritual reflection. Many life issues have spiritual implications that may go completely unnoticed but can lead to rich discussions. Parents who are sensitive to unscheduled teachable moments can have a major role in guiding their children along spiritual paths. For our family these discussions have often come while driving together or at bedtime.

Service. Turning the focus from self to the needs of others in active, tangible ways makes a major difference in kids' lives.

Singing. "Singing worships" on Friday evenings are special

for us. When our children were young, a singing worship would often come to a peaceful conclusion as sleeping little ones were carried off to bed. More recently we have had the goal of seeing how creatively we can harmonize. Music always feeds the soul.

Enjoying nature. Now, I admit that this isn't fair, but presently my family can drive five miles from home and have a good chance at seeing a pride of lions. However, we have never lived in a place where we couldn't be inspired by

experiencing God through His creation.

Multiple-family events. While our kids were younger, we had the good fortune of being close to several other families in our local church who had similar interests and children of similar ages. Active Sabbath afternoons that included a spiritual focus and involved several families were both delightful and important in making spirituality genuine for our children.

Humor. One of my best family memories is a Sabbath afternoon drive back from Mount Baker, Washington, to our home in southern British Columbia. During the drive we made up endless verses to that classic Sabbath song "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." ("How obtuse to swallow a moose" was one of my favorites.) It was a delightfully funny time for our preschool children, which ended—believe it or not—on a very spiritual note. Spirituality need not always be deeply solemn. It should infect every aspect of family life, including the funny times.

Parents' spirituality. Observing their parents in personal devotions, noticing spiritual books and magazines in the home, hearing spiritual conversations—all of these things send a powerful message to children.

To be real to kids, spirituality cannot be limited to a scheduled time of the day. It must pervade every part of every day. Family worship is important. But so are many other things.

*Spirituality must
pervade every part
of every day.*

Bert Williams teaches at Maxwell Adventist Academy in Nairobi, Kenya.



TV Talk Shows— Enlightenment or Exploitation?

When John Lithgow, star of the television series *Third Rock From the Sun*, won an Emmy award recently, he kissed the statue and exclaimed, "God bless television!" If you've seen some of the talk shows on television during the past few years, you've probably reached the conclusion that this blessing won't be happening any time soon.

Television has the potential of enlightening us about important social issues, such as drug addiction, domestic violence, racial intolerance, and teen pregnancy. It also has the potential of protecting us from unsafe products and consumer rip-offs.

If used rightly, television can improve our lives and even protect us from harm. One of the more socially responsible television talk shows, hosted by Oprah Winfrey, recently devoted an entire hour to taking a look at situations around the house that can hurt or kill us.

Unfortunately, for every helpful talk show program that enlightens and educates us, there seem to be many more that stimulate our curiosity or exploit the strange desire to watch other people's dirty laundry flap in the breeze.

Clement Stone has written: "Whatever the mind can conceive, it can achieve." From a positive perspective, this is an optimistic statement about human activity. But it also says a lot about the folly and depravity so often depicted on some talk shows.

If a talk show producer can conceive of a "Neo-Nazi Skinhead Families" or "My Husband Ran Off With the Baby-sitter" show, there's a good chance there will be a show about these subjects next month. These programs are relatively inexpensive and easy to produce; that's one of the reasons they're so plentiful.

"Would you like to confront your mother, who keeps stealing your boyfriends? Then call our number," said Montel Williams on his show recently. If you call that number, you and your mother might be on national television in just a few weeks.

The height of the talk show "talking frenzy" was marked with tragedy. Scott Amedure volunteered to be on an episode of *Jenny Jones* on March 6, 1995. The theme of that

day's show—notorious for its exploitation of sexual themes—was "Secret Admirers." Scott Amedure came on the show to tell about the secret crush he had for Jonathan Schmitz.

Schmitz, thinking that his secret admirer was a woman, also agreed to be on the show. He was mortified to learn—while the show taped—that his secret admirer was Scott Amedure. Prompted by Jones, Amedure proceeded to tell the audience about his secret fantasy concerning Schmitz. Three days after the taping of that episode, Jonathan Schmitz took a 12-gauge shotgun and shot Scott Amedure to death at point-blank range.

Amedure's death was seen by many as a wake-up call revealing the excesses of television talk shows. Former education secretary William Bennett and Senator Joseph Lieberman, along with others, deplored what they called the "cultural rot" on TV talk shows. Senator

Lieberman declared: "These shows increasingly make the abnormal normal and set up the most perverse role models. It's time for a revolt of the revolted." Several talk show hosts resolved to clean up their program's subject matter and act in a more responsible manner.

The change in some programs, like Geraldo Rivera's, has been noticeable. For others the change has been more superficial. Jerry Springer's executive producer described the "improvements" this way: "Last year [1994] we did a lot of scantily clad women and strippers. This year all of my guests have their clothes on."

