

ADVENTIST Review

October 16, 1997

Cutting Edge

What a Trip!

Travel agent Nancy Vytlačil's journey to joy

Dying Young

Of Mops and Men

Talkin' 'Bout My Generation



LETTERS

Dying for an Image

Thank you many times over for Gary Krause's "Dying for an Image" (Aug. 21).



Krause writes, "Many children in 'good Adventist families' grow up convinced that they're fat and inadequate."

As an individual with incredibly low self-esteem, I can testify that this is horribly true. To be the brunt of "fat jokes" and made to feel less than normal was not easy.

This did not change appreciably when I entered college and became a minister. Sometimes conference leaders would comment about those who added "weight" to the team. And I well remember entering one of the churches I pastored and being jumped by two women who wanted to sell me the latest diet powders. When I finally walked off, they were screaming at each other as to who got to me first and who would make the sale.

I am making great progress with my health and weight—but not because I have found much acceptance within my faith. Instead, it is through prayer and the understanding and help of the few who really do care and love, regardless of appearance.

—**Lawrence M. Walton**, PASTOR
IRON STATION, NORTH CAROLINA

Subscribing Again

After not taking the *Review* for more than 20 years, we just began subscribing again and really like that you're

covering a wide range of subjects that have interest for every age group. I read the August 21 issue from cover to cover. Keep up the great work!

—**LaVella Pinkney**
VIA E-MAIL

Slow Waters of Holiness

I nearly cried with joy and relief as I read Bill Knott's "Slow Waters of Holiness" (Aug. 21). He is thankful for his heritage, and so am I. It cheers me to know that at least one more person is not blabbering about our "dry 'proof text' past" or bragging about his own "free and loving" wartless body since he shed his "legalism." Thank you for the encouragement.

—**Edward Graves**
VIA E-MAIL

This editorial was like a breath of fresh air. We "oldies" often regret mistakes we would love to remedy, although made in good faith. So it's wonderful to realize that there are some out there who appreciate the instruction we gave in spite of our "legalism," etc.

—**Lauretta Clark**
MCDONALD, TENNESSEE

The Demons Among Us

Ella Rydzewski's "The Demons Among Us" (Aug. 21) exposes just the tip of a massive iceberg. It seems to me that whether the Berlin Wall is going up or coming down, it is deemed a sign of the end. We're crying wolf!

Recently Australia's ABC Radio National broadcaster Phillip Adams interviewed American researchers about millennialism and apocalypticism. They noted that Adventist evangelists interest people in joining the denomination by drawing their attention to crises. Then when these people join the denomination, they find that most members are not interested in the crises but are getting on with a normal life. Consequently, some who think that the message is being ignored attract a following and form a "fringe" group.

To sideline and thus weaken the importance of the plain statements of Jesus, founder and head of the church, about what really is important is to become cultic.

—**Angus McPhee**, PASTOR
ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

Sole Proprietor of Truth?

I applaud Byard Parks's effort in "Sole Proprietor of Truth?" (Aug. 21), to urge Adventists to share our message with others.

However, when he suggests that a majority of Christians will embrace the Sabbath truth, he's ignoring the Adventist understanding of the Sabbath as the testing truth in the last days. I don't agree that the way we measure our effectiveness is in "market share" of the Christian world. The truth will not be in the majority. Most people don't want the truth. They want programs, fellowship, and social activities.

—**Craig Johnson**
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

Parks has the right slant on Adventism. For too long many of us have clutched our doctrines tightly to our bosoms until they have become like Cleopatra's asp. When we learn to cast God's precious seeds abroad with abandon, as if they were a "meadow in a can," they will spring up to bloom profusely in the hearts of true seekers. Jesus' elegant software will then permeate the Internet of humanity so He can reap His harvest and take us home.

—Jean Winter
VIA E-MAIL

I would certainly like to believe that it is possible for members of other denominations to accept the truths of the Bible and stay in their churches to diffuse them. However, I have found a reason for the message of Revelation 18:4: "Come out of her, my people."

I have written leaders of other churches, and when it comes to accepting truth or keeping their membership in their church, it is very difficult to accept truth. One man said, "Technically, you are right" about the nonimmortality of the soul. But as he is a well-known man and Sunday school teacher on television, he would not accept or teach this doctrine.

Most other denominations are not as differing in their beliefs, so it is easier to go from one Sunday church to another or teach a slightly differing doctrine. But to start keeping Sabbath instead of Sunday? Very difficult.

I am in prison ministry, so I teach the Bible only. But I have found that the only place one who accepts all Bible truth can find acceptance is the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

—Elinor R. McFlaflin,
COORDINATOR
POTOMAC PRISON MINISTRIES
MADISON HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA

Moral Dilemmas (cont.)

In Jan Charles Haluska's "In Christ There Are No Moral Dilemmas" (July

NAD Edition), some helpful thoughts were shared, but it falls short of answering some "dilemmas."

His lead story about Dirk Willem escaping from prison but stopping to rescue his pursuer suggests that Willem felt a greater moral obligation to save the man than to run. But Haluska failed to point out that Willem running was in itself a violation of a government law: prison-breaking. And violating government law is a Christian "dilemma" (see Rom. 13:1, 2). Why didn't Willem submissively stay in prison and be burned? He would have violated neither God's nor the authority's command by staying. And his death still could have brought a blessing. Would this be Haluska's advice to Willem?

Second, how is it that fibbing to the gestapo about whether you're hiding Jews is wrong, but hiding them in the basement or secret closet is right? Hiding them is a form of "bearing a false witness" because we are attempting to deceive the gestapo. That too is a moral dilemma. I think I would probably attempt to protect the Jews by deceptive word and a secret closet.

—Terry Pooler, PASTOR
APOPKA, FLORIDA

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Note: Please include city and state/country with all letters, including those sent via E-mail.—Editors.

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ADVENTIST Review

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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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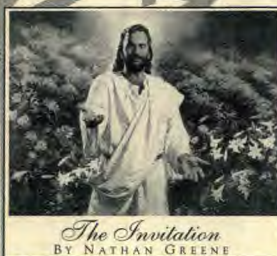
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Pray for the Shepherds

BILL KNOTT

Unwritten rules are often more compelling than the kind we codify on paper. You hardly need a placard to remind you not to run in the White House or drop water balloons from atop the Eiffel Tower or play dominoes in church. Some things go without saying, so they say.

One unwritten rule for editors declares: "Never write about your office." This is good counsel, given that those you might embarrass also have some skill for getting into print. Even more compelling is the maxim "Never write about the things in your office." Who cares that the copy machine is notoriously sporadic or that fluorescent lights can drain the vitals out of healthy 40-year-old men? When writers descend to essays about what decorates their cubicles, friends are known to murmur, "Obviously, the walls are closing in. The job must really be getting to him now."

Knowing all of this, I persist.

Hanging on the (unmoving) wall opposite my desk is a large framed print called "Where Walla Walla Worships," given to my wife and me as a farewell gift by friends when we moved east this past June. It portrays facades of nearly 40 sanctuaries, Adventist and otherwise, in which the valley's residents seek truth and fellowship.

It's an illustration, not a work of art. But it achieves what illustration seeks, for when I look a dozen times a day at all the crowded towers and steeples, faces rise in front of me—faces for whom I pause and pray.

There is David, pastor at Pioneer United Methodist, whose passion for the Saviour and the Scriptures warms his pulpit, warms his song, and warms my heart.

Doug too comes in view—arm about the shoulder of a tough Latino kid who just tonight accepted Jesus because this nontraditional pastor puts God's love on the line—the crosswalk line—of the streets of Walla Walla.

Bill smiles back at me from the dark stone tower of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. In his office, near a hundred times, I have mixed my prayer with his.

Ron appears: gentle; wise; always worth waiting for. His sheep at Christ Community Fellowship out by the highway are

led by one who understands why both he and they need green valleys and still waters.

Jim grins from the edges of the print. (His New Life Assembly of God meets near the river on the outskirts of town). Central to his daily work is the holy *joie de vivre* of a man whose tongue God has blessed with caring and with laughter.

For the past two years I met these five every Thursday after-

noon at 3:00. And now, 3,000 miles away, I still do. In their fellowship, in their disciplined, persistent prayer for me, I've tasted true community in Christ, even though we draw on fully five distinct faith heritages. Each of us brings some gift needed by the others: song, Scripture, Sabbath, service, Spirit. And each of us still takes away fully five times what we brought.

It hasn't always been easy, either in the doing of it or the thinking about it.

A seventh member chose to leave the group after months in which we struggled with his sin. More usually, I struggle with my familiar ways of looking at other Christians. With whom do I find fellowship as a Bible-believing Sabbathkeeper? The cultural Adventist with whom I share a day of worship and perhaps a common diet, but who long ago lost his interest in the Second Coming and his trust in the authority of God's Word? Or with these brothers who direct me every week into a deeper submission of my life to the verities of Scripture, but who now worship on a different day and under different creeds?

In their company I see dimly the shape of things to come. The sheep of many folds who hear and know the True Shepherd's voice (John 10:27) will be those who heard it first in Scripture, who pledge themselves to be obedient to everything He says. Adventists share with millions of Christians a deepening seriousness about the Bible—a willingness to trust ourselves and our futures to the Word that is "quick to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12, RV). My confidence grows daily that He who began a good work in them, and in me, will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Until then, we pray to keep each other honest, surrendered, and committed. That should be enough.

"In their fellowship, I've tasted true community in Christ."



Imaging

Image is everything. Individuals who are involved in businesses, educational institutions, churches, and hospitals know that. In fact, enterprising consultants have millions in their bank accounts from organizations who seek to inspire their employees with the importance of a good image.

CEOs know that a credible image implanted in the minds of customers, constituents, or members is a major assurance of success. There's the negative threat, too. You'll remember the burger scare, the Tylenol fright, and now the Florida mosquito bite fear—and the millions of dollars spent to recover from lawsuits, bad publicity, and possible business annihilation.

We have all experienced times when we have vowed never to buy a certain product or enter a specific store, and maybe some vow they'll never attend *that* church again.

One restaurant chain is off my list. A male offspring and I were on an-across-the-United States journey. We stopped for breakfast, and as the bill was paid, the cashier asked if we had enjoyed the meal. I had not. My hash browns were burned, and a spider had crawled on my glass.

A free breakfast lessened the annoyance, but the memories have not vanished even after the passing of more than a few years. (My traveling companion suggested we carry spiders along to lighten the food bill).

My pastor-husband was asked to shepherd a certain church, and it was our first Sabbath there. A lady was giving a report of mission endeavors when an older member seated near the back called out, "Can't hear ya." And another member, from the very last row, boomed, "Move to the front, then, idiot." Of course, this church was filled with wonderful Christians whom we love and loved, but as we reminisce, what memory surfaces first?

