

ADVENTIST Review

June 11, 1998

World Edition

Global Mission:

A Closer Look at the Task

Adventism 101

The Adventist Anthem

What's Love Got to Do With It?



LETTERS

Outward Adornment

Regarding "Outward Adornment and Inner Peace" (Bible Questions Answered, Apr. 9 World Edition). Though I greatly respect Angel Rodríguez's considerable scholarship, I wonder whether we depend a bit too much on our traditional position on jewelry in considering such texts as 1 Peter 3:3, 4. In verse 3 Peter mentions not only gold ornaments but also "fine clothing" (NRSV).

We as a church need to develop a consistent position that does not focus on certain areas of adornment while neglecting other even-more-glaring examples of vanity or undue expense. Many young people fail to see why a small ring or earring is prohibited, but a \$500 suit, \$1,000 dress, or expensive watch is acceptable. And what about ties? They, along with silk pocket hankies, seem to serve no purpose other than decoration.

I believe we need to recommend modesty, simplicity, and economy in dress, housing, and automobiles rather than focusing on jewelry. Let us develop the principles rather than dictating the specifics, letting each person seek wisdom from God.

—Veli Kysyva

VIA E-MAIL

Religious Freedom Bill

I grew up believing in motherhood, apple pie, and religious liberty, so I was pleased to read the title "NAD Supports Religious Freedom Bill" (Apr. NAD Edition). However, my pleasure was unexpectedly short-

lived for two reasons:

1. I am dismayed that an organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church would officially support any bill legislating sanctions, no matter how noble-sounding the purpose may be. The inevitable result of sanctions is severe hardship to many innocent persons. As a resident of a country currently experiencing hardship because of sanctions, I do not know anyone living in this country—including the many United Nations, diplomatic, and humanitarian leaders with whom I interact—who believes that the sanctions are justified, appropriate, or serve a useful purpose. On the contrary, sanctions have a negative impact on the very person they are intended to assist.

2. In its discussion of religious intolerance, the article identified only one country by name—a country that has in recent years been made the scapegoat of the international media. In the area of religious freedom, no country—including the United States—is perfect. However, a number of countries (some of which flagrantly violate human rights and remain good friends of the United States) have far less religious freedom than the country so badly maligned. This country is the only country in the region where the Adventist Church freely operates a seminary, conducts evangelistic outreach, publicly baptizes converts, and is experiencing continuous growth. There are, in fact, few countries in the world where the youth of the church are more actively sharing their faith, generally without any harassment whatsoever. Regrettably, in its

reporting, the *Review* has given credibility to a grossly misleading image of that country as epitomizing the worst in religious persecution.

As the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, ADRA has achieved an excellent reputation in this country and more than 140 other countries around the world. This reputation is the result of the loving concern displayed by a church that has proclaimed and maintained an apolitical stance. We presently have the opportunity to increase our service to this country through a variety of health education activities. I appeal to our leaders in North America to avoid any action, no matter how well-intentioned, that would undermine what we have worked so hard to establish and develop.

—Harold Peters

DIRECTOR, ADRA/SUDAN

Long-Distance Adoption

Regarding "The Soul of the Sahel" on the Global Mission page of the April NAD Edition.

I was really impressed with the statement that Hans and Sylvia Obenaus are the only Adventists in Mauritania. I suggested to our Wednesday night "Through the Bible" class that we adopt this lovely couple—praying for them, sending them periodicals and books, helping in any way that we could.

—Belva Dusek

ST. HELENS, OREGON

Adventist Health Care (cont.)

I have two concerns related to Dr. B. Lyn Behrens "The Mission of Adventist Health Care" (Mar. 26).

First, Adventist Health Care's goal seems to be vague concerning direct involvement in persuasion evangelism. "Promoting spiritual health and healing is good," but I wish that our medical institutions would be more involved with surrounding churches in soul-winning efforts.

Second, in many of our medical institutions most of the employees are non-Adventists. No doubt they cooperate with money to local organizations, but our mission demands more than this.

—**Carlos G. Martin,**
ADVENTIST INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES,
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SILANG, CAVITE, PHILIPPINES

Gentlemen, Please Remove Your Hats (cont.)

Hats off to Barrington Brennen for his clear-thinking "Gentlemen, Please Remove Your Hats" (Mar. 12), which focused on mutuality and partnership. I praise all husbands who have the courage to put this into practice and who uphold their God-given role.

Many thanks for the encouragement I continue to find in your magazine.

—**Shirley Allen**
SOMERSET WEST, SOUTH AFRICA

Serious Bible Study? (cont.)

I was truly disappointed to learn of the poor sales of Lee Gugliotto's *Handbook for Bible Study* and the Bible Amplifier Series (see Andy Nash's "Serious Bible Study, Anyone? Anyone?" Mar. NAD Edition).

Here in Zimbabwe, where the availability of good Bible study materials is quite limited, I have often yearned to have more of our books become available to believers over here. In my mind I often visualize our brethren in North America feeding on the Word of God

and enjoying the many aids to study available there. It saddens me to learn that I might have been quite wrong in my assumptions and to realize that the person who has opportunity to read and study but *doesn't* is not better off than the one without the opportunity.

—**Ron Forde, D.D.S.**
BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

New Drug for Smokers (cont.)

I read with great interest Jonathan Gallagher's "Doctor Hope" (Mar. NAD Edition). As one who helped introduce the Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking in Norway, I was often discouraged to see the poor long-term success rate (less than a 20 percent quit rate in one year). Some people seem to be able to quit without any struggles, while others keep fighting—and losing—the battle. I have noted with interest that there might be genetic explanations for some of these differences, and it is encouraging that there might be additional help for these unfortunate individuals.

—**Paul Frivold,** RETIRED PASTOR
RYSE, NORWAY

The Truth

I am troubled by the occasional letters saying such things as "I am tired of people telling me that we do not have all the truth. Are we now too sophisticated to be guided by God's prophet?"

Two years after the 1888 General Conference session Ellen White stated, "Do not any one think, that there we have got all the truth we need" (*Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 563).

—**Vladimir Odorcic**
odorcic@usa.net
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

Note to readers: You'll notice that several of these letters respond to articles 3 months old. Because the Review takes longer to reach readers outside of North America, we allow extra time for their letters, which generally run in the World Edition.—Editors.

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COVER PHOTO BY PHOTODISC

ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

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

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Dwight Nelson, Net '98 speaker

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Never Call Retreat?

BILL KNOTT

It's really more like a retreat than a convention," he murmured into the pay phone receiver next to mine last night. "But don't tell the editor."

I do my best not to listen to the conversations of others when I stand at crowded phone banks, if only because I can still then cherish the myth that they aren't listening to mine. But my colleague's confession worried me: what if our guilty secret leaked? What if all who paid to send us to a press convention discovered that in between the workshops and the business meetings, this gathering offered many moments of long, delicious slowness in the Carolina pines? What would they think if they knew that some of the best moments of the last three days were spent absorbing John Wesley's *Journal* in the battered cabin that has been my home away from home?

I sit this foggy morning on Rocking Chair Porch, named for the 17 oak-bottomed rockers that crown the wide flagstone veranda. Down the greening lawn, beyond the red and white azaleas recovering from last night's rain, pink dogwood floats above the mirror of the grey-green lake. Mallards glide among the rippled shadows of the pines that line the water's edge.