Some talk shows examine social issues in a responsible, intelligent manner, without resorting to exploitation—at least most of the time. The overall talk show scene, however, reminds me of the advice Gary Deeb, columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*, gave his readers a few years ago: "Unplug your TV and reconnect your brain."

Tim Ponder is married and has two children. He pastors the Adventist churches in Wilna and Norrisville, Maryland.



ILLUSTRATION BY DYNAMIS GRAPHICS / BILL TYMESCU

Is Midlife Crisis a Myth?

Bob is in his mid-40s and has been having problems lately. During the past year his spending has become less controlled—he's been buying a lot of "gadgets" that he really can't afford. He also admits that he feels dissatisfied with the direction of his life and is unfulfilled in his marriage.

You might say that Bob is having a "midlife crisis."

The midlife crisis is generally described as a period of time around midlife when individuals start to view their lives in terms of the number of years they have left to live instead of how many years they have already lived. This recognition of the unavailability of death is believed to create a sort of panic, followed by a desperate attempt to "get the most out of life"—before it's too late.

Is this situation inevitable? Does everyone go through some kind of upheaval at midlife?

Epidemiologically speaking, the midlife crisis as described here probably doesn't exist. That is, when researchers have looked at large groups of people to find a pattern of crises at midlife, they haven't been successful.

So why is the midlife crisis such a well-recognized term in society? If it doesn't exist, why do we all know someone who's had one?

Some of the confusion probably comes from the label "midlife crisis." Every individual strives to find and maintain identity, and this process is ongoing. Sometimes the most outwardly recognizable struggle happens during the teenage years. Then we call it "teenage rebellion." Sometimes it is most noticeable in adulthood, and we say that the individual is struggling to maintain multiple roles. One person might seem to have it "all together," while another might seem to undergo crisis after crisis. But if a person has one of these crises in midlife, it becomes a "midlife crisis."

Another important factor is that not everyone has the same definition of the term *midlife*. A crisis that occurs at age 35 and another that occurs at age 50 are both likely to be labeled a midlife crisis even though they occur more than a decade apart.

So is everyone destined to have a midlife crisis? No. It's not something we should anticipate with dread, and we needn't be anxious to "get it over with." On the other hand, everyone experiences problems in life—big ones and small ones—and we should be prepared for them.

Sometimes large problems can be avoided by being attentive to small problems. If you find yourself arguing with people more than you used to, no matter your age, this might indicate that a larger problem is growing. If you find yourself unusually tense or especially tired for no obvious reason, you should pay attention.

Depending on the changes you notice, you may want to talk with a close friend, your pastor, or your physician. You'll certainly want to pray about it. The important thing is not to ignore small problems and allow them to become unmanageable.

There are also some things that we can do to manage problems of all types better, as they arise. First we must cultivate our relationship with Jesus through prayer and study. A strong spiritual relationship is one of the best buffers against crises.

We must also make the effort to have good relationships with family and friends. In order to have good friends, we must be good friends (see Prov. 18:24). Although this sometimes takes effort, it's a joy to share in a deep friendship. And having someone trustworthy to talk to during times of crisis is invaluable.

What if someone you know is having a problem? What can you do to help?

The most important thing is to be a supportive listener, and that's not always easy. Often it's when someone needs the love and understanding of friends and family the most that he or she is most abrasive. Caught up in their



own problems, they allow themselves to be selfish and rude, thus driving away the very people whose support they need.

When dealing with someone like this, it often helps to remember that the unkind words are a result of the crisis and probably not intentionally directed at you. If you don't take it personally, it's easier to give much-needed emotional support.

Another important thing: *you* cannot resolve someone else's crisis. The responsibility lies with the

*Do not ignore
small problems
and allow them
to become
unmanageable.*

person who is having the crisis. Pray about the problem, alone if necessary, or with the person—if he or she will allow it. And if you feel that things are out of control, don't be afraid to say so—the problem may require outside help.

Leslie R. Martin is a social and personality psychologist and assistant professor of psychology at La Sierra University in Riverside, California.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL DAKOTA

My Tribute to Harry Anderson

BY LARS JUSTINEN, WHO WRITES FROM NAMPA, IDAHO.

God crafted a sharp spiritual sword with the paintbrush of Harry Anderson. The prolific artist laid down that brush on November 19, 1996, after a long and fulfilling life. For more than seven decades he worked at creating a wealth of paintings that could have represented the lifework of several artists.

For Adventist artists such as me, it is difficult to convey what Harry's work has meant to us professionally and personally. Many people I talk with think of him as a well-known "Adventist" artist. But among his contemporaries Harry was known as "an artist's artist," a source of inspiration and admiration to his own peers.