The word *image* reigned rather prominently in ancient Egypt and was seen as the highest form of example. Pharaohs were called "the living image" of the supreme god, and the Rosetta stone says the youthful Ptolemy was the "living image of Zeus."

Imaging, though, was God's idea. He had hoped the earth would be populated with people who looked like He looked, and acted as He acted. To crown His act of

Creation, God decreed, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26).

It was done. Man stood straight and tall in his Maker's image. Handsome, muscular, intelligent, perfect. Woman was formed too, and Creation was complete. Visualizing Eve as beautiful, graceful, and brilliant is not difficult, and Adam loved her instantly. Two humans, created in the image of their God, stood ready to pattern their lives after His.

It was a good plan. Man and woman could have lived together with their families, and their families with their families, happily forever. A perfect world. All that was required was to remain in God's image. Nothing more.

With the emergence of sin, God must have been tempted to annihilate Adam and Eve, and subsequently, the rest of us. But his love lingered and He covenanted that sin would not obliterate humanity forever (Gen. 3:15). God dreamed of you and me (and everyone else) emulating His image.

The challenge is to emulate God's image outwardly and inwardly. We often find the visible easier to change than the inward. Fortunately for us, it is "the glorious destiny of every Christian" to unite the human with the divine (see *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 576).

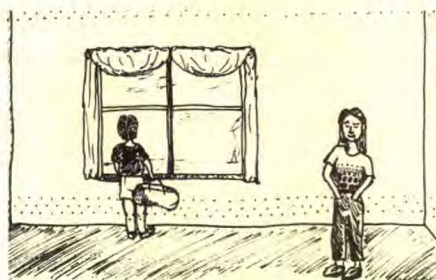
What a gift! Symbolically, the robes of light worn by Adam and Eve (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45) before their sin were returned to them as robes of the perfect righteousness of Christ as they wished to adopt His image in their now-sin-darkened hearts. The promise for us is that as we behold the Lord, we are changed into the same image (1 Cor. 15:49).

*It's the glorious
destiny of every
Christian to unite
the human with
the divine.*



GIVE & TAKE

ADVENTIST SKETCHES



"The Sabbath school teacher said that Jesus might come this afternoon."

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ADVENTIST LIFE (KIDS, GHOSTS, AND ANGELS)

When our son Steven was in kindergarten two years ago, he had never participated in Halloween-type activities. I talked with his teacher about the upcoming Halloween party at school and with my husband. Together we decided that some activities were acceptable for him to participate in. We decided to let him dress as an angel—but of course he wanted to be a ghost.

After two weeks of going around and around, the dreaded day arrived. Going out the door, he again mentioned being a ghost. Tired and aggravated, I said, "Steven, you are not a ghost! We don't do ghosts!" Without hesitation he looked over his shoulder and replied, "Then I will be the Holy Ghost."

—Lois Beavers, Keystone Heights, Florida



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

One Sabbath evening for bedtime stuff, my daughter-in-law Terri was playing a game of Bible Builders on the computer with her 6-year-old, Theron. The conversation turned to the Godhead. Theron wanted to know who the Holy Ghost was. Mommy explained that the Holy Ghost was just another name for the Holy Spirit.

Theron thought for a moment. "Oh," he said, "maybe we call Him the Holy Ghost because He makes us all white inside."

Mommy didn't see any need to argue with that theology!

—Ruth G. Calkins, Tustin, Michigan

We had been having some really windy days, and I noticed what looked like a plastic bag in a nearby tree. Getting the attention of my 4-year-old grandson, I said, "Look what the wind blew up into our tree."

"No, Grandma," he said. "It didn't come from down below. It came from heaven. It's an angel costume. They had too many and threw one down here."

—Bonnie Johnson, Plymouth, Minnesota

AT EASE



HANGIN' OUT: Pathfinders from the Allegheny East Conference try to keep cool at a hot 1997 Columbia Union Camporee. Photo by Dick Duerksen.



PHOTOS BY ANGIE NASH

Booking My Flight to Heaven

BY HUI CHA (NANCY) VYTLACIL

GOD IS AWESOME! I mean that sincerely. My journey with the Lord has brought me through many trials—tragedy, hardship, and emotional pain—even before I knew Him. Yet God knew me and loved me. He gave me another chance. And this time I realize that He's the only one I can depend on.

Early Pain

I was born in South Korea, but my mom died while I was still an infant. Since my rural area had nothing bottled, my oldest sister (then a teenager) took me to different women in the neighborhood to be nursed. As I grew up watching other children interact with their moms, I knew that a mother's touch and after-school hot-baked cookies wouldn't be part of my life. Still, I learned a lot about Mom—and how neat she was—through my sisters, neighbors, and especially my dad.

Dad was my buddy. I was the youngest child—his girl. He was getting old, and his eyesight was bad. I would read letters to him from my sisters, who had left home. In contrast to my aunt (a famous fortuneteller), Dad taught me to pray and occasionally took me to church, giving me an early glimpse of God.

I always thought Dad would be there to care for me. But when I was 10 he died. Not only had I lost my dad; I'd lost his memories of my mother. Suddenly people were calling me an orphan.

Living In America

A couple years later I came to live with my sister Si Man in El Paso, Texas. I couldn't speak or write any English, but made friends with a blond-haired, blue-eyed girl named Sally, who was my age and lived across the street. Sally helped me to speak and write English. Even though I didn't know Jesus then, I know He

blessed me with such a good friend. More than 20 years later we're still close.

When I was 13, I started attending a Catholic church, mainly because it gave me a sense of warmth and belonging. Then a couple years later Si Man was murdered. They never found

who killed her, and I was terrified. Si Man had been like a mother to me.

Nightmares plagued me every night, and I felt I couldn't take any more. I had told myself that if I lost one more person in my family, I would go crazy. Although I attended church, I didn't know much about God. But I still prayed to Him every night, asking Him to protect and help me.

When I was 20, I married a man I'd dated in high school. We lasted only 18 months. He wanted the all-American dream marriage—complete with children, a house, two cars, and a cat. I wasn't emotionally ready for that responsibility.

I started going to bars and dance clubs with my girlfriends, enjoying the freedom and fun. I didn't cheat on my husband, but I felt excited going out whenever I wanted and meeting new people. Soon I asked my husband for a divorce.

For months I kept going to bars, drinking, and partying. Yet I always felt lonely returning late at night to an empty home.

A Second Marriage

I dated another man for two months; then we decided to marry. He came from a Catholic background, but wasn't practicing. Meanwhile, I got baptized into the Catholic Church. Our marriage, though, wasn't what I'd hoped. Depressed, confused, and insecure, many times I wanted to die, and I was sure my new husband was going to leave me.

On the surface I had everything—youth, health, marriage, freedom. I was financially secure working for a major airline, which offered me first-class travel anywhere, anytime. I kept going to church every Sunday, yet something was missing. I still felt unfulfilled.

We moved to Maryland in the summer of 1992. The weather was hot and humid, and I was pregnant. I had terrible morning sickness and had to drive 90 minutes each way to work. One day I was driving down the Capital Beltway and saw a sign, "Drive to Survive." It suddenly hit me that I was barely surviving. I realized that the commute to

my airline job was putting too much stress on my pregnancy—so I quit.

During this time I had met a Jehovah's Witness woman who began teaching me her understanding of the Bible. I went to her church and meetings for six months, but eventually stopped attending. They had said I needed to repent from my sins. *But I'm not a sinner*, I thought. *I don't do anything so bad or wrong that I should be labeled a sinner*. Yet this woman had taught me something special. She had challenged me to learn about the Bible, and for the first time I began to study it for myself.

Several months later I had surgery on my neck. The doctor advised me not to lift anything heavy and told me to avoid any kind of stress. Soon after, one of my sisters also underwent major surgery—twice. I was really concerned for her, so my husband and I drove to upstate New York to visit her. I became so ill and distraught that three days after we returned home, I miscarried.

I sank further into depression. I didn't want to deal with *anyone*. I started remembering how Dad had described my mom. I really missed her and longed for her to comfort me.

One day, after a short business trip, I pulled into our apartment parking lot, looked up at our apartment on the first floor, and noticed that my living room draperies were missing. Inside, I saw all my husband's belongings were gone. All that remained was my little Yorkshire terrier. Feeling helpless, I broke down.

"Why, God?" I asked over the next few weeks. "Why did I have to lose everyone in my life? Why do I have to struggle?"

Spiritual Awakenings

Shortly after this I met some Korean people who attended a Pentecostal church. Each Friday night at their church I would sing—and cry. When I felt depressed my heart thrilled to read Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I



AISLE OR WINDOW? The author (left) at her General Conference travel office.

live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (NIV). And for the second time I got baptized.

Then, feeling as if God had opened another spiritual door, I joined the United Pentecostal Church. These people rejected the Trinity, so I was baptized a third time in the name of Jesus only. I was happy there, learning about Him. It was an important time for me, because the church added discipline to my Christian life. Although they were very strict in their lifestyle, the members loved the Lord.

Then one day a flyer from Amazing Facts came to my home. My boyfriend, Stephen, and I were attracted by the topics listed (though we thought the flyer looked a little demonic with the horned dragons and other wild-looking animals).

The meetings were held in a high school auditorium, and we took our Bibles just to be sure of what was being preached. When I heard the truth about the Sabbath, I had a hard time accepting it. For at least two months I attended church on both Saturdays and Sundays. Finally, after studying God's Word about the Sabbath more and more, I felt convicted.

Although I was already a Christian, I felt that accepting God's Sabbath was a major turning point in my life. I wanted to symbolize that through baptism—my fourth. So in October 1996 Pastor Paul Gates baptized me in the Linthicum (Maryland) church, and I became a Seventh-day Adventist.

Life as an Adventist

Some people may look critically at me for being baptized four times. Looking back, I can see that God reveals to us only so much at a time. He knows how much we can handle. All of the churches in my life helped me in my spiritual journey. It's just that

God has convicted me that the Seventh-day Adventist Church stays closest to the Bible.

I love my Adventist brothers and sisters. The church has such wonderful things—seminars and study guides and Bible studies and Sabbath school. But we don't talk about God with each other enough. We shouldn't be



CLOWNING AROUND: Baptized just a year ago, Nancy is very involved at both the Linthicum, Maryland, church and the New Hope church in Laurel, Maryland. Here she enjoys a Wednesday night social with Kim Goldstein (seated) and Darlene Weber, members at New Hope.

ashamed of the gospel. We shouldn't be afraid to praise the Lord in our worship services. We shouldn't be afraid to praise the Lord in our daily lives.