On the farther shore, Canadian geese—AWOL from some northward-winging battle group—grow anxious and unsettled, honking and strutting as if deliberately to break the stillness. Perhaps for them, as for me, the quiet is an unaccustomed thing. Surely there must be a flight to take, a "V" to form, a deadline to meet, a battle to win. Somewhere, high above these silent pines, wide vistas call us on to higher, stronger effort.

Or do they? I still myself long enough to feel the blood move through my veins, to hear my heart beat with thankful regularity, to watch the bubbles from ascending fish and turtles break the surface of the lake. Why does the concept of retreat, so welcome in anticipation, seem so hard to realize? Why is it, in the absence of the stress and noise, our fickle souls require those very things or else are ill at ease?

We Adventists are a busy lot—hammering the world into shape, troweling mortar and laying block, tearing down false notions. We share an activism—some would say, a restlessness—shaped more by Revelation than by Ruth, by Proverbs more than Psalms. We've learned our lessons from

the ant: no sloths or sluggards we. But somehow Sabbath's green release has failed to fill our weekday lives. We crave a world in which we lead, command, assert, convince. We fret beside still waters.

"Retreat" sounds vaguely treasonous to people engaged in a great controversy between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. Reared on "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," we can't forget the second verse: "He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat." Weekend coordinators frequently apologize for the term: "It's really an *advance* we're holding here this weekend," they will say, just before announcing a mind-numbing schedule of workshops, seminars, and worship gatherings. To hear them talk, we've

only moved the battle to another field. Hurrying up the leaf-strewn paths, we are supposed to find a moment of epiphany among the pines, so long as it is brief, strategically significant, and reportable.

But nature and nature's God cannot be rushed or made to speak upon command. Wood thrushes do not sing at noon, nor does the Father reveal Himself because we have an extra quarter hour on our hands. The stillness in which God is known (Ps. 46:10) calls for a holy leisure, an uncluttered quietness in which the only movements we permit ourselves are those that keep our senses open and the rocker moving. A godly sense of wonder will uncover small, exquisite things—bees cavorting in azalea blooms, warblers chorusing at dawn, fog ascending in the warmth of slanting sunlight. The true worth of our remnant busyness will appear on a scale that spans from polliwogs to galaxies, and I suspect that half our activism will be shown for the urgent faithlessness it really is. My past reveals this lesson: what does not grow from quietness must often be repented of.

The Word reminds us, "In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." There in chosen backwardness Jesus found the grace and strength to win—for time, and for eternity.

To the victor goes the retreat.


ILLUSTRATION © DYNAMIC GRAPHICS

Essential Adventism

The phone call came unexpectedly. "I want to be baptized," said the voice on the other end of the line.

I didn't know her, I didn't know how she got my number, but I agreed to meet her halfway—at a church I pastored 72 miles from my home, 105 miles from hers (for many people, getting to church in northern Nevada requires more than a Sabbath day's journey).

When we met I learned her story: her only son had been killed in an automobile accident a few weeks before—just days after graduating from eighth grade. She had studied the Bible with different individuals and somehow decided that Adventism was closest to what the Bible taught. She wanted to know what she needed to do to be baptized.

I showed her around the small church, and then she and I sat down to discuss some of Adventism's fundamental beliefs. Two conflicting emotions wrestled in my consciousness: the desire that baptismal candidates be "thoroughly grounded," and the urge to restrain myself from unloading more than 100 years of Adventist teachings about doctrine and lifestyle.

We spent a couple hours together; I did most of the talking. We parted cordially. I followed up with a number of phone calls. But soon my telephone messages were left unanswered. Later I was told that she had to postpone her baptism, and still later she told me that she'd call me when she was ready to resume preparing for baptism. I never heard from her again.

As I reflected on that experience I realized that in my zeal to turn someone into an Adventist, I probably loaded her down with so much information that I squashed her desire to become one of Jesus' disciples. My crash course on Adventism had directed her focus to the teachings rather than the Teacher. And what made it (still) so frustrating is realizing that she wasn't the only one I did that to.

Adventists have been blessed with a wealth of knowledge about the Scriptures, about health, finances, recreation, and a host of other lifestyle issues. But sometimes overlooked in our efforts to get new members is the fact no one makes a good Adventist who hasn't first accepted Jesus as Saviour

and acknowledged His lordship in their life.

Granted, our ecclesiology requires more than a mere verbal assent before a person is considered a member in good standing, but is it possible that in our enthusiasm to communicate our fundamental beliefs, we fail to underscore the importance of having a relationship with the living Christ?

When the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they replied, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household*" (Acts 16:30, 31, NIV).

After Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, and Philip "*told him the good news about Jesus,*" the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" (Acts 8:35, 36, NIV).

Everything has a beginning. And the beginning of a life of discipleship comes by knowing Jesus. Christ is the foundation upon which everyone—the baby Christian as well as the most mature believer—can build their Christian experience. Well-meaning people over the years have tried to act as conscience to help others see their duty and do it, but only a relationship with Christ will assure genuine growth.

"Sanctification is the work of a lifetime," wrote Ellen White. "As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 65, 66).

New believers need a crash course in knowing Jesus—how to read His Word, how to hear His voice, how to know His will, how to reflect His character. Information about prophecy, diet, dress, recreation, and entertainment is valuable. But these lifestyle issues, by themselves, won't turn anyone into a candidate for God's kingdom.

However, knowing Jesus as Saviour, Lord, and Companion is invaluable. "For there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12, NIV).

*Knowing Jesus as
Saviour, Lord,
and Companion is
invaluable.*



GIVE & TAKE

LET'S PRAY

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

WE NEED YOU

Send Give & Take submissions to . . . Give & Take, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; E-mail: 74532.2564@CompuServe.com. Please include phone number. Submissions will not be returned.

ADVENTIST LIFE

When we first arrived here in Ishaka, we hired a 45-year-old man named Koja as our part-time gardener. During the interview I asked him if he knew how to garden. "A little" was his response.

"Do you know how to plant leafy green vegetables and also carrots?" I asked.

"No," he answered. "But I know how to plant corn."

So I kept busy teaching Koja how to plant and take care of salad greens and other vegetables. A few weeks later our garden was full of them, and several times Koja caught me nibbling on the crispy greens.

One day I told him that I was going for a four-week vacation. I gave him a packet of sweet corn seeds for planting. After four weeks I came back and saw neatly planted corn about five inches tall—but planted four inches apart.

"Why did you plant them so close to each other?" I asked. "The ears of corn won't grow big."

"Well," he replied, "I thought you would eat the leaves only."

—Leila Rocero, Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Bushenyi, Uganda, East Africa

Our church was running a Neighborhood Bible Club for the children in the community. All the songs we sang were written on large poster board and vividly decorated for the children's enjoyment. Since there was no place to store these large sheets, we laid them on the floor behind the piano.

One day the leader came to set up for the program and discovered that the church had been vandalized. The window behind the piano was broken, and muddy footprints were tracked over the words to the song "Oh, be careful, little feet, where you go."