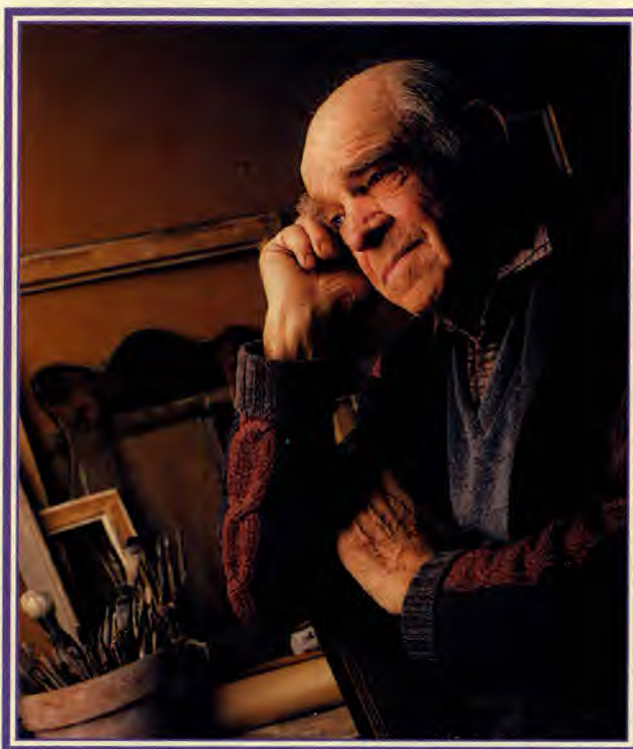
That's why in 1994 he was inducted into the Illustrators' Hall of Fame at the Museum of American Illustration. This honor is among the highest in the art world, and Harry is among only 36 illustrators, such as Norman Rockwell, who were inducted during their lifetime.

I cannot remember a time in my life when Harry Anderson was not a household name. Before becoming an Adventist in her late teens my mother had admired his illustrations in such popular magazines as *Good Housekeeping*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Redbook*. She joined the Adventist Church about the same time as the Anderson family. So from a very early age Harry was a kind of artist hero to me. The more I learned

of this artist and his work, the more I respected and admired him.

Beyond the Brushwork

Harry was much more than a great artist to those who knew him. He was a loving husband, father, and friend.



He possessed that rare and wonderful blend of keen intellect, extraordinary talent, and self-effacing humility. He never entered art competitions that many artists routinely participated in to build their reputations.

One autumn day in 1987 Harry gave me some advice I will never forget. We were talking about the business of painting when he suddenly interjected, "The secret is prayer, the prayer you have before you start a

painting. That's important."

The Anderson home was always open for all who wanted to stop by. This was especially true for young artists, who were always thrilled to get a tour of the venerable master's studio. If you were lucky, he might sketch or draw for you, or invite you for a free art lesson and painting session.

People who knew Harry remember his great generosity. My wife and I cherish several photographic reference pictures Harry gave us from his studio collection that he had used to create some of his well-known paintings. Covered with splatters of paint, these old photos are a wonderful insight into his approach and a tribute to his immense talent.

Once while I was working as the in-house illustrator at Pacific Press Publishing Association, a large wooden crate arrived unexpectedly in the Art Department, addressed to me. I recognized the return address as Harry's Ridgefield, Connecticut, home. Friends in

the Art Department gathered around as I opened the box and found enclosed a beautiful watercolor sketch of a little girl he had painted for a calendar series in the early 1950s.

The mysterious gift had no note or card. I called Harry to thank him and discovered that he had heard about an unfortunate incident that had happened to my wife and me. A few months earlier we had paid our final payment on a 1943 *Good Housekeeping*



The Prince of Peace

Anderson painting we had bought on our honeymoon a year earlier. The painting had been severely damaged while being shipped.

Though Harry was very generous to individuals, his real legacy is his generosity to the church, commencing while Harry was well on his way to a lucrative career as one of America's premiere artists. He was introduced to Seventh-day Adventism by John Stoller, a conscientious handyman who, while installing storm windows in the Anderson home in 1942, shared his faith and invited Harry and Ruth to study the Bible.

After months of thoughtful study they were baptized. Harry gave up his pipe tobacco and accepted the church's health principles. I believe that accounts in part for his long and productive life.

The paintings he created for his new church family were commissioned at a fraction of his usual fees. For example, the famous painting of the little girl on Jesus' lap, entitled *What Happened to Your Hand?* was purchased for \$200; and in the days before copyright protection for artists, that included all reproduction rights as well. Without great remuneration Harry put his immense talents at the disposal of denominational art directors and designers.

The often overlooked Adventist art director Terence (T. K.) Martin collaborated with Harry to create some of the most memorable religious concept illustrations ever executed by an artist. Classic paintings like *The Prince of Peace*, depicting Christ standing at the United Nations building, or a series of stunningly beautiful scenes of heaven. These paintings have been spread all over the world.