After my baptism I started sharing God's love with everyone I met. As I did, my faith and my love for God got stronger. I knew many friends and other people who were hurting, and because of my background I could relate to and communicate with them. I tried to tell them about God's love and that Jesus died for them.

I started telling a coworker how God changed my life. She was going through a difficult time, but she wasn't ready to accept the Word of God. Instead of growing stronger, she complained to our boss about me. My boss forbade me to pass out literature about God, and told me to stop speaking about Him. I was hurt and felt Satan had won a battle at my place of employment. I couldn't talk about

God, but everyone else could talk about anything. I thought America was supposed to be a land of opportunity and freedom of religion.

Just three weeks later God answered my prayers, helping me find a job at the Seventh-day Adventist world headquarters. Now, instead of starting my day with coffee, I get motivated through the morning worship in the chapel. I enjoy the worship so much. It really gives me encouragement when my spiritual life feels weak. And in the travel office I'm able to enjoy gospel music and sermons while I work. So I'm not only organizing travel itineraries—I'm learning more about God.

I can't keep quiet about Him. Visit my office, and you'll see banners on the wall that cry out "Praise the Lord" and "Hallelujah." I'm full of joy and happiness, and I'm on fire for Him. I've heard that some people were concerned about me as a new Adventist coming to work at the General

Conference. They thought that I might become discouraged or disillusioned when I saw people making mistakes. But my eyes are on Jesus. None of us are perfect. We're all sinners in need of our Saviour.

For more than 10 years now I've been in the travel business. I'm constantly making reservations for people to go to beautiful, peaceful, tranquil, faraway places. Now that I've gotten to know God, I know that Jesus is booking my flight to heaven, the best place of all. ■

Nancy Vytlačil writes from Odenton, Maryland.

Doing Time

SANDRA DORAN

Recently I was approached by a woman looking for an educational consultant to conduct some workshops for prisoners. "Do you know anything about inmates?" she asked me.

"Inmates?" I responded.

"I have boxes of letters from inmates. Poems written by inmates. Tapes of songs recorded in prisons. Artwork, prayers, photos, bookmarks. Inmates pray for me, inspire me . . ."

"Inmates?" she queried again.

I stopped the warm flow of words, suddenly realizing how difficult it would be for her to understand. An unlikely collection of people are woven among those who have added meaning to my life through the years. Inmates. Psychiatric patients. People unable to hold down a job. The abused, the castoffs, the underconfident, the guilt-stricken . . .

Being a columnist for the *Adventist Review*, I find myself on the receiving end of odd-shaped letters and packages when I least expect them. The cover of a candy dish wrapped in tissue, with a Bible text stenciled on the cover. Photos of homes and children, pets and schools. Words written from the heart.

I suppose I treasure these things so highly because of the refreshing honesty that accompanies them. Unlike the papers written by my students, laden with phraseology painstakingly estimated to bring in a high grade, *Review* correspondents write only to be understood. Such sincerity always restores my faith in the integrity of humankind.

I would like to share this month the wisdom and faith of those who have taken the time to correspond with me from behind walls of incarceration.

"I have made so many sporadic, impulsive decisions in my life," began one letter. "This has resulted in two failed marriages, no self-esteem, and years in prison. I am very grateful for your articles. I pray that other children may not have to go through the pain and frustration that I experienced as a child. Life in prison is no way to have to come to grips with who you are and where you have gone wrong."

Another person wrote, "By my return address, you can see where I'm at now. I want to say that, no, I haven't lived a life of crime. I made one mistake. I've been paying for that mistake for a few years now, but I'm due to get out next month.

With all this time to think, I've gotten to know myself better. Most of all, I've learned that Christ is all-forgiving. Because He forgives me, I can forgive myself."

*All of us would
do well
to have some
time alone.*

"Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! God is so good!" enthused another correspondent. "In my lonely wanderings I've been incarcerated five times, but I guess somebody, somewhere, is always praying for me. In darkness and ignorance I've fallen many times, but Jesus is always there to pick me up. I long for a home and people to love me. I am praying for you three times a day."

And finally this revealing note: "I must be honest and tell you I am in prison, writing from a tiny cell. I am 78 years old and am anxiously awaiting that glorious morn when the trumpet shall sound. I was baptized by H.M.S. Richards 26 years ago. Obviously, I have not been the member I should have been. Yet, glory to His wondrous name, I have a Saviour whose love is everlasting! I wish I could write more, but must conserve paper—especially lined."

Reading such letters, I am lifted by the optimism that flows from the pens of those whose lives are measured in eight by 10-foot enclosures. Perhaps all of us would do well to have some time with all of the trappings stripped away—the telephone unplugged, the printer offline, the lined paper reduced, the television silenced, our wallets removed, the CDs packed up, the company gone home, the lights turned off, the door closed. Alone with our conscience for a companion, our God for a solace, our minds our only freedom, might we too set our sights on things above?

Thanks, inmates, for sharing from the heart. For praying for the rest of us. For not wishing your lot upon our children. For selecting a sheet of conserved paper and sending your hope in Christ through the U.S. mail.

As I prepare to close this article, my computer runs its automatic backup system. I wait, suspended in time for five seconds, while technology flashes the message: "Word is saving Inmates." I can think of no better way to draw this subject to a conclusion.

Sandra Doran is an educational consultant, author, and speaker. She teaches at Providence College in Rhode Island.



Dying Young

Their lives were short; their influence lingers.

BY ROBERT G. WEARNER

SOME MEN AND WOMEN ACCOMPLISH more for God in a short span of years than others do in long lives.

Examples of this paradox are as old as the first family to inhabit the earth. Genesis 4 tells us that righteous Abel was murdered by his older brother, Cain. Yet in Hebrews 11 Abel occupies first place among the many heroes of faith. His years were short, but his noble choices still inspire. Though dead, "he still speaks."

The greatest example, of course, is Jesus Himself, crucified at age 33. But consider how much self-sacrificing love He packed into that short lifetime.

Throughout the Christian Era we find illustrations of brief lives that had far-reaching influence. I'm reminded of one example every time I travel into Chattanooga from my home on the edge of the city. One of the main thoroughfares is Brainerd Road, and one section of the city is called East Brainerd. This name is taken from the Brainerd Mission, established in this area to witness to Native Americans almost 200 years ago. Tennessee historians say that the mission was named in honor of David Brainerd, apostle to the Native Americans of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts.

Born in 1718, Brainerd spent only five years preaching Christ to the Indians before he contracted tuberculosis and died at age 29. New England preacher Jonathan Edwards published Brainerd's diaries, which later

inspired such missionary giants as William Carey and Henry Martyn to dedicate their lives to Christian mission.

We can also find numerous stories from Seventh-day Adventist history of those whose brief lives nevertheless made lasting contributions.

One of the better known is Annie Rebekah Smith, sister of longtime *Review* editor Uriah Smith. Three hymns she composed appear today in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* ("How Far From Home?" No. 439; "I Saw One Weary," No. 441; and "Long Upon the Mountains," No. 447). Ten of her hymns appeared in the older *Church Hymnal* published in 1941.

Born in West Wilton, New Hampshire, in 1828, Annie accepted Jesus at age 10 and joined the Baptist Church. Later she, her brother Uriah, and her mother accepted the Millerite message of Jesus' soon return.

Annie shared in the keen disappointment of other Adventists when Jesus didn't appear in October 1844. Determined to be useful, she prepared herself to be a teacher. In 1851 she attended a meeting conducted by Joseph Bates and accepted the Sabbath message.

After submitting a poem titled "Fear Not, Little Flock" for publication in the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Annie was asked by James White to join his editorial staff. Three years later the magazine published news of her death from tuberculosis at age 27.

Annie Smith's beautiful hymns of the Second Advent



Presumed self-portrait of
Annie Rebekah Smith

continue to minister to the movement she loved. As with other faithful witnesses, "though dead, she still speaks."

Another example from early Adventism is that of Mary Andrews, teenage daughter of John Nevins Andrews. Her father's many years of service as evangelist, editor, and administrator made him the natural choice when the General Conference sent its first missionary to Europe in 1874. Mary's mother, Angeline, had died two years earlier, and the 12-year-old accepted more than a child's responsibilities when she and her brother, Charles, joined their father sailing from Boston. She not only took her mother's place in domestic duties, but also helped out with the editorial work for the new French language missionary journal her father began.



Mary Andrews

In the French-speaking section of Switzerland where they lived, Mary immediately displayed a gift for languages. She soon spoke French like a native, joining her father and brother in a promise that they would speak only French at home, with but one hour a day reserved for English. Her father soon depended on Mary's superior knowledge of French to produce an excellent magazine. She worked as copy editor, while Charles set the type.

Less than three years later Mary fell seriously ill. She traveled with her father to the General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1878. Though Dr. John Harvey Kellogg did his best to save her life, Mary eventually succumbed to tuberculosis at age 17.

Her brief term of service helped to

pioneer Adventist work in Europe. Certainly her influence lives on.

Records show that many Adventist families of that era lost a loved one to what was then known as the "white plague," including even the White family.

In 1876 Mary Kelsey married W. C. (Willie) White, son of Ellen and James. Mary showed considerable literary talent and was soon editing book manuscripts and even serving as editor of the *Youth's Instructor*.

When her mother-in-law labored in Europe from 1885 to 1887, Mary joined Willie in working in the mission office at Basel, Switzerland, taking time to raise two daughters born in Europe. Like Mary Andrews before her, Mary Kelsey White also contracted tuberculosis and died of the disease in 1890, but not before leaving her mark on

the growing Adventist Church in Europe.

Adventist missions in China also owe much to young adult pioneers. While the Advent message was first introduced to eastern Asia in 1888 by aged layperson Abram LaRue, it was the arrival 16 years later of four physicians and two nurses that gave momentum to the effort in the province of Henan.

Maude Thompson was born in Michigan in 1880 and studied medicine at the American Medical

Missionary College in Chicago. She graduated in the spring of 1902, the youngest member of her class, and a few weeks later married a classmate, Harry W. Miller. Within a year they accepted a call from church headquarters to work in China, arriving in October 1903. Both were then in their early 20s.

Less than a year after arriving, the young couple was overwhelmed with sadness when twin sons died shortly after birth. In her grief Maude laid plans to help provide better medical care for the children of China. Before she could implement those plans, however, she succumbed to a combination of work-induced exhaustion and sprue, a deadly tropical disease.

Her last words were "It will not be long. I shall awake in the New Jerusalem."

She was not quite 25 years old.

Maude's time of service measured less than a year and a half, yet these months dedicated to the Master helped to open up gospel and medical work in China.

Her husband, Harry, later became famous as "the China doctor." A surgeon, administrator, and soybean product pioneer, he lived just short of a century.