—W. Welch, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

My cousin, visiting from Bristol, England, has quite a British accent. She attended church with us, and we were all invited to stay for lunch. Also at lunch was Timmy, 5-year-old grandson of the host.

Timmy stuck close to the English visitor, watching her closely and hanging on to her every word.

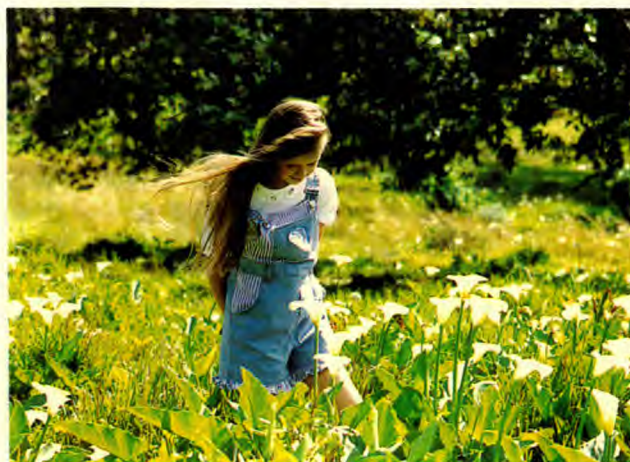
As we were leaving we heard him ask his grandmother, "Grandmother, is that lady speaking in tongues?"

—Joan Poole, Canby, Oregon



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

CONSIDER THE LILIES



SWEPT AWAY: A pupil of the SDA Hillcrest School in Cape Town, South Africa, admires the arum lilies on a spring day outing just across the highway from the school. Students are able to enjoy the amazing flora for which the Cape peninsula is famous. *Photo by Gwynneth Glass.*



That We Might Win Some

Another look at the controversial issue of the gospel and culture

BY JERALD WHITEHOUSE

"I now see how true it is that God has no favourites, but that in every nation the man who is godfearing and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34, 35, NEB).

probably would have been for Hebrew or perhaps Greek to teach the target group a language in which they could then understand the gospel. The Holy Spirit literally had to

push them out of their closet thinking into the sunshine of a wider world.

It all began with Pentecost.

Says the record: "Each one [of the multitude] heard them speaking in his own language" (Acts

2:6, NIV).

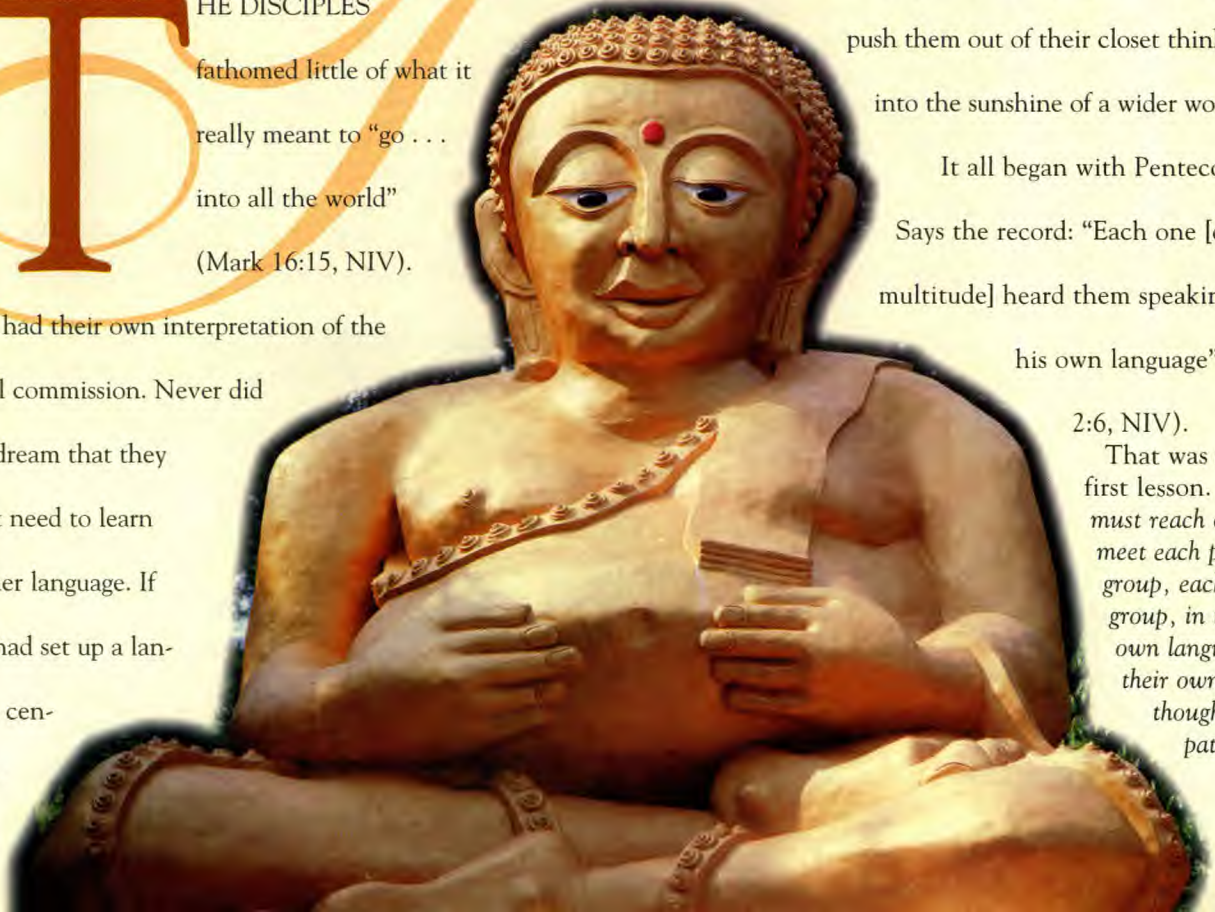
That was the first lesson. *Mission must reach out to meet each people group, each ethnic group, in their own language, their own thought patterns.*

THE DISCIPLES

fathomed little of what it really meant to "go . . . into all the world" (Mark 16:15, NIV).

They had their own interpretation of the gospel commission. Never did

they dream that they might need to learn another language. If they had set up a language center, it



Getting Started

But school had just begun for the early Christian church. Along the way we have the first traveling missionary, as Philip was instructed to follow a dusty road leading out of Hebrew land to the diversity of the continent of Africa, there to encounter and baptize not only a foreigner, but a eunuch—one whom they had been instructed should have no part with the people of God (Deut. 23:1). The Spirit apparently knew that the eunuch had no chance of being baptized in Jerusalem at church headquarters, that the only possibility would be a distant rendezvous where the only concern would be his acceptance of Jesus as Saviour and Lord (see Acts 8:26-40).

But Peter was not as easy to persuade. In Acts 10 we find the interesting story of one of his several moments of truth. The apostle has a vision of a sheet containing clean and unclean animals. He is hungry and hears the command: "Kill and eat." Then came the application: "Peter, some men are here looking for you; make haste and go down-stairs. You may go with them without any misgiving, for it was I who sent them."