Regrettably, in spite of his reduced fees, budget constraints prevented Harry from receiving as many commissions from his church as he might have. Some organizations did discern his unique abilities. The great murals of Christ he painted for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in Salt Lake City, Utah, are considered by many to be among the best religious art pieces painted this century.

Life's New Chapter

In his later years Harry began painting for a few fine art galleries. He had always had an interest in scenes from the western United States. After



Christ at the Sickbed

traveling through some of the Rocky Mountain states, he began a series of paintings depicting landscapes, horses, wildlife, and history. Harry had always been an interpreter of outdoor landscapes and lighting, so it was no surprise when his work quickly became much sought after by collectors and art dealers.

He joined a small cadre of famous illustrators of his day, such as Tom



What Happened to Your Hand?

Lovell, who, having honed their talents in the disciplined world of commercial illustrating, now enjoyed painting the themes of nature simply for the joy of painting.

Though Harry painted all of his subjects with an uncommon excellence, for me no artist has been able to capture the essence of Christ as he did. Harry carried the full weight of his convictions when he painted a picture of his Saviour, and it shows so clearly in his work.

Whether it be the Advocate pleading the cause of the sinner at the judgment seat of God or the Healer reaching gently for a sick child (left), Jesus was always portrayed with unpretentious nobility. The Saviour's eyes are full of tenderness, yet He retains His masculine strength. There is a sinless, Godlike bearing shining through.

Ellen White writes that "a proper illustration of Bible scenes requires talent of a superior quality" (*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 217). God blessed our church with an artist who possessed a superior talent. His religious paintings find no rival in other denominations. Only God Himself really knows the impact Anderson's paintings have had on countless hearts and minds around the world. ■

Why Jesus Suffered, Bled, and Died

BY ANDY NASH, ASSISTANT TO THE REVIEW EDITOR

That's the title of a scripture-laden, soul-damning quarter-page ad bought by "Pastor McKinney" of the Jesus Christ Baptist Church in a recent *USA Today*—just above the personals.

The pastor's intent is clear: save people. And his strategy, familiar. Any survey of highway billboards, the World Wide Web, or Monday night football—particularly during field goals—will yield *some* sort of in-your-face evangelism.

The bigger question is: Does it work?

For some, it probably does. Without hard data, we're left to imagine the proverbial bum on a frozen sidewalk, curling up under an old *USA Today*, stumbling upon the gentle appeal to "repent now . . . or go to hell." Intrigued, he sits up and reads on: "Do not let this chance pass; it may be your last. Tomorrow is not promised." The bum

gives his life to God, becomes a missionary, and, to date, has baptized 4,012 Papua New Guineans, many of them former cannibals.

It happens . . . doesn't it?

But not so quick with the cynicism.

NEWS COMMENTARY

At least Pastor McKinney has the courage to share his beliefs. For those of us who support the friendship evangelism model—the kind, we argue, that Jesus practiced—the biggest pitfall is focusing so hard on the friendship (gotta build their trust, gotta build their trust) that we forget the evangelism. At some point we've got to pull our secular friends aside and speak from our hearts. It might be a year, month, or week from now. Then again, it might be today.

After all, as Pastor McKinney says, "tomorrow is not promised."

NEWS BREAK

Church in Rwanda Grows Despite Insecurity

In spite of the turmoil of war in Rwanda in 1994 and the insecurity that came in its wake, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the country has experienced strong growth and financial support.

According to reports from Rwanda, in the first nine months of 1996 there were more than 25,000 baptisms. It is difficult to determine the true picture of our church membership, said Lowell Cooper, an associate General Conference secretary. He recently returned from a year-end council in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where a state of the church report from Rwanda was presented. It is expected that because of membership and financial growth, three of the local missions will become financially supporting within the next two years and qualify for conference status.

The scars of war and the war's impact on the church are a primary concern of the leadership in establishing a program to promote unity and reconciliation in Rwanda. According to Cooper, Rwandan church leaders emphasized 1996 as a year of reconciliation and unity.

"There have been seminars and meetings of church leaders specifically for this purpose," reports Gordon Gray, Africa-Indian Ocean Division treasurer, who recently returned from the Rwanda-Burundi region.

More activities are planned for the future, he reports. "In Burundi the range of action of church leaders is quite limited at present, because of security risks, but similar efforts are being made," he adds.

The situation in the region continues to be highly volatile, and "indeed, the church is greatly affected and involved in seeking to share the message of reconciliation, pardon, and peace that is a result of Christian love and the acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ," Gray comments.

But "our local leaders are sensitive to their environment," he says, "and are working in ways that encourage reconciliation and the principles of Christian brotherhood."

The Rwanda war deeply affected the Adventist Church. An estimated 10,000 believers lost their lives, and thousands of the nearly 300,000 church members in the country became refugees or fled to areas of safety within the country. The church's university, hospitals, clinics, and schools were all closed.

However, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency maintains its presence and offers aid throughout the region. Most recent reports indicate that many schools in the country have reopened. The Adventist university offers some collegiate-level classes in Kigali. Mugonero Hospital, the site of a horrendous massacre in 1994, is functioning. However, there is a continuing need of

62 Years Ago: Church Leaders Make Peace

In March 1935, 77-year-old Arthur Grosvenor (A. G.) Daniells, former General Conference president, lay dying of cancer at the Glendale Sanitarium.

Reflecting upon the estrangement between himself and William C. White, son of Ellen White and secretary of the White Estate, Daniells asked if the 80-year-old veteran administrator would visit him. The conciliatory interview stands as a model of Christian reconciliation. A small portion:

White: "I long for the time when we can sit down together as we used to do and talk over the progress of God's work."

Daniells: "Brother White, let me have your hand. . . . I have not rendered you very good service."

White: "Oh, don't think of that. Think of what we have done when we were working together."

Daniells: "Yes, Brother White, we worked out some immortal principles, sitting on the deck of that old steamer. . . . I wanted my hand to clasp your hand as one of my truest friends on earth."

As the visit ended, Daniells told his colleague that he knew he had made mistakes in his leadership, but rejoiced that he had been "bound up with the greatest character" to have lived in the modern era, Ellen White.

Two days later Daniells died.

—Bert Haloviak, GC Office of Archives and Statistics

Religion in the News

Religiously, Congress Looks a Lot Like America

The 105th United States Congress, now getting down to business, may not look like the United States in terms of class, race, or gender, but when it comes to religion, members are fairly representative of the nation, according to a new survey of congressional religious affiliations by Albert J. Menedez, associate director for Americans for Religious Liberty.

Roman Catholics remain the largest single religious group in Congress, with 151 of the total 535 members. Catholics are also the largest religious group in the U.S.

Southern Baptists, the nation's second-largest religious group, have the second-largest congressional presence, with 76 members. Other top religious groups include United Methodists (59), Presbyterians (55), Episcopalians (42), and Jews (35), reports Religion News Service.

NEWS BREAK

Adventist medical personnel.—*Adventist News Network*.

New Youth Devotional Book Coming in June

Ellen White's classic work on health reform, *The Ministry of Healing*, will now be available in an edition targeted at teenagers starting in June.



The new abridged version, titled *Heal the World: Begin With Yourself*, will include 75 devotional sidebars to help young readers understand and apply the book's timeless messages. These articles are written by 36 authors, who handle topics such as self-esteem, peer pressure, habits, prejudice, courtship, and nutrition.

The new devotional book is a joint project of the General Conference Health and Temperance Department and the Ellen G. White Estate.

News Notes

✓ The Adventist Development and Relief Agency's Global Village project in Washington, D.C., has been rescheduled for April 1998. The life-size educational

exhibit was originally scheduled for this April. ADRA's cosponsor for the project is the World Bank.

✓ The *Adventist Review's* affiliate journal in Brazil, *Revista Adventista*, began its ninety-third year of publication with a four-color 40-page issue. The journal serves 800,000 Portuguese-speaking Adventists in the South American country.

✓ Samuel Gaikwad, vice president for academic affairs at Spicer Memorial College in Pune, India, was recently appointed college president. Gaikwad replaces W. Gordon Jenson, who became Southern Asia Division field secretary.

✓ More than 1,500 Adventists from the Northeastern Conference gathered February 17-19 in Albany, New York, for the conference's annual workshop for church officers. The workshop is one of the largest meetings of its type in North America.

What's Upcoming

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

Defining Down Deviancy

Once sat on a committee in which a member, an ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister, argued that “as a denomination we should accept monogamous, practicing homosexuals as full church members.”

Though after an embarrassed silence the committee ignored the statement and continued its work, those words represent what has been termed “defining down deviancy”—meaning simply that our nation’s moral fiber has declined so greatly that the once unacceptable is now, if not right, at least not considered worthy of rebuke, shame, or reproach. In other words, the culture is so steeped in sin that it no longer seems sinful, and those who label it as such are “Victorian bigots.”

Just how far have we defined down deviancy?

Last year a Hawaiian court ruled in favor of gay marriages. No wonder. With homosexual practice now merely an “alternative lifestyle,” with elementary school textbooks titled *Heather Has Two Mommies*, and with homosexual characters portrayed on TV, who should be surprised that gay marriages could soon be legally sanctioned?

Had Bill Clinton been running for office in the era of John F. Kennedy, he might never have politically survived the moral scandals that many Americans (including me) today are apparently willing to shrug off.

During the past presidential campaign Bob Dole cited *True Lies*, with Arnold Schwarzenegger (a movie containing nearly 100 killings!), as one film “most friendly to the family.”