Adventist missions on Europe's Iberian peninsula were launched early in this century by two brothers from California, Walter and Frank Bond.

After first working among Spanish-speaking settlers in nearby Arizona, they volunteered for work in Spain, arriving in Barcelona in 1903.

Walter and Frank concluded that the best method to begin

Adventist work in Spain was through



Mary Kelsey White with daughter

education, and they opened a boys' school in Sabadell within months. A year later three persons were baptized through their efforts.

Walter took a special interest in publications, and soon several colporteurs were selling books and distributing tracts. By 1911 John Brown from Mexico came to direct the literature work. Eduardo F. Forga from Peru and several others joined the band.

Walter was soon elected director of the Spanish Mission, a position he held until 1914 when he succumbed to an attack of peritonitis at age 35. His brother, Frank, continued to labor on in the region for another decade. History remembers them as the vanguard of Adventist missions in Spain.

In the early years of this century a young Adventist couple, Norman and Alma Wiles, were sent to the New Hebrides (now called Vanuatu), an island group east of Australia. In 1914 Norman and Alma accepted the challenge to carry the message of Christ to Malekula, second-largest island in the group, home of the notorious Big Nambus tribe. The young couple spent four lonely years treating the sick, pacifying warring tribes, teaching children, and preaching Christ.

Tragedy struck when Norman fell victim to blackwater fever, a particularly violent form of malaria. Alma had to lay her 27-year-old companion to rest in a crudely dug grave while a Christian native conducted a brief burial service.

But Alma didn't give up. She returned to the United States, earned a nursing degree, and subsequently volunteered to serve in both Nigeria and New Guinea.

The sacrifices of Norman and Alma Wiles soon became a legend in Australian mission history. Their story, known as the "Malekula saga," inspired hundreds of young people to dedicate their lives in service. Today near Norman Wiles' resting place stands a fine church filled with worshipers who sing praises to God each Sabbath morning.

Norman Wiles would be pleased.

It would be tempting to include only stories of young adult missionaries who died of natural causes. But young Adventists in mission service have also been victims of violence.

In 1931 Victoria Miller, 29, and Vera White, 30, were working with their husbands in the Yunnan Mission in south China. Victoria's husband, Claude, directed the mission, while Vera's husband, Dallas, served as treasurer. Their three years of service together had been greatly blessed by God.

Early in the year Claude and Dallas set out on a 200-mile journey to Talifu to carry on gospel work, traveling on foot since no other method of transport was available. During the two months their husbands were gone, Vera and her two small daughters shared a house with Victoria for mutual support and encouragement. The two women visited area residents, tending to physical and spiritual needs, while Vera, the nurse, also treated patients in a dispensary.

Disaster struck one night when an assassin burst into the house and brutally murdered the two women. Asleep in a crib in an adjoining room, Vera's daughters somehow escaped injury.

While the deaths of these two young women shocked Adventist workers in south China, the heart-broken husbands determined to carry on. Many baptisms followed in the region, especially among the Miao people.

Yet another story of early martyrdom comes from the Solomon Islands. In November 1965,

Brian and Valmae Dunn, graduate nurses from Sydney Sanitarium, left Sydney to work in a mission hospital on the island of Malaita, thrilled that they could fulfill their dream of becoming medical missionaries on a primitive island. They set to work quickly, treating the sick and assisting in the carpentry work of the hospital then under construction.

On the night of December 16 an assailant attacked Brian and pierced his back with a crude spear some eight feet long. After an agonizing journey in search of help, Brian died on December 19. He was 25 years old and had served only three weeks.

Their years were brief. But their influence for good will be eternal.

To paraphrase the apostle: "And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Ellen White's son Henry; of Herbert Smith, a young pastor gunned down by bandits in south China; of Elmer Coulston, a young physician who died of diphtheria in China's far north; and of so many others who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises. . . . Of whom the world was not worthy" (see Heb. 11:32-38). ■



Left, Victoria and Claude Miller; right, Vera and Dallas White with daughters.

Robert G. Wearner is a retired pastor and missionary who served in both North and South America. He writes from Ooltewah, Tennessee.



Sirens



ROSY TETZ

What's the first thing you do when you hear a siren? Well, it depends on where you are and what you are doing. If you are riding with your parents in the car, you'll notice that they try to figure out where the noise is coming from so they can get out of the way. The best thing a driver can do is to steer the car to the side of the road and stop until the ambulance or fire truck or police car goes past.

How about if you are on a bicycle or walking? It's still important to stop and get out of the way. And you definitely don't try to cross the street until all the excitement is over.

How about if you are safe in your home and you just hear the siren? You don't need to do anything, do you? You can just continue reading your book or playing your game or cleaning your room. But a lot of times your brain doesn't just ignore the siren. You think, *Is my family safe? Is someone I know in trouble?* Maybe you even go to the door or window to see if you can see what's going on.

A siren is more than just a noise. It's a noise with a lot of meaning. It means danger. It means someone is in trouble or needs help. When we hear it, we react immediately. Sirens keep us safe. They warn us to pay attention. It would be very foolish to ignore a siren.

Do you remember the Israelites in the Bible? God rescued them from slavery. He gave them a land of their own and blessed them. He promised them, "I will be your God and you will be my people" (Jer. 7:23, ICB).

But the Israelites wouldn't keep their side of the bargain. They wouldn't obey God. They kept wor-

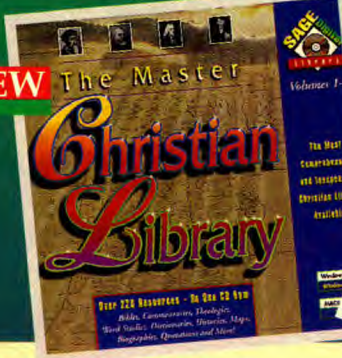
shipping other gods. So God sent the prophets. The prophets were like a siren. The prophets warned the people of danger.

God told the prophets, "Blow the trumpet in Jerusalem. Shout a warning on my holy mountain. Let all the people who live in the land shake with fear. The Lord's day of judging is coming. The Lord's day of judging

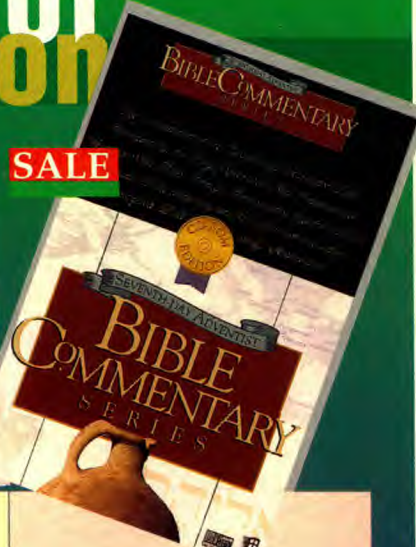
is near" (Joel 2:1, ICB).

Can you think of anything that God might use as a siren in your life? What keeps you safe? What warns you to pay attention? What keeps you out of trouble?

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Talkin' 'Bout My GENERA

BY MICHAEL NEIL JACKSON

"... Be content."—Paul.

FAT DEACONS AND CANNED MUSIC remind us that we have yet to reach the golden shore. Yet in all our zeal to enact change, I sense a black cloud a-comin'.

It seems that the very ones who bemoan the critical, cold legalism of the "old school" seem often to miss the very standard they espouse. Love is the bull's-eye of my generation. Yet that mark is very rarely hit.

Criticism, instead of support, comes from the very element that says it wants unconditional love. Jesus is often portrayed as a cool guy, someone who needn't be bowed down to, but a friend who can be casually addressed between commercials. Any other view of

Him is looked down upon with contempt. In turn, our love for each other waxes cold.

In this we're not far removed from the perfect church. You know, the one in which Lucifer directed the choir. Well, a third of the members stopped coming to practice. Why? The status quo. I can just hear the soft rumblings: "Weren't the harps flat yesterday?"

A Little Background

I grew up in a large California

In a culture obsessed with change, the church needs to be certain that it's changing for the better.



city. I listened to hard, grinding rock music for years. I attended concerts with speakers as big as small buildings. When I joined the Adventist Church nearly five years ago, I remember hearing an old woman play an old organ. I just about saw angels floating around the room. For a kid like me, who had heard enough loud noise to launch the space shuttle, I was "enraptured." From that muffled old organ I found that "His name's so sweet."

I represent a large portion of the type of people we're commissioned to reach. My generation incubated in "moshpits." We grew up with Bob Marley, backward baseball caps, and Burgie Beer. I'm part of a large class of American youth that has seen enough

we need and what we want are sometimes two completely different things.

When I see a pretty woman, in a moment of temptation I may *want* to kiss her; yet is this a pressing *need*? It may reflect the fact that a wife would be a treasure worth mining for, but to infringe on someone else's freedom to supply my *perceived need* is nothing short of plain old hard-boiled selfishness.

After I became an Adventist, I wanted a sleek young woman to "decorate my life." Did I need her? About as much as David needed Bathsheba.

What I really needed was to stand with an old saint, arm in arm, and sing about the old rugged cross, with the salty taste of tears on my lips. I wanted acceptance, yet I know now that real acceptance comes only via the cross. It was *there* that I was reconciled to God. No longer do I need recognition. No longer must I demand attention. The Lord and His cross swallow all that.

Sometimes I want people to listen to me. I get upset when they don't. This is natural. Yet God isn't asking me to "go natural." He's asking me to launch out into the supernatural. And that involves learning to listen to others,

for "the fool multiplies words" (Eccl. 10:14, NIV).

I can't always have what I want. In this there is freedom. No longer am I enslaved by the false hope that everyone has to do things my way. I can stand free and enjoy what God has gifted others to do and put my personal biases on the shelf. This enables me to grow outside the limited space of my own little life.

God's Love Versus Our Perceptions

The road of life is bumpy, and smooth talk and warm fuzzies betray the truth. My generation knows that we're in a war. We just want our marching orders. Too often I find the church loosening the line to accommodate and attract folks like me. We see right through it. We're looking for something out of this world, not just an improvement upon it. With so many trying to escape from reality, my generation is looking for truth. Whether it's ugly, bleeding, or naked, we care not (see John 18:16-37). We want truth—pure, unenriched, unbolted, unfrosted truth.

I'll never forget a comment I heard during a Sabbath school class discussion. A dear saint remarked that she was just going to love her friend into the kingdom; all of that "doctrine" had to go. "Jesus, only Jesus" was her prescription. She concluded by assuring everybody that the Holy Spirit would take care of the rest.

That sentiment reminds me of the prophet Jonah. God gave him a particular message to announce in

Nineveh. Jonah saw God as a God of love (1 John 4:16). Yet he presumed upon this love.