Peter accompanies the representatives of Cornelius, a Roman and a convert who, though he worshiped the God of the Jews, had not adopted all the Jewish practices. Arriving at Cornelius's house, Peter had to convince himself that it was OK to be there. "I need not tell you," he said, "that a Jew is forbidden by his religion to visit or associate with a man of another race; yet God has shown me clearly that I must not call any man profane or unclean. That is why I came here without demur when you sent for me" (see verses 28, 29). Then came the words at the top of this article: "God does not play favorites."

This concept was to become even clearer to Peter by what happened next. "The believers who had come with Peter, men of Jewish birth, were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should have been poured out even on Gentiles" (verse 45, NEB). Under such direct intervention of the

Holy Spirit, how could baptism be refused to these Gentiles?

Resistance

Back in Jerusalem, however, it was a different story. "'You have been visiting men who are uncircumcised,' they said,⁶ and sitting at table with them'" (Acts 11:3, NEB). Peter tells his story, and they have no defense.

But their approach to mission does not change. Later in the chapter we find the statement that "those who had been scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen made their way to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, *bringing the message to Jews*



only and to no others" (verse 19, NEB). But the Holy Spirit was not about to stay out of the way, and the neat orderliness of these early evangelists was

soon interrupted by "natives of Cyprus and Cyrene among them, . . . [who,] when they arrived at Antioch, began to speak to Gentiles as well, telling them the good news of the Lord Jesus" (verse 20, NEB).

It took people born and raised in the more cosmopolitan environment of Cyprus and Cyrene, outside the strong monocultural Jewish mind-set, to reach out to those of different ethnic backgrounds and meet them in their own time and place.

This could be instructive for us as we grapple with the issue of what is the most appropriate instrument for reaching unreached peoples today. Even Peter, who rightly claimed to be chosen by God to preach to the Gentiles, was never able to get out of his Jewish skin sufficiently to really minister effectively to other ethnic groups. It was left to Paul, born in the cosmopolitan trading center of Tarsus, to lead the advance toward the unreached peoples of Asia and Europe.

The early church had to learn that the gospel must be communicated contextually, that it knows no ethnic boundaries, and that it must be presented with the mind-set of the receiver in mind. They had to wrestle with the problem of *how* these new converts should respond to the gospel.

That was the subject matter of the first church council, recorded in Acts 15. Peter's speech is critical. But it was the reality of distant mission successes among diverse peoples, as told by Paul and his associates, that carried the most weight. The final decision: *Within certain core guidelines, Gentiles should not be required to become Jews in order to be regarded as true believers.*

How About Us?

As we face the challenges of Global Mission, the leading of God in the early Christian church could give us critical guidance. What is the nature of mission today? What should the remnant in each people group really look like?

In this context mission is at least as diverse as the number of people groups on the globe. The very nature of mission demands that we not rest in the

notion that since we have the message we also have the method. Nor that we alone have the correct way of expressing or responding to the message. Just as the message must be "discovered" and uniquely responded to by each generation, becoming their own, so too must it be discovered and uniquely responded to by each cultural group, becoming their own.

Jesus could incarnate Himself into only one culture. Through us He wants to incarnate Himself into every culture, to assume the dress of each group, to restore eternal truth to a setting that makes it meaningful in that culture.

We must stand in the midst of the mosque and ask God, "What is the mission, Your mission, today in this time and place?" We must reverently enter the peaceful quiet of the Buddhist temple, wade into the river of Hinduism, respectfully enter the shrine of Shintoism, and ask God: "How are You working here, and how can I cooperate with Your Spirit to reach these people?"

I recall several experiences that have forced me to face that question. One was when I had only a few weeks left before an Adventist Egyptian family and mine would be the last Adventist workers to leave the country of Libya. With 12 years of Adventist presence and no visible fruit, the answer to the question became

clearer as I realized that we had Libyan hospital workers who had never been visited even once in their homes by an Adventist worker.

I recalled going to some of their homes during a flood and standing knee-deep in water inside their houses with them, then purchasing some blankets and other items to assist them. But few personal acquaintances and friendships through mutual home visits had occurred.

It became clear in those final moments that the least I could do was to visit each one in their homes and offer to pray with them, mentioning that though we might not ever see each other again on this earth, I would like to see them in God's paradise. If they would be faithful to God and open to His leading, I said to them, we will see each other again. Then I left a simple tract with each of them,

reviewing the qualities of the faithful believers in Allah in the last days as we together prepared for the day of judgment and the second coming of the Messiah.

There was no time—nor even the need—to give them all our 27 fundamental beliefs. Only time to deal with the matter of *heart allegiance to God as they could grasp it from within their cultural context* at that time and place. It was mission with a

unique focus and method for a particular time and place.

It's Happening

The mission is as diverse as the need.

I had cause to reassess the diversity of mission a few months ago as I sat with a group of believers in Jesus within the Muslim community in a particular Muslim country—members of a group that now numbers several hundred and who remain in their communities, living and communicating in Muslim dress the eternal truths of the gospel and the three angels' messages. Adventists? Yes! God's remnant in the Muslim community? Yes!

To allow this kind of diversity in our mission and in the response to the gospel necessitates a definition of what is core and essentially Adventist. But I think that affirmation of such diversity is prerequisite for the unity that we so strongly advocate and desire. To force unity while denying diversity—because

we fear the latter would fracture us—is not realizing that we cannot relate to each other in supportive and unifying ways unless we each possess a sense of God-given identity and self-worth rooted in our particular



culture and in God's acceptance of us.

How It Will Be

God's vision of the future is of a diverse people, each praising Him from their own uniqueness.

Let's do a bit of "visioning," or "futuring." Look at Revelation 7 and 21, and Isaiah 56. John and Isaiah saw a people from every people group, from every tongue. How did he know? Their cultural/linguistic differences were somehow still evident to John as he saw them gathered on the sea of glass. Even heaven—at least, when we arrive—doesn't suddenly make us all White, or all Black, or change our native tongues. But we'll be communicating regardless. And it will be far better than Pentecost.

But we will each bring our praise from our unique perspective, our unique experience, our unique "dress"—even our uniquely cultural way of understanding and organizing

the glorious eternal truths of the gospel. This chorus, this mosaic, is infinitely powerful in proclaiming God's worthiness precisely

because of its great diversity. To do anything less would be a travesty, a self-proclaimed denunciation of the government of God.

The infinite God who so highly respects our personal freedom wouldn't dare force loyalty, love, or a praise response from His creatures. Picture it if the praise were all the same from each. All the people mouthing the same words, the same songs, the same testimonies, repeating the same phrases. What a sham! What a travesty! An indictment of the very principle of freedom upon which the whole great controversy rests.

I have watched, fascinated, as the

Tibetan Buddhists sat in their shops or walked around the stupa twirling their prayer wheels. But I wonder if we are so distant from such practices when we figuratively insist that everyone sing out of the same "songbook." No! Everyone will be singing songs of praise from their own unique background, experience, and cultural ways of celebrating and praising.

Some may say, "But aren't we in danger of losing our unique remnant status—the Adventist 'spin'?" Adventism is not

*We must stand
in the midst of
the mosque and
ask God, "What
is the mission—
Your mission—
today in this time
and place?"*

just about a certain conservative, vegetarian, North American lifestyle.