Milos Forman’s *The People vs. Larry Flynt* turned the five-times married, drug-addicted publisher of the vile, racist, scatological porn magazine *Hustler* into an American hero and defender of free speech and human rights.

How can all this happen? The answer is easy. We have defined down deviancy.

Why? Though many factors are involved, the problem stems partly from the pervasiveness of postmodernism, which teaches that such concepts as truth and morality, right and wrong—even up and down—don’t exist in any objective, absolute sense, but only as relative, indeterminate, fluctuating notions that each individual and community must define for themselves. Unlike the modern world’s belief in an objective reality that could be understood by human reason, post-

modernism rejects the very notion of objectivity itself, a position that inevitably leads to moral chaos.

After all, if objective truth doesn’t exist, then objective

morality doesn’t either. Standards of right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error, aren’t rooted in any absolute—whether God, natural law, divine law, or even tradition—but are only what either individuals or the community decides, and if the community doesn’t see premarital sex or homosexuality or pornography as wrong, then they aren’t wrong, because there’s no absolute to say they are.

Yet the postmodern premise is

inherently self-contradictory, because to state that no objective truth exists is in and of itself an attempt to state objective truth.

The fact, of course, is that objective truth does exist, and it’s rooted in Jesus Christ, the one in whom “we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). No matter how much our culture denies or ignores them, absolute standards of right and wrong are real, and society can no more by majority rule eradicate them than it can by majority rule vote God out of existence.

And for this reason our nation groans from substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, corruption, mental illness, broken homes, teen pregnancy, crime—everything. The society is being destroyed by the very sin that it denies even exists. You don’t have to believe in God’s law to suffer the inevitable consequences of violating it, any more than denying the existence of gravity will stop you from falling when you leap off a bridge.

Ideas, it has been said, have consequences. Postmodernism is an idea; defining down deviancy a consequence. On American primetime TV, for example, only 6 percent of the sexual acts portrayed are between married partners. And our nation bemoans teen pregnancy?

Defining down deviancy hasn’t pervaded just our society, as the committee member’s words indicate. It’s not only reached the church door; it’s in the pew and pulpit as well.

*Objective truth
does exist, and
it’s rooted in
Jesus Christ.*

Clifford Goldstein is the editor of *Liberty*, a magazine of religious freedom.



Thank You, God, for Knotheads

CHRIS BLAKE

Hi, Mrs. Turner. Would you like me to nail up your soffit for you on the east side of the house?"

The Turners lived west of the Blakes, and their soffit (the wooden sheet on the underside of their overhanging roof) drooped three feet in places.

With Mrs. Turner in her 80s and Mr. Turner an invalid, I figured they might appreciate my help.

They did. After planting my aluminum ladder under the Turners' eave, I hoisted a box of four-inch nails and a hammer. Pressing the sheet up, I drove a nail flush.

To my amazement, the board bounced like a springboard. Three more nails eased into the old wood behind the soffit, but the result was identical. The wood was mush. I tried other places. Nothing solid remained to hold a nail. Then I spotted it. A knot.

I'd watched knots bend my nails before. Knots are typically avoided; the remnant of an original limb is too dense, too resilient. Lacking other options, however, I aimed toward a knot. The wood held. I looked for every knot I could find and pierced each, pinning the soffit securely. The job was finished within 15 minutes. Yet I've thought about the experience ever since.

Some people are like wooden knots. Actually, they're *knotheads*. Knotheads are the chewing gum in the parking lot of life. They're the eggshells in your omelet, the driver with the stuck right-turn signal, the screaming baby in the seat behind you, the snarling Doberman on the path ahead. They're as popular as a paper cut, as subtle as an ingrown toenail.

They're in your church.

Knotheaded church members by nature fight change. For them, whatever its problems, the known past appears rosier than the murky future. They quote the *Testimonies* and Paul Harvey, buck current trends, bark up the same tree, back into a corner. They're intractable. Inflexible. Stubborn.

Thank God for knotheads.

Now, whenever I think of knotheads I think of Jesus and His words (see Luke 21:33), of Paul's obstinacy, of times of trouble and the infamous time of trouble, because above all the time of Jacob's trouble is about being a stubborn knothed, about doing nothing more than clinging to our God and braying, "I will not let You go" (see Gen. 32:22-28).

And whenever those times come, whether we're a goat herder or vice president of operations of the striped goats division, life drives us down to our knees (or past our knees to our faces),

leaving us clutching for something real and godly and lasting.

I knew Geraldine Nagel as a 70-something friend. She wouldn't budge on a letter of doctrine. With a voice like a rusty hinge she'd trumpet, "Righteousness by faith *alone*!"

Gerry's convictions about carpet color in the fellowship hall ran as deeply as her bedrock Adventist beliefs. Though softhearted, she could seem as prickly as a sea urchin with an attitude.