Notice Jonah's reason for disobeying God by fleeing to Tarshish: "I knew that you

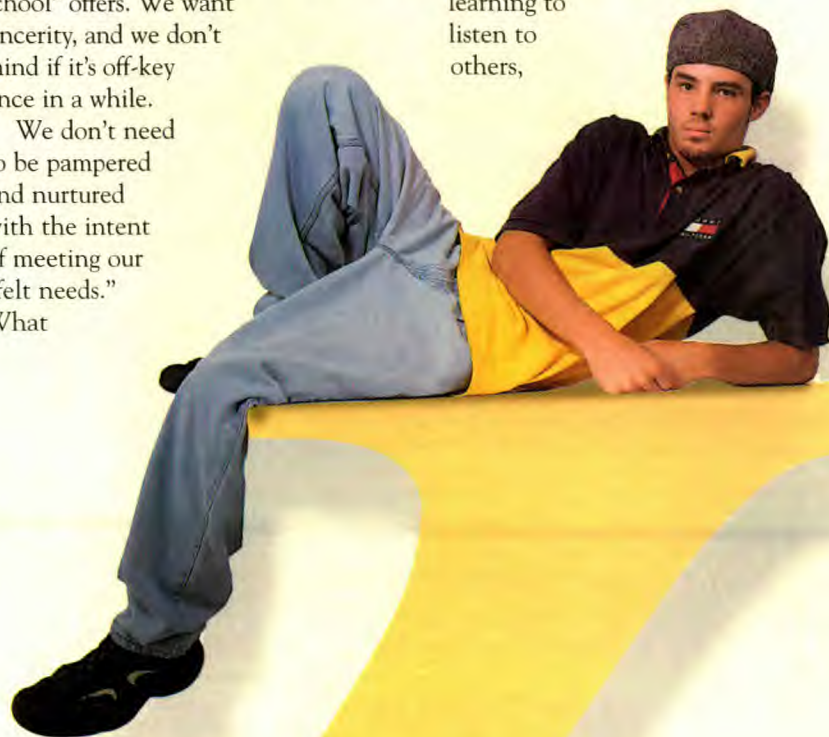
are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity" (Jonah 4:2, NIV).

Obviously, knowing that God is compassionate, gracious, and long-suffering isn't enough. Jonah knew all of this, and still he did it his way. Paul

TION

of "the real world" to cause a gorilla to blush. We want what much of the "old school" offers. We want sincerity, and we don't mind if it's off-key once in a while.

We don't need to be pampered and nurtured with the intent of meeting our "felt needs." What



Many of our churches are colder than a Chihuahua in a downpour.

caught a glimpse of the height and breadth and depth of the love of God, and yet he still said, "What I hate I do" (Rom. 7:15, NIV).

We're all like Jonah and Paul: we want change, but we have the hardest time changing ourselves.

God's love for Jonah was manifested by a three-day stint in the Atlantis Hilton (Jonah 1:17). Remember the violent storm (verse 4), or that "scorching east wind" (Jonah 4:8, NIV), or that pesky old worm (verse 7)? Was this the work of a compassionate God?

The problem was not with the whale, or the hot wind, or the worm that ate Jonah's only source of shade—the problem was with his perception of God. What he saw was distorted by his own warped experience.

Getting Real

Too often we're polluted by the world's definition of love. I well remember attending a Grateful Dead gig. One of the primary reasons I went was the "love" I heard would be there. You could just be yourself, and everyone would welcome you into the family.

I found the complete opposite. If you didn't talk the talk or walk the walk, you were blackballed. That is, unless you had money to buy marijuana-laced brownies or tie-dyed T-shirts, you could expect little acceptance. A guy with an Oliver North haircut, a \$100 smile, and a Bible under his arm would have a

tough time finding fellowship there. So much for unconditional love.

My generation cries out for unconditional love, yet we often refuse to give it to the ones who rub us the wrong way. "What does it profit you if you love those who love you? Why, even the Dead Heads do that" (Matt. 5:46, author's paraphrase).

Love "is not self-seeking" (1 Cor. 13:5, NIV). Jesus, while on earth, "humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8, NIV). This included being forsaken by His friends, His family, the world, the church, even His God. Yet in the framework of an absolutely unjust trial, conviction, and crucifixion, Jesus "did not open his mouth" (Isa. 53:7, NIV) to whine about His own wishes.

Jesus sat at the rabbis' feet, "asking them questions" (Luke 2:46, NIV). He revolutionized the religious structure within the bounds of its own traditions and customs. Every move He made was on the tightrope between the way things were and the way they should have been.

Never was there a "rebel" like Jesus, because His methods were so unorthodox. Who would ever dream of changing the structure within the structure, and at the same time taking into account the individual freedom of each member? Amid all the pomp and dead formalism of the status quo, Jesus quietly and steadfastly set the world on fire.

It's a Cold World

To those who want change, I applaud you. I want it too. I agree that many of our churches are colder than a Chihuahua in a downpour. Yet we often forget that God works in mysterious ways, bringing us into contact with different colors, creeds, political persuasions, ages, and temperaments so as to balance our experience.

My generation, I appeal to you, don't sweat the "old school." Pray for 'em. They've been through more than most of us can imagine. Don't fret because the music in church will never win a Grammy. God has more respect for a cheap Wurlitzer played from the heart than the finest Steinway played with stuffy arrogance.

God wants to express His love through so many avenues. And that just *may* include my poor, lisping, stammering tongue; or an old organist in a Dorcas-print dress, giving the church all she's got on Sabbath morn. ■

Michael Neil Jackson is a health ministries student at the Wildwood Sanitarium in northern Georgia. He loves to cook—especially Italian food.



For God's Sake

ALLAN AND DEIRDRE MARTIN

How would you handle someone who uses the Lord's name irreverently? Many of our friends and family members thoughtlessly say "Oh, God!" or use His name as an expression of anger or surprise. It hurts me every time I hear it, and I wonder if I should speak up, or whether that would make me seem "holier than thou." What do you think?

Deirdre's reply: The Lord leads each of us to handle such situations with care specific to the circumstance and our relationship with the person. It's admirable that you are conscious of how your comments may be taken by the person speaking God's name in vain. It shows your love for that person—and for God.

What I would do in such situations really depends on the level of relationship I have with that person. If I didn't know the person well, I would simply ask what is meant by the exclamation "Oh, God." I find that most people use such phrases without much thought as to what they mean. And in most cases I would leave it at that. I would hope the person would think about that phrase more carefully next time they utter it.

If I had a close relationship with a person, I would begin by asking what the phrase means for them, then I would tell them how the loose use of God's name affects me. I would try not to tell them what to do, but simply share my feelings with them. If they value our relationship, they'll think twice when they talk carelessly about my Best Friend.

Before I became an Adventist two years ago, my husband and I used to do country-western partners dancing. We have since given it up, but we miss it. We don't drink or do suggestive moves. What's your opinion?

Allan's reply: Thanks for giving me an opportunity to share my opinion. Wow! Before I get carried away with my own opinions (I have lots of them), I'm wondering what prompted you to give up dancing when you became Adventists, and what's prompting you to reconsider it.

Now, you asked my opinion. Let me refer you to the words of David: "Let them praise his name with dancing" (Ps. 149:3, NIV). When I become a follower of Christ,

something miraculous happens—I become a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17), which means that my life as a Christian moves to a different beat. Instead of doing my own high-stepping, I now follow the lead of the Master.



There's a time to dance (Eccl. 3:4), and being or becoming a Christian is among those opportune times to dance for joy. As it was for David, dancing can very well be an expression of our praise and exuberance for our life in Christ (2 Sam. 6:14).

Unfortunately, in our world Satan has distorted this into a form of self-exaltation and idolatry. Instead of being an expression of holy joy, sin has turned dancing into an outlet for vanity, lust, aggression, and selfishness.

Paul does a great job of giving some clear guidelines about Christian living in Colossians 3. Given my desire to serve Christ and avoid Satan, I choose to set my heart on things above (verse 2). Because I am a Christian, I choose not to dance . . . in self-indulgence before Satan.

My opinionated comments aside, I am hoping you can take a good look at the questions I posed at the beginning. As you and your spouse take a honest and personal look at your replies, I'm confident your Christian discernment will lead in your choices on dancing, as well as many other aspects of Christlike living.

As a traditionally raised Adventist, I don't know how to dance. I just don't have enough rhythm to make a go of it. But we Adventists need to learn how to dance . . . in joy before the Lord. Because I have a sneaking suspicion that when I see Christ coming, I'll want a joyful, graceful move or two as I take to the air to meet the Lord.

Send your questions about young adult life, Christian lifestyle, and Generation X culture to The X-CHANGE, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, or via e-mail to dream_VISION_ministries@CompuServe.com.

A. Allan and Deirdre Martin are cofounders of *dre.am VISION ministries*, which strives to empower young people in Christian lifestyle and leadership.



New Distance Learning Project to Unite Adventist Students Across North America

BY SHEILA ELWIN, EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP COMMUNICATION LIAISON WITH THE SOUTHERN UNION

A new distance learning project that could pioneer Adventist education in the twenty-first century has been embraced by the North American Division and will soon be launched in several states throughout North America. The AE21—or Adventist Education for the Twenty-first Century—Satellite Network will bring students and teachers across the division together with educational specialists, scientists, church leaders, authors, and others for a cooperative learning venture this fall.

During the past school year the Southern Union Conference was asked to pilot distance learning in 20 of its schools. Teaming up with Educational Management Group (EMG), a company that provides learning materials via satellite, the schools were able to tap into a vast data bank of resources, participate in live interactions with experts, and expand their view of the world.

The success of this experiment led the division to enter into a contract with EMG, making these resources available to all Adventist educators

across North America. Additionally, educators are studying the merits of other forms of distance education. Several academies will be joining together via telephone and cable connections to exchange teacher talents. Others schools are partnering with junior academies to broadcast classes.

Another experiment began August 25 with eight one-teacher schools across the United States. Small schools often balance precariously as they try to meet the needs of students, providing a quality education, while working with very limited resources. An AE21 pilot program will address these small school concerns. The pilot schools are installing equipment to enable students to be taught by one teacher via satellite.

Greg Thompson, a master teacher, will broadcast live daily from a studio in the Florida Conference office. He will relieve the onsite teachers by teaching science, social studies, language arts, and reading skills to the fifth through eighth graders in each school. The students will interact with Thompson and their peers at the other participating schools.