Adventism is a certain set of principles, a certain understanding of God, the great controversy, the personal ministry of Christ for us, and how we relate to each other in the context of these last days, lived out in a humble, godly lifestyle and expressed appropriately, simply, and joyously in a diversity of cultures.

Adventism speaks ultimately of a certain supratribal union that transcends tribe—not obliterating them, but affirming, transforming, and then transcending them. We will not have unity in diversity by forcing unity. But first we must celebrate and affirm the diversity with the principles of the gospel for these last days, then the unity will be a by-product as the Holy Spirit leads us into that supratribal realm of *agape* relationships.

Scott Peck, in his book *The Different Drum*, puts it this way: "Traditional thinking says: 'If we can resolve our conflicts, then someday we shall be able to live together in community.' Could it be that we have it totally backward? And that the real dream should be: 'If we can live together in community, then someday we shall be able to resolve our conflicts?'" (p. 72).

We won't suddenly attain to some magical state of oneness when we reach heaven. We will carry on from the state of unity in diversity that we achieve under the power of the Holy Spirit on the earth in these last days. We must also allow and encourage each cultural group to discover the eternal truths for themselves and express their response to those truths in ways meaningful to them. Mission is to be the spiritual midwife to such a new birth process with every people group.

The early Christian church went through a painful process of evaluating what was essential and what diversity could be allowed in response to the gospel. We are in the midst of just such a process today as Global Mission forces us to confront the unfinished task, particularly among the high-solidarity people groups that have been unresponsive to our traditional methods.

I am confident we will reach that sea of glass. But I am also confident it will be only as we first accept, respect, and affirm a uniquely adapted mission to every people group and a genuine response to the gospel from within each people group.

"No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me." "For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Jer. 31:34, NIV; see also Isa. 56:7). ■

Jerald Whitehouse is director of the Global Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations in Loma Linda, California.



The Adventist Anthem

A hope that burns within our hearts

BY BILL KNOTT

HYMNWRITERS MUST BE patient folk. The love they pour into the lines will often wait for years before it resonates with the experience of the church, if ever it does. Today we sing fewer than 1 percent of the hymns composed by Charles Wesley; even fewer of Fanny Crosby's.

But once in every era a graced hymnwriter produces a polished gem that matches all the hope and longing of the church, and instantly (or at least, very soon) it takes on anthem status. "Blessed Assurance," "In the Garden," and "Lift Up the Trumpet" have been those hymns in eras past.

For Seventh-day Adventists, the appearance of Wayne Hooper's "We Have This Hope" at the 1962 General Conference session in San Francisco was cause for

celebration. The stirring music, departing from a theme by Brahms, was matched by words that captured the church's attitude of joyful confidence in Christ's soon return.

Hooper's hymn has been selected as the General Conference session theme song for three more gatherings since 1962, including the one at Utrecht, Holland, in 1995, where a second verse, added by the composer, was also sung.

Many Adventist congregations around the globe have come to treasure "We Have This Hope." It has also become a favorite for youth rallies, conferences, and retreats. But in many small churches the musical skills required to play the version printed in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (No. 214) have proved too challenging.

As a service to a movement that already loves this hymn, the *Adventist Review* is printing Wayne Hooper's new, simplified version of the tune, complete with the second verse he added three years ago.

And though we don't usually recommend defacing your copy of the *Review*, cut out the facing page, put it on the piano in your home or church, and remind yourself and those you love of the One for whom we wait. ■

Bill Knott is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*.



WE HAVE THIS HOPE

Theme song for General Conference Session, 1962, 1966, 1975, 1995

Words & Music by Wayne Hooper

We have this hope that burns with - in our hearts, Hope in the
We are u - ni - ted in Je - sus Christ our Lord, We are u -

coming of the Lord. We have this hope that Christ a - lone im - parts,
ni - ted in His love. Love for the wait - ing peo - ple of the world,

Faith in the prom - ise of His Word. We be - lieve the time is here,
Peo - ple who need our Sav - ior's love. Soon the heav'ns will o - pen wide,

When the na - tions far and near, Shall a - wake, and shout, and sing, Hal - le - lu - jah!
Christ will come to claim His bride, All the un - i - verse will sing, Hal - le - lu - jah!

Christ is King! We have this hope that burns with - in our
Christ is King! We have this hope, that faith, and God's great

hearts, Hope in the com - ing of the Lord.
love, We are u - ni - ted in Christ.

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The Nature of Christ

ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

Why do some people say that the title "God" in Titus 2:13 does not refer to Jesus? The passage seems very clear: "While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (NIV).

Sometimes what is obvious to one person is not as obvious to another. Why? Because we often bring to our reading of the Bible some of our own personal ideas and convictions.

In this particular case a person who concludes, based on his or her reading of other biblical passages, that Jesus is not God will make an effort to bring this passage into agreement with that conviction. Those who conclude that Christ is God will argue the opposite.

There's nothing wrong in using the general biblical teaching on a topic to inform and influence our interpretation of a particularly problematic passage. However, we should always be open to the possibility that our general understanding of a biblical concept may not necessarily be right. Passages that do not seem to conform to our preunderstanding may serve to correct erroneous or unbalanced views.

Whenever a biblical teaching is clearly discernible, an attempt to harmonize the difficult passages with it would be appropriate. In those cases we have to pay close attention to the language used by the author and the historical, religious, and cultural backgrounds that may have motivated the author to express the idea in a way that may appear to be out of balance with the prevailing biblical perspective. Such investigation may result in an exegetically sound harmonization or in the recognition that the passage may not be clear enough to contradict or support the general teaching of the Scriptures. Then we wait for further evidence or new insights that will solve the apparent tension.

Look at Titus 2:13. The central question is: Are the titles "the great God and Savior" referring to one Person, Jesus, or do we have here a reference first to the Father and then to Jesus as Saviour? The King James Version takes the second option: "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Here's a literal translation of the phrase under consideration: "the great God and Saviour of us Jesus Christ." From a

grammatical point of view the passage could be understood in either of the two ways. The article "the" could be connected only with "great God" and not with "Saviour."

How do we decide? One could argue that in general the New Testament avoids calling Jesus God. However, there are some passages in which He is called God (2 Peter 2:20; John 20:28), and this could be another one of those. Besides, Greek grammar indicates that if we have one definite article ("the") and two nouns connected by the conjunction "and," the article governs both

nouns. In other words, "the great God and Savior" is designating one person, further defined in the sentence as "Jesus Christ." This would be the most natural way of reading the passage in the original Greek.

An argument that tips the balance is the use of the noun "appearing." That noun always applies to Jesus in the New Testament and not to the Father (1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1, 8; 2 Thess. 2:8). Equally important is what is said in Titus 2:14, where it suggests that in the previous verse Paul was not talking about two different Persons (the Father and the Son), but about one. He develops the thought by saying the one (our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ) "who gave himself for us to redeem us" (NIV).

We also know that the phrase "God and Saviour" was employed in pagan religious settings as a religious title used to designate only one person, a particular pagan deity. Paul may have used these two titles in order to state in unambiguous terms that Jesus Christ is the only true "God and Saviour," and that at a particular moment He will appear in all His glory to those He will redeem.