Shortly after our family moved away, a car accident killed Gerry. Her funeral in San Luis Obispo, California, astounded some members. Over the phone my friend Peter told me about it. "The church was *packed*. And there were as many non-Adventists as Adventists! I've never seen so many non-Adventists in our church. She must have been in 10 community service groups."

Apparently Gerry had been as knotheaded about her work as she was about her faith.

I've had encounters with other knotheads.

When my father lay dying, the ravenous cancer having strangled his kidneys, my knotheaded sisters resolutely bathed his excreting skin with a sponge.

When false rumor swirled about me in a rancid fog, a knotheaded colleague called me directly and asked, "Hey, what's up with this?"

When our second son took all night to be born, a knotheaded friend unswervingly stayed the night on a couch in our home with our firstborn.

We need to admit it. In the future, when the espresso stands crumble, when cyberspace implodes, when (not if) the stock market crashes, our feel-good, go-with-the-flow "Christian" friends will disappear like cotton candy in a hurricane.

But we know from the Crucifixion that Christ's body can hold a nail.

When the world completely loses its solid center and we can't count on anyone, the knotheads—stubborn to the end—will be constant and true.

God, help me at the right time, in the right way, to be a knothed.

Chris Blake teaches at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska.





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Adventist Youth on the Move

During the last part of 1996 the following young adults left their homes to minister in other cultures.

They served and they learned. May God richly bless their experience. Schools represented: AUC:

Atlantic Union College; AU: Andrews University; CaUC: Canadian Union College; CUC: Columbia Union College; LSU: La Sierra University; OC: Oakwood College; PUC: Pacific Union College; SAC: Southwestern Adventist College; SAU: Southern Adventist University; UC: Union College; WWC: Walla Walla College

Rodney Dwight Ramey (SAU), to serve as computer teacher, Marshall Islands Mission Academy, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Vero Beach, Florida.

Julie Marie Reaves (SAU), to serve as grade 5 teacher, Pohnpei Adventist School, Kolonia, Pohnpei, of Lowell, Michigan.

Jennifer Kay Reifsnnyder (SAU), to serve as launch nurse, ADRA/Amazon Mission, Manaus, Brazil, of Snellville, Georgia.

Laura Jean Renck (WWC), to serve as grades K/1 teacher, Laura SDA School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Mead, Washington.

Dionne Victoria Roberts (WWC), to serve as engineer assistant, AWR-Latin America, Alajuela, Costa Rica, of Mandeville, Jamaica.

Jennifer Michelle Rogers (UC), to serve as music/choir teacher, Majuro SDA School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Christopher Moses Romero, to serve as computer assistant, Trans-European Division, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England, of Portales, New Mexico.

J. Shannon Rones (AU), to serve as history/art teacher, Ekamai International School, Bangkok, Thailand, of Montclair, New Jersey.

Jonathan Andrew Rosaasen (PUC), to serve as grades 1-4 teacher, JEH SDA School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Redlands, California.

Abel Rosario, Jr. (SAU), to serve as teacher/evangelist, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Collegedale, Tennessee.

Henry Charles Rudolph (WWC), to serve as accountant/secretary, Yap SDA School, Colonia, Yap, of Star, Idaho.

Kim Schalesky (WWC), to serve as grade 7 teacher, Yap SDA School, Colonia, Yap, of Econdido, California.

Summer Shackleton (AU), to serve as grade 8 teacher, Pohnpei SDA School, Kolonia, Pohnpei, of Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Rubani Kundana Shaw (AU), to serve as teacher/evangelist, Korea SDA Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, of Edmonton, Alberta.

Scott Cameron Smith (WWC), to serve as grade 8 teacher, Palau SDA School, Koror, Palau, of Redlands, California.

Stacy Smith (WWC), to serve as kindergarten teacher, Palau SDA School, Koror, Palau, of Redlands, California.

Jason Dean Stirewalt (SAU), to serve as English teacher, McNeilus School, Prague, Czech Republic, of New Market, Virginia.

Julianna Jean Streifling (CaUC), to serve as radio worker, Radio JOY 92 KSDA, Agana Heights, Guam, of Mount Pearl, Nebraska.

Eric Wayne Stubbert (SAU), to serve as history teacher, Majuro SDA School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Sonora, California.

Laura Anne Taylor (PUC), to serve as music/choir teacher, Majuro SDA School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, of Angwin, California.

Sonya Christine Thayer (WWC), to serve as English/Bible teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, of Bozeman, Montana.

Angela Lynn Tucker (Brown), (PUC), to serve as grades 5-8 teacher, Yap SDA School, Colonia, Yap, of Napa, California.

Lorinda Jewell Unruh (WWC), to serve as grades K-4 teacher, Namu SDA School, Ebeye, Marshall Islands, of Paradise, California.