To meet the challenge of this style of learning, a team of educators was brought together from several conferences and Andrews University. Led by Elaine Plemons, division coordinator and trainer for EMG services, they developed a new multiple-subject curriculum that is designed to make learning practical and applicable to everyday situations. For example, a unit on the Mississippi River might have the children studying soil samples and water life biology for science, life in the nearby agricultural communities for social studies, and topical books and vocabulary for



LEARNING IN CYBERSPACE: Cheryl Gold explores the AE21 Web site.

language arts. At the same time onsite teachers could introduce math into the picture via projects such as measuring rainfall, water level, and width of the river. Religious heritage also could be explored as the students learn of the initial work of the Adventist Church along the river's path. Each of these topics will be enhanced through video, computer-based simulations, electronic links, interaction with specialists, print materials, and the Internet.

Participating in the one-year pilot will be students from Oregon, Florida, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Michigan.

"Our small schools across North America are in jeopardy," states Jim Epperson, Southern Union education director. "Increased costs are stretching our limited resources to a point of crisis, resulting in the closure of dozens of schools across North America. This pilot tries to address some of these issues."

If the experiment is successful, it will open opportunities to use distance learning in small schools and perhaps add security to the future of the small Adventist schools.



IN CONTROL: Greg Thompson gets oriented to the distance learning equipment.

Tallahassee Church Members Minister to Inmates

BY LISA ZIEGELE and CINDY KURTZHALS, SOUTHERN TIDINGS
CORRESPONDENTS

Tallahassee Seventh-day Adventist Church members are helping to spread the Word of God through the *Discover* series of Bible studies with inmates at the Federal Correctional Institute (FCI) in the city. The FCI houses about 30 women and 300 men.

"Our members are very enthusiastic about supporting this ministry," says pastor Gordon Henderson. "The weekly *Discover* Bible school classes we've been holding are packed." Tallahassee church member Kathy Pierce directs the Bible study classes

with help from church members who also visit with female inmates.

"Our outreach covers the gamut of backgrounds represented in the prison," Henderson says. "Church representatives who visit with the inmates are Hispanic, Anglo, Portuguese, and African-American. Bible studies are also available in Spanish and Portuguese. We've even received requests for information from Medellín, Colombia."

Seven other church members assist with grading completed lessons for this special ministry.

Although the Tallahassee church has been situated across the road from the FCI for more than 20 years, it wasn't until 1995 that a regular prison ministries program consisting of Bible studies and visitations was established.

"There are currently no full-time chaplains at FCI. The church's program, with help from a Catholic nun, has filled the void," says Henderson.

"I'm so happy to hear how the Lord is blessing the church's ministry to the inmates," reports former pastor Russ Aldridge. "A few years ago the church's efforts to begin a prison ministry were stonewalled. It was really a shame, because the church was located right across the street from the prison."

Things have also opened up so that Henderson presents weekend chapel services throughout the summer. "It gives us the opportunity to let more people know about our Bible school."

NEWS BREAK

Robert Spangler Dies in California Accident

A tragic multivehicle accident in Los Angeles, California, claimed the life of John Robert Spangler, one of the Adventist Church's most widely respected leaders.

A dedicated minister who served the church for more than 50 years, Spangler, 75, died about 5:30 a.m. on September 19 when a Volkswagen Beetle collided with the Adventist Media Center's Ford Aerostar van.

Three other persons in the van were injured in the collision, including Spangler's wife, Marie, who was hospitalized at the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center in Westwood with fractured ribs, a broken leg and collar bone, and several lacerations and bruises. Marie Spangler was listed in good condition at presstime.

Another passenger, Volker Schmidt, who serves on the *It Is Written* board, suffered three broken ribs, and driver Roy Supit suffered a bruised heart and chest. Supit and Schmidt were treated and released from the medical center. Two persons in other vehicles also suffered injuries.

Spangler and his wife were en route to the Los Angeles International Airport when the collision

occurred. He was traveling to an *It Is Written* fund-raising weekend in West Virginia.

According to the California Highway Patrol, a south-bound Volkswagen Beetle lost control and struck the center divider. The vehicle ricocheted off the divider and caused a chain-reaction, three-car pileup. The van, attempting to evade collision, was hit, and rolled over on its side.

Spangler was partially ejected from the vehicle and suffered severe injuries. The driver of the Volkswagen remains in police custody at presstime.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Spangler came to the General Conference Ministerial Association in 1962 after serving as a missionary in the Far Eastern Division. He gave the next 28 years of his life and service to pastors and pastoral families, says James A. Cress, currently Ministerial Association secretary.

During his ministry Spangler served for 23 years as editor of *Ministry* magazine and five years as Ministerial Association secretary. As *Ministry* editor Spangler initiated the PREACH project, which provided the magazine to 200,000 non-Adventist clergy.

He also coordinated the production and distribution of *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* to non-Adventist clergy and public libraries. The book explains Adventist fundamental beliefs in a Christ-centered context.



J. Robert Spangler

The Court of Public Opinion

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ, ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW

"Innocent until proven guilty?" Not necessarily.

Increasingly judges and juries are no longer the ones who decide the guilt or innocence of people on trial. That responsibility has shifted to society, as informed by "unbiased" news coverage.

Earlier this year when the Air Force began disciplining its first female B-52 bomber pilot, Kelly Flinn, First Lieutenant Flinn and her attorneys were suddenly on all the morning news programs, saying, in effect, "Hey, it's no big deal; everybody commits adultery. If Kelly were a male officer, this wouldn't even make a blip on the radar screen."

Turns out there were other factors that only later saw the light of day. But by then polls had already appeared, and the Air Force prosecutors not only had to persuade a court martial; it also had to persuade the public.

And therein lies a problem. Even an informed public

doesn't always understand or appreciate the nuances of military justice. And even though an attorney is articulate, that doesn't mean that he or she is credible.

When Sergeant Major Gene McKinney was accused of indecent assault, sexual harassment, and obstruction of justice, his attorney's claim that the charges were racially motivated may make good headlines, but they don't change the

facts in the case. And the facts (as best as they can be known) are what make a person innocent or guilty. Although there's much we hear on the evening news, don't think that we're privy to all the available evidence.

Look for a lot of spin in today's news coverage. Rather than a simple statement of the facts, be prepared to hear someone trying to "spin" the facts so that they don't appear as they really are.

NEWS COMMENTARY

NEWS BREAK

Though he retired in 1991, Spangler remained active as evangelism coordinator in the former Soviet Union. His efforts spurred a significant upsurge in church membership and construction of new church buildings in Eastern Europe.

In January 1994 Spangler accepted a position as field representative for It Is Written, where he continued his ministry as a fund-raiser.

"Bob Spangler was a big man in every way," says *Adventist Review* editor William G. Johnsson. "I have often thought of him as the Adventist Billy Graham—energetic, powerful preacher of the gospel, an evangelist through and through. An innovator, a visionary, he made a major impact for the Lord."

AWR to Use Satellite Distribution System

Adventist World Radio (AWR) president Donald Jacobsen recently announced that the Adventist Church's shortwave radio outreach will endeavor to use audio channels on a new global television satellite distribution system being developed at the Seventh-day Adventist Church's world headquarters.

The first phase, covering most of the Americas, is being organized on a system already in place, while other parts of the world may be online as early as next year.

AWR is now planning to provide programming on

BrazilSat by early 1998. Programs in Spanish, Portuguese, and English are scheduled. A multiple language service channel may also be added. With the new programming on satellite, radio stations on the ground—both local AM/FM and AWR's international stations in Costa Rica and Peru—will be able to broadcast the programs directly. The uplink for these broadcasts will be located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

According to Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference president, this phase for the Americas "is the first segment of a global satellite system that will deliver programming 24 hours a day, in up to 40 languages." Other parts of the system will involve special radio and television programs for Europe, Africa, and Asia.

AWR also sees the new system as a way to provide many more hours of programming to local stations, numbering approximately 100, who request access to the AWR signal. The church operates national networks in eight countries and has local AM or FM stations in many other areas.—*Adventist News Network*.

Philippine Government Honors Mountain View College

Mountain View College in the Philippines recently received a first-place award for having the best literacy course in the country. A student at the college, Daryl

Did You Know?

The United States ranks sixteenth among least-corrupt nations, behind Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom but ahead of France, Japan, and Italy, according to a survey released August 4 by the German anti-corruption group Transparency International (TI).

Three Scandinavian countries—Denmark, Finland, and Sweden—ranked the least corrupt in the survey, which was based on seven different business surveys in each country that evaluated how business leaders, political analysts, and the general public perceived the degree of corruption in a country.—*Religion News Service*.

Belief in Afterlife Increases. More Americans than ever before—81 percent—say they believe in an afterlife, says Andrew Greeley, a Catholic priest who conducted a study of 19,000 people. Greeley attributes the increase to the immigration of Catholics and Jews into a more devoutly religious environment in the United States than the environment found in the immigrants' homeland.—*Religion News Service*.

For Your Good Health

Daily Variety

People who eat many different types of foods typically consume less fat and more nutrients than those who stick with a few favorites. And among men, those with wide-ranging tastes tend to be thinner.—*Consumer Reports on Health*.

Heart Burners

While drinking milk or eating peppermints are long-time home remedies for soothing heartburn, these temporary solutions can actually worsen the problem. Milk can wash acid in the esophagus back down into the stomach. But an hour later the milk can cause the stomach to produce more acid, causing the pain to return. Peppermints can neutralize acid in your esophagus, but also weaken the sphincter muscle at the base of the esophagus that serves as a lid on the stomach. For people with very sensitive stomachs, even one or two pieces of peppermint can worsen heartburn symptoms.—*Baylor College of Medicine*.

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

N E W S B R E A K

Famisaran, also won a first-place prize in the government's outstanding literacy program.

The award, given by the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports, aims to affirm students and educational institutions for their literacy contributions, reports John Duroe, Southern Asia-Pacific Division communication director.—*Adventist News Network*.

Adventist Becomes Second-highest Naval Chaplain

Barry C. Black, an Adventist minister who served for 21 years as a chaplain in the United States Navy, was recently appointed Deputy Chief of Chaplains for the Navy.

In his new post Black will carry the rank of rear admiral and assume the number two position over nearly 1,000 active duty Navy chaplains from 175 faith groups in the United States. Black will assist in the issues of religious accommodation, ethical standards, spiritual coverage, religious education, professional training and development, and many other areas.

"This is a remarkable first for

an Adventist chaplain," says Richard Stenbakken, director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries at the General Conference. "This is the first time the church has had any chaplain at this level in any military branch."

Before taking his new post, Black, a native of Baltimore, Maryland, served as Atlantic Fleet chaplain and supervisor of one third of the Navy's clergy.

"The United States is unique in its chaplaincy program," Stenbakken says. "There is a constitutional mandate not to have an established state religion, and that means free access and the need to provide for the free exercise of religion for military personnel. For this reason the Adventist Church has 'lent' pastors to the military to serve the needs of Adventists and others on active duty."