Although the sentence could be interpreted either as a witness to the deity of Jesus or as a reference to the Father and to our Saviour, a contextual analysis suggests that the more likely and more correct interpretation is the first one.

Jesus Christ is the only true "God and Saviour."

Angel Manuel Rodríguez is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference.



A Few Good People

*When you think the game is over
for the church, think again.*

BY JERIS E. BRAGAN

A TOUR GROUP IS LED THROUGH A small London art gallery. A docent, showing the group through, stops before a large painting of Mephistopheles playing chess with Faust. She points out that only a few pieces remain on the chessboard before Faust: the king, a rook, a and few pawns.

On Satan's side of the board most of the chess pieces remain.

Clearly in agony, Faust is bowed low over the board, running his hands through his hair, pain on his face. Mephistopheles sits with a smirk on his face. Below the painting is its title: *Checkmate*.

"Medieval legend holds that Faust sold his soul to the devil for wisdom and knowledge," the docent explains. "Now Satan is collecting. *Checkmate* says it all."

Soon the group moves on to other paintings.

But Boris, one of Russia's great chess masters, stays behind. Fifteen minutes pass as he focuses intently on the painting. Suddenly a broad grin spreads across his face.

"The king has another move!" he shouts.

Checkmate?

Circumstances wrote "Checkmate" in large letters across the church on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.

Everybody was present in the upper

room. In fact, the same group had been there almost every day since the first week after the Resurrection.

Peter was the leader. But with only 120 men and women, this wasn't that much of an administrative challenge. The other apostles—a handful of fishermen, a tax collector, and assorted Galileans who were more available than able—were also present.

Seven weeks earlier the women had returned from the tomb with stunning news: "He is not dead! He is risen! He is risen, indeed!"

Now Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome, and even Mary the mother of our Lord were back to doing the cleaning, cooking, and all those other ordinary tasks reserved exclusively for women in the ancient world.

Every day friends gathered in the evening to reminisce. They remembered the lessons Jesus taught them. They told of the journey from the Sea of Galilee to Jerusalem, of the great parade that welcomed them into the city on Palm Sunday. And they talked about the rest of that terrible, mystifying week that went straight downhill until their Master was arrested, tried, convicted, and executed.

Seven weeks after that first Easter, they may have written some songs to use in their worship—hymns of the Resurrection, hymns that recalled the encounter they'd had with the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus. And they were praying intently.





But in all honesty, not much else was happening. Some of them had been with Jesus from the very beginning—nearly four years. What did they have to show for it? About a hundred formal followers. Not a great legacy. Yes, Jesus had risen. They knew that. But now He had

ascended into heaven, leaving them so terribly alone.

In the upper room before His death, He'd promised to return. But days had turned into weeks, and they were worried, a pall of sadness resting over them. With not much reason to be hopeful, they still prayed.

The Church Is Born

Dismal though the future looked, the King had one more move!

On that Jewish festival day of Pentecost, there in the upper room the presence of God swept in like a mighty wind, as a sacred fire of faith that came to rest in the lives of all

who were there.

They were transformed!

Taking to the city streets, they preached the good news of the gospel.

People were attracted. And the church was born. And in less than 100 years they had spread the good news of the gospel as far east as India, as far west as Spain, and as far south as Ethiopia.

But by the second century the church was in trouble again. The Roman government, looking for a scapegoat to blame for the failure of its policies, put the blame on leaders of the church. Hunted down like criminals, they were arrested and thrown into prison. And ordinary members were torn apart by wild animals for the entertainment of the people.

Checkmate! It is all over?

But God had another move. The blood of martyrs became the seed of the church. And pagans, far from being repulsed, were stunned by the courage these Christians displayed in death and became attracted to the faith.

The character of Christians was to become even more evident early in the third century, when an epidemic swept through Rome. Terrified by the disease that killed 5,000 people a day, Romans by the thousands abandoned their loved ones when simply a little nursing care might have saved their lives. In that setting they could not help noticing that Christians, by contrast, did not abandon their sick, but rather risked their lives to save them.

Word began to spread: "See how they love one another."

Hundreds of years later another set of difficult circumstances plagued the church. While the medieval church was the most powerful institution in Europe—more powerful than any government—it was nevertheless rotting from within because of a series of corrupt popes more concerned about their personal wealth and pleasure than about serving Christ.

Checkmate!

But God had another move. At a

At a time when the church should have collapsed and disappeared into obscurity, it flourished.

time when the church should have collapsed and disappeared into obscurity, it flourished. God raised up a few good people to spread the Word—Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others—with a new understanding of the faith that reformed and transformed the church.

A Few Good Adventists

Down through the centuries there have been many difficult times when it seemed that the church was little more than a candle in the wind about to go out. But then a word comes from the Lord. Flames erupt. Reformation begins. The church is renewed.

Like the first Christians, Adventist history began—in 1844—in the midst of disappointment, despair, and humiliation.

Checkmate!

That should have been the end.

But God had one more move.

Ellen, a young, poorly educated woman, and her husband, James White. These two people, joined by a small group of disappointed Millerites, began the Adventist movement.

For these early Adventist pioneers, *sola scriptura* wasn't just a slogan. They possessed an abiding conviction that God was calling them—a small band of obscure and unimportant people—to continue the Reformation begun by Martin Luther and other Reformers. They dug into their Bibles. There, like so many

time-release capsules, old but forgotten truths about the Sabbath, the state of the dead, the pre-Advent judgment, and much more burst into focus.

Like those obscure disciples in the upper room, these equally obscure early Adventists were seized by a God-given vision of a worldwide ministry of preaching and healing, a vision of judgment for a dying world.

Theirs was an impossible dream. But since they didn't know it couldn't be done, they went to work, acutely conscious of the Holy Spirit working through them.

Thus empowered, they went about establishing churches, schools, hospitals, publishing houses, and other institutions to support a worldwide ministry.

Today descendants of those early Adventists approach 10 million in number, ministering in every nation on earth.

Like the first disciples, we Adventists have our share of intramural theological and organizational conflicts. Debates over circumcision or eating meat offered to idols aren't big issues for contemporary Adventists. But we find other matters to squabble about. *Discouragement sets in. Churches splinter. Charismatic pastors and other leaders fall from grace. Individual members abandon their faith. The devil smirks.*

Checkmate!

But God has yet another move. He works through the lives of a few good people empowered by the Holy Spirit to renew the life of the church in the world.

Today the church remains a candle in the wind. It always has been. But that flame is fueled by the Holy Spirit, and nothing can blow it out! ■

Jeris E. Bragan writes from a prison in Nashville, Tennessee.

Questions About Origins

I notice that often when referring to different groups, Seventh-day Adventists in North America use hyphenated racial designations: African-American, Asian-American, Mexican-American, etc. Would not the work in the United States be blessed if you would drop this attitude and function as truly one?

Eliminating the designations before the hyphens would not eliminate the obvious existence of minority cultures. In fact, it would be dysfunctional in that it would retard the capacity to focus upon specific challenges, that is, housing, education, health, etc., in both the majority and minority sectors.

Cultural distinctiveness manifests itself in almost every facet of American life, including worship patterns, family traditions, musical tastes, political preferences, etc. Christ's love makes us tolerant and genuinely accepting of other cultures, and it provides a commonality of doctrinal belief and spiritual oneness, but it is questionable to assert that it intends or generates cultural homogeneity.