Lucinda Renee Unruh (PUC), to serve as orphanage worker, Vovo Josephina Children's Home, São Paulo, Brazil, of Paradise, California.

Sharie Lynn Uyeyama (WWC), to serve as elementary teacher, Kosrae SDA School, Tofol, Kosrae, Micronesia, of Oakdale, California.

Ruben Luis Vega (PUC), to serve as engineering director, KSDA-FM, Agana Heights, Guam, of San Jose, California.

Reuben Owen Vincent, to serve as agriculturist, ADRA-South Sudan-Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya, of Covington, Pennsylvania.

Matthew Vixie (SAU), to serve as English teacher, Chuuk SDA School, Weno, Chuuk, Truk Islands, of Ridgefield, Washington.

Melissa Ann Voss (UC), to serve as assistant girls' dean, Maxwell Adventist Academy, Kenya, of Edmore, Michigan.

Dana Louise Walker (UC), to serve as English teacher, McNeilus School, Prague, Czech Republic, of Greeley, Colorado.

Rochelle Marie Ward (PUC), to serve as English teacher, Quito Adventist Academy, Quito, Ecuador, of Visalia, California.

Cheri Wehling (UC), to serve as grade 6 teacher, Chuuk SDA School, Weno, Chuuk, Truk Islands, of Washington, Kansas.

Sheryl Angela Wesley, to serve as elementary teacher, Northwestern Adventist Academy, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, of Hempstead, New York.

Kristofor Otto Westermeyer (UC), to serve as youth worker/assistant youth pastor, Canberra City Act, Australia, of Lincoln, Nebraska.

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Washed!

BY ANN BURKE

Some people are born scrupulous. Supersensitive to the way things *should* be. Since they're also sensitive to the way things *should have* been, early on they confront the world with apologies.

They should have been born sooner. They should have cried less. They should have eaten all their strained green beans. These people should have been perfect babies.

Of course, they should have been born into a perfect world.

"Daddy, don't ever sing on the radio!" I admonished my father when I was very young. It worried me that his pitch was not perfect. Whenever a light burned unnecessarily in our house, I turned it off. If undesirable music came over the airwaves, I turned that off too. Even as a small child I gave promise of developing "scrupulosity," a condition marked by disproportionate guilt over shortcomings large and small.

No Peace

Sure enough, during the rigors of young motherhood something went terribly awry.

I hadn't a clue what was wrong. All I knew was that my Friend, Jesus, now towered ominously above me as The Example. Like the perfect law, Jesus was holy and just and good. Paul's famous lament in Romans 7 certainly pictured my plight: the harder I tried, the less I measured up.

Believing the convicting power of the Holy Spirit was the source of my wretchedness, I began confessing sins. But the more sins I confessed, the more surfaced. Peace dangled just out of reach.

Was the Christian life impossible? Was there no hope? Springtime came and went without my smelling the blossoms.

"I think," suggested the kindly pastor to whom I went in distress, "you need to lean heavily on the Lord."

Lean heavily. I pondered his words. Exactly what did they mean?

At last, in desperation I experimented with mercy. Confessing complete helplessness, I leaned on Jesus the Substitute. It was the most important experiment of my life.

But I was not through learning. Through the years I faced

lesser bouts of scrupulosity. Since asking God's forgiveness was not so painful as fearing I *should* have asked, I apologized often, just stopping short of taking the blame for bad weather.

In addition, I was vulnerable to regrets. I wished I were a better mother. I wished I'd been a better daughter. I wished I were a better . . .

One day as I went about my work in this frame of mind, I had an arresting thought. *You are despising the blood.*

What? It was like an idea from outside my head, a whole new perspective on the old torment!

Driving along the freeway later that day, I took time to examine it. As my little gray Honda moved past hill and housing, I wondered, *If I really valued Jesus' blood, why didn't I feel OK?*

The question was laced with hope. I toyed with the possibility of letting my mistakes and inadequacies slip away . . . just slip away. For want of a more original term, it would be like being "born again!"

It struck me that when Jesus saved a guilty woman (John 8) from stoning, He freed her from more than punishment. He loosed her from the binding sense of her imperfections as well.

"Go," He told her.

She'd need to remember her mistakes to the extent that they provided wisdom. (This was implicit in the "sin no more.") But she wouldn't need to subject herself to one stone a day for the rest of her life to make up for the regular stoning.

And neither would I.

"But you were washed," the apostle Paul told early believers (1 Cor. 6:11, NKJV). His words encourage me to banish my old guilty feelings. I have the right to sniff the blossoms every spring, every year of my life.

I'm *washed*. (Amazing, isn't it?)

That's what the blood is for. ■

*If I really valued
Jesus' blood, why
didn't I feel OK?*

Ann Burke is a poet and freelance writer living in Yucaipa, California.