Currently there are 43 Adventist chaplains in the United States military, including 16 serving in the Navy.

What's Upcoming

Oct.	18	Spirit of Prophecy Day
Oct.	25	Children's Sabbath
Nov.	1-8	Week of Prayer
Nov.	8	Week of Sacrifice Offering for Global Mission
Nov.	15	Ingathering Day
Dec.	6	Stewardship Day



Barry Black



Surprised by Doubt

Without warning, here it was—uninvited, unwelcome, unwanted. I was stunned.

BY BOB RIGSBY

I WAS BORN TO GOD-FEARING SEVENTH-DAY Adventist parents, raised in the “mission field” of Ethiopia, and educated for 20 years in Adventist schools. It seemed that I should have a strong grasp on Christianity. But I had little understanding of a personal walk with God, and little desire for it.

Personally and professionally things were going well. I thought of myself as basically a good person. Then while on a brief visit back to Ethiopia, it dawned on me that I hardly knew why my much-respected and much-loved dad (who died in 1987) had been so dedicated to this poor nation and its people.

I became increasingly driven to discover the meaning and essence of my dad's life, dedication, and contentment. How could he pray, as he was dying, not for life or healing, but that glory might come to God's name through whatever happened? I began to face the fact that I wasn't sure what I believed in, or

even if I believed in God.

Sharing my search with my mother led her to lend me my dad's Bible, which had been near him each day for 30 years. In its wide margins numerous notes, thoughts, and quotes had accumulated from years of sermons and study.

As I read his Bible, seeking to get to know him better, I discovered his God. The simple, pure, profound gospel of grace through Jesus Christ found a home in my heart and mind. Faith—for 37 years a misunderstood, uncomprehended, and rejected notion—became very real to me. I had awakened to a new life in Christ and thrilled with each new day's insights. The God of my father (1 Chron. 28:9) was now very real to me.

Surprised by Doubt

Nearly a year after the thrilling discovery of a personal Saviour and a peace and inner contentment I had not thought

possible, I suddenly faced an unexpected guest: doubt. Uninvited, unwelcome, unwanted.

As a new Christian, I was caught off guard. I began to question, Is Christianity just an elaborate coping mechanism for those who are unable to deal with death's *certain*ty and life's uncertainty? Could this God, whom I had only recently come to worship in a very personal way, be simply wishful thinking? Was this good news really too good to be true?

One great irony of the whole situation was that it was my best friend—an agnostic—who had unwittingly played a role in the initiation of my search. His claim that in order to believe one simply must *want* to believe led me to condense all my questions down to one: Did I want to believe? After weeks of pondering this one question (for I sensed that a great deal hung on my answer), I answered, with all the honesty I possessed, yes.

However, I also rejected his notion that the only validity to belief was simply wanting to believe. Rather I saw wanting to believe as a necessary element in validating the search process. It seemed quite possible to me that I had this burning desire to know God not because of some inner psychological weakness or insecurity, but because there really was a God—a God who created me with that very longing to seek Him.

But then—doubt.

I was shocked, annoyed, and not a little panicked to be considering such a thing. What was I to do with this intruder? It seemed I could recall no sermon or talk about doubt, and so was unsure how to proceed. Do I hide it? ignore it? pretend it's not there? Doubt seemed a negative thing, but I couldn't make it go away. Neither could I wish it away.

Then I remembered my first realizations of the good news about God and His saving grace. God had won me not by fear or force, but rather by slow, quiet, patient persuasion and conviction, stirred by the Christian life of my dad. Surely the God who had waited 37 years for my awakening could lead me through this seemingly insurmountable obstacle.

It occurred to me that doubt was not

the issue. Faith was. And mine was being tested. Certainly I hoped my faith could stand up to a little scrutiny if it was worth anything.

The story of redemption, while possibly a myth, seemed far more compelling than the alternative: no story at all. I wondered how I could give up my newfound faith just because proof for God's existence now seemed elusive. To give in to that doubt would merely leave me with more doubts.

I vowed to press on with the battle against doubt, knowing that God didn't condemn me for doubting His existence—for it was that very process of honest seeking and evaluation of truth through which God had reached me.

Bible Doubters

I turned to my dad's Bible to continue the struggle with doubt. In the margin beside Hebrews 11, the "faith" chapter, he had inserted a note that the "greatest men of faith and belief were great doubters." That struck me as a new way of looking at these heroes of faith. The actions of these honored believers at times demonstrated not faith but doubt. Abraham, for example, one of Israel's fathers of faith, felt it necessary to venture in and "help" God out in fulfilling His promise—with disastrous results. It was doubt that God would fulfill the promise that led to his behavior.

Yet he and the others are held out as shining examples of faith! *How can that be?* I wondered. The answer seemed to lie in their persistent pursuit of God by faith. Despite their mistakes and doubts, they didn't give up. The promise of God drove them forward. They believed God when circumstances said their faith wasn't reasonable.

Turning to the life of Christ, I realized that He too had to go to God through faith, just as Abraham had. And just as I must. Even as He was dying to redeem a lost world, says Ellen White, "doubts assailed the dying Son of God" (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 209).

Battling Doubt

I began to see a common theme emerge as I read. While doubt seemed ever ready to rear its ugly head, to live in

faith meant to *act* in faith—not on doubt. Through an act of my will, which must be surrendered to God daily, I am to *act* on faith. I found this insight confirmed again and again in the Bible.

The story of Naaman shows the importance of acting in faith. Despite his doubt that simply washing seven times in that muddy Jordan River would do anything, he acted. And God rewarded even that tiny bit of faith.

The father of the demon-possessed boy came to Jesus seeking help. "I do believe," he said to Jesus. "Help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24, NIV). His son was healed in that same hour (verses 25-27).

Crucial in my battle against doubt was the role of memory. I needed to remember and review often the evidence of God in my life. With honesty and openness I had heard and seen God for the first time in my life through the leading of His Spirit. Such memories gave me the courage I needed to press on and the assurance that God does reveal Himself to those who seek Him with all their hearts.

Living With Doubt

As I reviewed my growing faith, I realized that it was God Himself who had drawn me to an understanding of His grace (Matt. 16:17; John 6:44). The frustration that I had felt when trying to explain my discovery of God to my unbelieving friends emphasized the very personal nature of faith. It was between God and me. For the first time I saw that in the spiritual walk faith exists just beneath the total comfort of certainty. How could I insist on a provable God of certainty when the heroes of faith, as well as a "great cloud of witnesses"—my own father among them—had died in faith not having received the promise?

I knew that I might be accused of abandoning reason and logic in this search for God. But, I wondered, how can a finite being come to know with complete certainty an infinite God? How could I deny God simply because He could not be found on my terms? Reason and logic, while supreme in our world of science and technology, seemed inadequate tools to discover the thing I was searching for. And when one stops to

think of it, the things that give meaning to my life—the love of my wife and my three children, a wonderful Italian meal, a stunning sunset across the lake, a moving symphony, an unexpected kindness from a stranger—transcend reason and logic.

Likewise, it was apparent early on that emotion had little to do with faith. Faith isn't a feeling, but a commitment of my will to choose God. And yet once faith was acted on, I made a pleasant discovery: faith was confirmed by intellect and emotion. The inner peace and joy that were now mine for the first time confirmed for me the reality of God. The power of my faith wasn't in the strength of my will, but rather lay with the object of my faith. For it was the power of the cross that had convicted me (1 Cor. 1:17). Perhaps this intellectual confirmation of faith was part of the "reward" for those who seek Him (Heb. 11:6).

Doubt Strengthens Faith

Now I think I know how I will deal with doubt in the future. While the demon of doubt will always be unwelcome, fearing it would mean giving it strength. But it's faith I want to strengthen. When doubt comes, the battle must be engaged. There is too much at stake to sit on the sidelines. I'll seek to do the things that strengthen faith. I'll listen to what feeds faith.

To neglect faith is to let doubt and unbelief win by default. The responsibility for this search is mine, but I trust God to lead me in the process, through His Spirit. The quality and success of my search are related to the degree of honesty and humility guiding the search—honesty to go where the Spirit leads, and humility to be able to give up preconceived notions or self-serving behaviors that hinder my search.

Through battling doubt I understand faith better. Faith isn't a belief system to defend, but a life to live. It's a personal, ever-growing, never-completed relationship with God. Faith isn't a destination, but a road to travel. To believe on Jesus Christ is a call to action, not a plea to intellectual assent to something I'm not sure of. I won't be satisfied to know about God—I must know God Himself. I want a faith that clings tenaciously to the

promises of God as stubbornly as Jacob wrestled with God.

My first battle with doubt gave me a new understanding of God and new evidence of just how highly He values my freedom. He is confident enough to let me doubt Him. He won't coerce, but rather, quietly and patiently, leads the open heart to Him. This gives me confidence. I can trust that He "who began a

good work [in me] will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6, NRSV). ■

Bob Rigsby is an anesthesiologist who practices at Florida Hospital in Orlando.



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BOOK

• M A R K •

Guerrilla Kindness



Gavin Whitsett,
Impact Publishers,
P.O. Box 1094, San Luis

Obispo, California 93401, 1993, 160 pages, US\$8.95, paper. Reviewed by Ella M. Rydzewski, editorial assistant, Adventist Review.

"They attack without warning. They're the 'kindness guerrillas,' combating indifference and cruelty with spontaneous acts of love and thoughtfulness," reads the description of this delightful little book.

So you want to make the world a better place but don't know how? In this manual of good deeds, you can find a multitude of ways to spread kindness around. Ever wish you could be an evangelist, but your voice doesn't carry? "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189).

Whitsett, a college professor in communications and an urban ministry worker, invites you to join other revolutionaries in bringing unexpected kindness to others.

Some people seem to be "born" friendly; others have to really work at overcoming inhibitions to let their light shine. It's not that they don't want to be friendly; they simply need practice and direction. Whitsett not only gives simple tips on how to appear friendly, but suggests hundreds of

actions that will bring a moment of happiness to friends and strangers. To spread cheer, you don't even need to be there. Something as simple as leaving change in the sand on a playground can add sparkle to a child's day.

To purchase this "guerrilla manual" you'll need to order it from the publishers. Why not start a revolution in your church or neighborhood?

Ten Who Left: People Who Have Left the Church and Why



Fred Cornforth
and Tim Lale, Pacific Press Pub. Assn.,
Boise, Idaho, 1995,
128 pages, US\$8.99,
Cdn\$12.99, paper.
Reviewed by John M. Fowler, associate

director, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

I could have been the eleventh, but for the grace of God.