Christianity transcends ethnicity. It does so in the sense that it, not culture, drives our obedience to the commandments, that is, our relationship to God and to one another. However, even here culture is very much involved in that it influences to a great degree one's understanding of what God is commanding.

Thomas Jefferson's dream of America as a melting pot of nations has been largely achieved for numerous groups. Generations of intermarriage have muted, if not fused, what were once the distinctive physical and behavioral characteristics of many European immigrant cultures. That is not, however, a pervasive reality for various minorities—especially those from Asia, Africa, India, and many places in Latin America.

Aside from the rightness or wrongness of attitudes and laws that have produced this reality, it is not helpful to plan God's work as if it doesn't exist. Rather than denying the sociological pluralism or cultural "salad bowl" arrangement of the United States, or any other nation, we are wise to meet its challenges with informed intentionality. This approach should include ways of celebrating the rich variety of "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" who comprise God's family, and structuring practical means of building unity in diversity.

Many say that our short chronology posture on the age of the earth is bad science and locks us into an impossible position. It may take some courage to admit our error, but would that not be better than plodding along as if modern earth-dating methods are invalid?

There are good reasons for regarding Scripture as more reliable than science in questions of origin. One is that science, by modern definition, is inadequate to explain the supernatural. Another is that significant data in the geological column challenge the

long chronology position. Evidences of catastrophism and large-scale deformation and upheaval point to "time" gaps in the rock record that make a short chronology quite plausible.

We do lock ourselves in, however, when we become absorbed in the "prove it" debate. Indeed, we cannot *prove* Creation, or for that matter, the existence of the Creator; we "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

We have strong evidence to substantiate our faith. This includes the order, immensity, and complexity of the universe; the unity of Scripture; the fulfillment of prophecy; and most of all, answers to prayer and the effect of the gospel upon our lives. But while ours is a reasoning faith, we don't have empirical proof. In fact, where there is proof we don't need faith; faith (in this sense) and proof are mutually exclusive.

The truly courageous are those who accept by spiritual insight what physical eyesight cannot process.

One helpful definition states that "faith is love and knowledge trembling on the verge of a certainty which, if gained, nullifies its need." For some, the vulnerability inherent in such absolute trust is too heavy a burden to bear. Consequently their belief in God relies upon hard data rather than firm relationship.

We are correct to refer to God via His handiwork. However, we should do so knowing that the unwillingness to believe what we cannot prove is a major source of unblessed claims and unclaimed blessings.

*Christianity
transcends
ethnicity.*

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



Standard Bearers Old and New

I often hear the expression "the Spirit of Prophecy says," as if the Spirit of Prophecy is a person. Who or what is the Spirit of Prophecy, and what is its influence in the Adventist Church?

When people in your church declare "The Spirit of Prophecy says," 99 times out of 100 they are referring to the writings of Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They do this because Ellen White (1827-1915) holds a unique place in the life of the Adventist Church, and because her writings have special authority for Adventists. Let me explain.

In Old Testament times God revealed His will through men and women to whom He had given the prophetic gift (Heb. 1:1; Amos 3:7). In New Testament times the church was given spiritual gifts by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11, 28; Eph. 4:11-13). Among these was the gift of prophecy. G. I. Butler, president of the General Conference in the early days of the church, defined the term *spirit of prophecy* as "that spirit which causes certain persons to prophesy." "This Spirit," he wrote, "comes upon certain ones. They speak as they are moved upon by this Spirit. Future events or things necessary for the well-being of the church to know are thus revealed" (*Review and Herald*, June 2, 1874).

Seventh-day Adventists, after applying to Ellen White all the biblical tests of a true prophet, believe that she was "the recipient of the gift of prophecy in the Bible sense of a duly accredited and authoritative spokesman for God" (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1976), p. 1412. Further, because Revelation 19:10 declares that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" and Revelation 12:17 states that the "remnant" church will have the "testimony of Jesus," we have seen in this text a forecast of Mrs. White's ministry.

Gradually church members have come to use the expression "Spirit of Prophecy" as a kind of shorthand to refer to Mrs. White's writings. (For a comprehensive treatment of Ellen White's life and ministry, as well as the way the prophetic gift has operated in both ancient and modern times, read *Messenger of the Lord*, available soon at your Adventist Book Center.)

By Kenneth H. Wood, chair of the board of trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate.

My son has been involved in Boy Scouts for several years. I know that Adventists have Pathfinders, but I wonder if my son should leave the Scouts in order to become a Pathfinder. He has so many good friends in Scouts.

To most people, Pathfinders are sports utility vehicles built by Nissan. To Seventh-day Adventists, however, Pathfinders are young people who belong to a Scout-type club where they are taught to love God supremely and serve humankind.

Pathfinder Clubs were inaugurated in southern California soon after World War II. Though in many ways Pathfinders function like Scouts, the Christ-centered emphasis of this program makes it unique.

Pathfinding is not merely a program to entertain children in grades 5-10. It's a ministry that leads young people into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Pathfinders are helped to (1) understand that the church loves, cares for, appreciates, and needs them; (2) discover God's plan for their lives; and (3) prepare for lives of service.

Pathfinders are also taught to develop an appreciation for nature and a concern for the environment. They learn specific skills and hobbies that make life meaningful and occupy time profitably. They are given leadership responsibilities as they demonstrate their abilities.

Pathfinders enjoy camporees (which are the equivalent of the Boy Scouts' jamborees)—an outdoor, mostly tent-camping event that lasts about five days. Since 1985 Pathfinders have had a North America-wide camporee every four or five years. The next large camporee will be held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on August 10-14, 1999. Twenty thousand participants are expected to attend.

In partnership with parents and church leaders, Pathfinder staffs aim to help Pathfinders achieve excellence and develop meaningful relational skills, to prepare not only for life in this world but also for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Does the Pathfinder Club make a difference in the lives of young people today? Yes, a thousand times, yes. Put Pathfinding to the test, and you will see the results in the lives of your children.

By Willie Oliver, director of Pathfinder Ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

This column is intended to answer questions asked by new Adventists and by those unfamiliar with Adventist terminology. Send your questions to *Adventism 101*, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

Southern Publishing Association Brings Good News to South Africa

BY GLEN ROBINSON, SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR FOR PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION IN NAMPA, IDAHO

In this day and age it's always good to hear that an Adventist institution is being effective in spreading the good news of salvation. It's even better to hear that it is financially sound after years of financial instability that threatened to close its doors. This is the story of Southern Publishing Association (SPA) in South Africa.

Long History

SPA dates back to 1890, when the Review and Herald Publishing Association sent a small handpress to Adventist pioneer D. A. Robinson. In 1895 the first Adventist tract in an African language (Xhosa) was printed. In September 1895 the first issue of the English-language *South African Sentinel* was published, followed by *De Wachter*, a Dutch paper.

Initially the press carried the name South African Publishing Company (it was renamed Sentinel Publishing Company in 1916). In 1920 the publishing house grew to include large books, and as the colporteur work expanded in the Southern Africa Division, the publishing company expanded as well

and was renamed Southern Publishing Association in 1982.