Ten children of the family of God tell why they left the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some of them still consider themselves Adventists; some have found identity elsewhere; and some still grope for that spiritual spark that makes life worth living.

Why did they leave? Theological struggles? Incomprehension about the gift of prophecy? No, these ordinary people left the church primarily for two reasons: legalism and inadequate relationships in the church setting. Lindsey, for example, says she dropped out because of a generational gap: older people ran the church. Perhaps reason enough, but her response to a question on what she had to do to get to heaven reveals a deeper reason. Stopping smoking, she feels, would get her to heaven, in addition to taking care of her body, going to church, and praying.

To the question "How are you saved?" Lindsey answers, "I don't know." If she has founded her faith on do's and don'ts and hasn't experienced the assurance of salvation through the crucified Christ, she has built her house on sand—ready to collapse at the first blowing of the

wind. It doesn't take a big storm.

Another left the church because of his divorce—he felt isolated. Others cite the condemnation of 90-cent jewelry by luxury car owners, unfair treatment in dormitories, members' unwillingness to listen to their moments of despair and struggle, and judgmental attitudes. The authors tell of a father who asks his son, away in a boarding school, not to call on Sabbaths, because "we might end up talking about things we shouldn't talk about during those 'sacred hours.'"

Legalism and neglect are two tools the devil uses to cut off the young and the unsure from God's family. Doesn't the church have a responsibility to nurture, care, hug, and love the weary, the tired, the hurting, and the failing?

Church leaders and members alike need to make the church truly a family and to avoid building their own faith on the shifting sands of others' misrepresentations of the gospel.

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Of Mops and Men

Is this unexpected bliss or inevitable misery?

BY LONEY ZIAKRIS

A MASTER OF MOP MANIPULATION. That's me. It's true—I can wash floors with the best of them. And that's not all: I vacuum, do dishes, and even iron (better than my wife, as she would frankly admit). Did I mention cook? Well, add that to my résumé of household duties. Ah, yes, I believe that I truly am a man of the nineties.

The reason for telling you this isn't that I need affirmation or that I believe I'm the only man in the world who does housework on a consistent basis. I'm not seeking a nomination for *Time* magazine's Man of the Year, either. Rather it's a tribute to two of the most important women in my life: my mother and my wife.

It was my mother who taught me (in no uncertain terms, I might add) that there is no such thing as woman's work—"If it needs to be done, do it" was her creed. Of course, this was probably a survival tactic for her, being the only woman in our family of four and coming from a culture in which men were treated as though they were part deity (you know, the "women should be seen and not heard" mentality). Throw in the fact that I'm considerably older than my sibling, and you will realize that I didn't stand a chance.

Having left home at 18 to go to college, I took with me my prior training and became quite self-sufficient, notwithstanding a laundry disaster or two. Add to this that it usually doesn't hurt, when courting a member of the opposite gender, to mention that you are skilled in the domestic arts (always an ulterior motive, right?).

The irony in all this is that now when my wife and I visit





mom, she won't let me anywhere near the sink or vacuum cleaner. She even comes to our house and cleans in her spare time. Perhaps this is my reward for the thousands of dishes I've washed over the years—or am I being way too optimistic? I'll have to get back to you on that one.

So where does my lovely wife fit into this picture? I do what I do around the house because it's fair. In an age when women are often thrust into the workplace because of financial need, how can men demand that women do all the domestic chores as well? (Before all the men whose wives stay at home start jumping up and down, read on.) But it's not just about being fair—it's also about love. I don't believe that I can love my wife yet relegate her to the role of servant. It just doesn't work that way.

If marriage is to be a true partnership, as God intended, then put aside your patriarchal attitudes, men, and learn that the words "iron" and "scorch" don't have to be synonymous. Washing the dishes that you ate from won't kill you, and as we all know, that which doesn't kill us will only make us stronger. And to be fair, women can wash and vacuum the car sometimes too, or take on other traditional "manly" chores. No one is less of a man or woman because he or she is willing to expand beyond the comfort zone of traditional roles.

Amos questions whether two can walk together happily unless they have reached an agreement (Amos 3:3), and Paul commands that we not be "unequally yoked" (2 Cor. 6:14). Traditionally we interpret these verses to encourage marriage relationships built on similar Christian belief systems. But marriage is more than walking and being yoked. Shared responsibility is another facet of a happy partnership.

Oops, time is getting on. The mop and pail are calling. ■

PHOTO BY JOEL D. SPRINGER

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My Heart Knows Home

Each life is graced, from time to time, with moments of such transcendent beauty that we are transformed, and they remain with us for the rest of our days. Again and again we remember—and there remains a bitter-sweet longing always to stay touched by that beauty. This secret may remain unacknowledged, even within ourselves, that this is what should always have been.

Years ago my friends and I often went exploring in offroad vehicles. There is a place “way back of beyond” in the San Bernardino mountains where, rounding a corner, we would suddenly come face-to-face with tall white cliffs rising straight up from a picnic-sized meadow. Majestic and unforgettable, it seemed inconceivable that such beauty remained hidden from the world, and that we should be included in the secret of this priceless gift.

The gift was shared by others. Once we had to dive off the road because we had whipped around a corner and come upon an elderly couple, their big white Cadillac seeming incongruous on the narrow mountain road. If those white cliffs could talk, they might tell of long-ago picnics and young lovers in that tiny meadow at the foot of the cliffs. It has been 20 years, and still I remember.

Once I was given a beautiful full-length white fur coat by my fiancé. Happy and proud, I wanted to share this extraordinary gift with my friends, so I took the coat with me to work. After a few minutes of excited showing off, I hung up the coat, and we turned our attention to work.

Hours later I went into the back room to retrieve my coat and go home. We didn't have a coat rack, so I had hung the coat on the metal supply rack. It wasn't until I pulled the coat off the rack that I realized it had been hung next to several large bottles of ink used to restamp ink pads. The bottles were used, and red and purple ink had dripped down the outside. My beautiful coat had been hanging next to them all day, soaking up the ink.

Frantic, I called for my boss, and together we spread the

coat out and tried desperately to blot out the ink. But as we worked, the ink got on our hands, and nightmare-like it spread in great purple and red blotches to new places on that gentle white fur.

Finally, in tears, I called my fiancé and told him what had happened. Gently he told me to wrap the coat up and bring it to his home. All I could do was watch, tears rolling down my face, as he worked gently, removing the stains with bleach and a cleaner, until it was beautiful and white again. Then turning to me, he took me in his arms and asked why I was so upset. When I sobbed that I had almost ruined this beautiful gift he had given me, he said, “Don't you know that you are much more

important than that coat? If it had been ruined, I would have found a way to buy you another one.”

I still have the coat, and it is still beautiful, but the spot that I treasure most and always reach for first is the spot where the fur is just a little stiffer than the rest.

There must be a reason that moments of beauty capture us so—that they reach out and tug at our hearts over the years. It's more than a simple appreciation of loveliness—there is a longing that never quite goes away to return to those places, to hold on to them, to live in that moment forever. I believe the poignant power of those memories comes from the mind's eye recognizing glimpses of our long-lost home. Our hearts respond and hold dear those visions of wisdom and beauty that give us just a glimpse of heaven. It is the recognition of our hearts that what should have been ours has been removed from our reach for far too long. It is the longing of our hearts for home. ■

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far too long.*

Janessa Roberts is a real estate underwriter who writes from Loma Linda, California.



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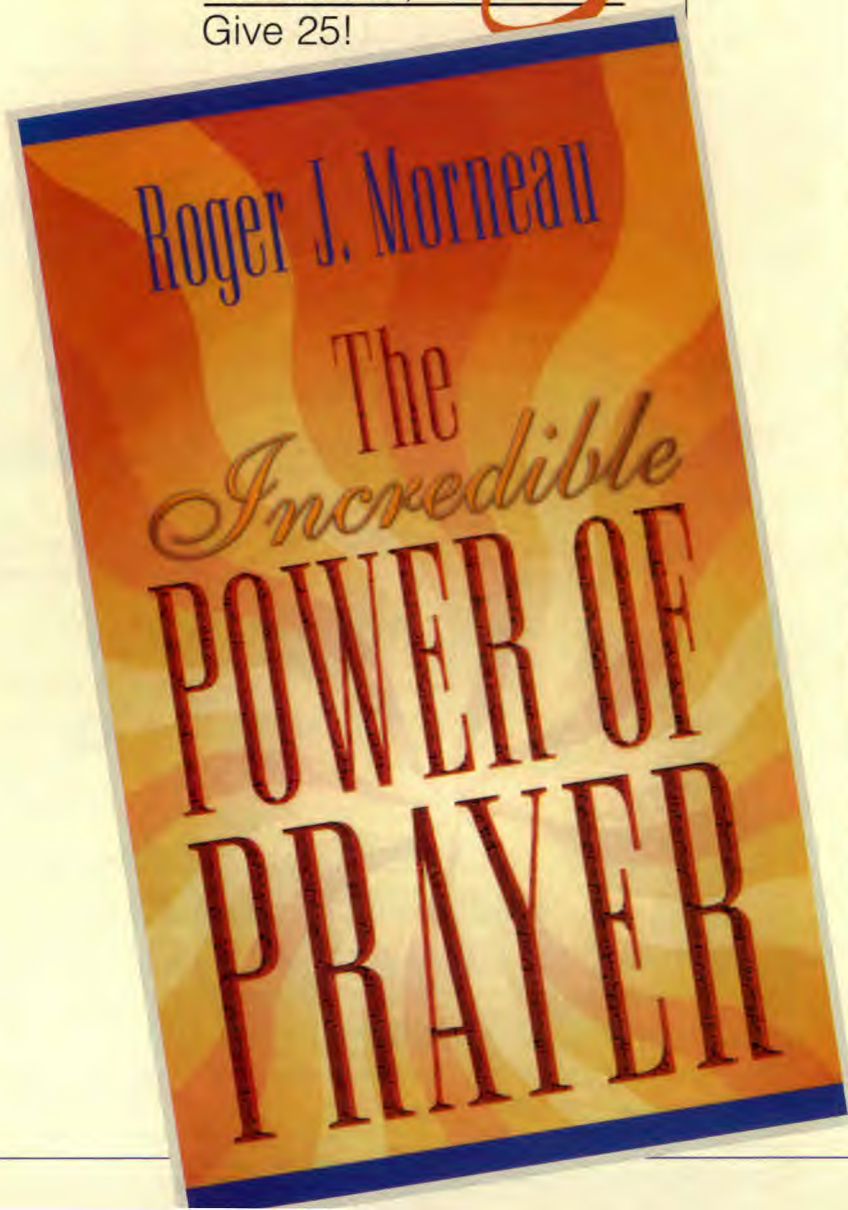
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