Unfortunately, the house fell upon hard times in the early 1990s.



Robert Kyte

The marketing programs and literature evangelism program struggled. Credit came too easily, and SPA was unsuccessful in collecting customer debt. Book production outstripped sales, and inventories grew. Rather than purchasing new equipment, Southern Publishing Association leased it with enormous balloon payments at the end of the lease.

In 1992 the General Conference appointed Larry Johnson as press manager with the mandate to see if SPA could be saved. He determined that it could, but only with major changes.



Larry Johnson

The production area was reduced, and staff was cut from 66 to 22.

"The press had to be downsized to reflect the marketplace more appropriately,"

Johnson says today. "We needed to rebuild the image of the Southern Publishing Association from a factory into that of a service organization."

Strict Conditions

In 1996 the General Conference asked for help from Pacific Press Publishing Association. Pacific Press agreed to help under the following conditions:

1. Southern Publishing Association would return to ownership control of the Southern Africa Union Conference (SAUC).



V. S. Wakaba

2. The General Conference would take over several loans made to SPA that related to operating expense and not capital improvement.

3. Pacific Press Publishing Association would manage SPA, but would not be expected to provide financial support for its operation.

The Southern Africa Union Conference executive committee agreed to these terms and entered into a management agreement with Pacific Press. SAUC president V. S. Wakaba agreed to serve as board chair, with Robert E. Kyte, PPPA president, as vice chair, and Ross Lauterbach, financial VP for PPPA, as a board member as well. Pacific Press selected Kenneth Jameson, at that time manager of the Arkansas-Louisiana Adventist Book Center, to serve as the new manager.

Strictly Cash

The literature evangelism program was modified, moving from a credit to a strictly cash selling program. Under the leadership of Peter Hurter, the literature evangelism program grew and evolved. Today literature evangelists are active in South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, and Lesotho, and about 75 percent of the SPA's business is generated by literature evangelists. The LEs achieved record sales in 1997, with more than

2.5 million rand (US\$505,000) worth of books being distributed.

With the changes implemented by Johnson and additional changes brought by Pacific Press, the cost to SPA of producing products decreased from 110 percent of market price to 45 percent. With a more efficient approach, time, funding, and energy could finally be invested in new products.

New Products

Pacific Press helped SPA strengthen its marketing program to the church. In addition, as part of the working agreement, Pacific Press and SPA were able to produce the children's book set *Great Stories for Kids* in Afrikaans. Plans are under way to produce other books with Pacific Press, including health books in English and Afrikaans.

"SPA would never have been able

to do any of these projects on their own," says Jameson. "I count our relationship with PPPA as one of the most

*God has a work
for Southern
Publishing
Association to do
in Africa.*

important assets, for without it, SPA would have closed."

Presently SPA prints about 45,000 Sabbath school Bible study guides per quarter in seven languages; *Advent*

Hymns in 13 languages; the Southern Africa Union paper, *Maranatha*, in two languages; some job printing for the union, local conferences, and Helderberg College; subscription books in numerous languages; and special print jobs.

New Gains

According to Jameson, the year 1996 was the first in many years that SPA operations showed a financial gain. According to audited statements, 1997 looks good financially as well. Currently SPA is basically debt-free. In 1997 press officials paid off a R470,000 (US\$95,000) mortgage on their building and all the long-term contracts on equipment.

"There are many challenges both in house and out," says Jameson. "But God has a work for SPA to do in Africa."

NEWS BREAK

Russian Adventist Leader Confirms Worsening Climate for Religious Liberty

Media reports of increasing religious liberty problems in Russia are true, says a Seventh-day Adventist administrator based in Tula, Russia.

Ivan Ostrovsky, Southern Conference president, says Adventists are seeing greater difficulties, especially when it comes to public outreach. A recent decision by the local government in Tula to ban the use of public buildings is just one example, according to Ostrovsky.

"We do not have the freedom that we had before in renting public halls," says Ostrovsky. "More and more we are feeling the pressure from the Orthodox Church. Two weeks ago I was in the small city of Ludenova in my region. An evangelistic meeting was just finishing, and a baptism was planned.

"We were disappointed to see that the local newspaper [had] printed articles against the church, saying that Adventists were trying to take the Orthodox faith away from the Russian people." Ostrovsky also says that such incidents are not isolated.

"This is not just a problem in the Tula region. It's a problem in many parts of Russia. We also have been unable to verify the 'presidential order' that the municipal authorities have cited."

Reacting for the United States-based International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA), Richard Lee Fenn said that they shared similar concerns for the state of religious freedom in Russia.

"The increasing number of cases we are hearing about indicate that once the restrictive law was enacted in September 1997, this was seen by some authorities as a green light to oppose minority religions," says Fenn. "We fully support IRLA-Russia's effort to eliminate restrictions that violate the Russian Federation Constitution."—*Adventist News Network*.

Pentecost '98 Commences in South Africa

When the organizers of Pentecost '98 launched the satellite evangelistic series in late April in Soweto, South Africa, more than 80,000 persons attended the opening-night ceremonies in 12 African countries, reports Emmanuel Nlo Nlo, communication director for the Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

The five-week series, featuring lay evangelist Fitz Henry, of Jamaica, is being uplinked to approximately 500 sites throughout Africa. More sites were launched as the meetings continued.

"The transmissions have been successfully received as far away as Windsor, England, as well as in most of the

Millennium Madness in the Holy City

BY ROGER HUNTER, TEACHER, STANBOROUGH SCHOOL, WATFORD, ENGLAND

As New Year's Day 2000 approaches, Israeli authorities are bracing themselves for an estimated 4 million pilgrims planning to arrive in the Holy Land. But many of the prospective visitors aren't just looking for a good party; they're expecting something much bigger. "Some are not planning to return home," says London's May 17 *Sunday Telegraph*. Other reports have people already selling their possessions and taking up residence on the Mount of Olives.

The approaching turn of the millennium has only intensified the religious mania the Holy Land has, for years, inspired. The "Jerusalem Syndrome," says Israeli psychiatrist Dr. Bar-El, usually afflicts fundamentalist Protestants. The symptoms would be comical were they not so serious.

On arriving in Jerusalem, the sufferer is simply overwhelmed by the place. He or she then becomes obsessed

with self-purification, will dress up in white sheets (usually taken from hotel bedrooms), and will find a public place to preach hellfire and approaching doom to any willing listeners.

Understandably there are concerns about what this condition, coupled with worldwide millennium fever, might do to the huge number of Armageddon hunters on their way to Israel. Equally concerning is the small number of fanatics who wish to "help" prophecy along by carrying out such reckless acts as burning down mosques and other Muslim shrines.

But perhaps the saddest thing about all of this is the way it ridicules the concept of the Second Coming. Until then, in the face of hysteria let us be rational and loving Christians, showing that we value all human beings whether Christ returns in A.D. 2000—or much later.

NEWS COMMENTARY

NEWS BREAK

countries in Africa, reports Warren Judd, president of Adventist Media Productions, which is coordinating the broadcasts. "The whole concept of 'live by satellite' seems to have really caught the imagination of people. It is rewarding to hear of the excitement and the thousands of people who are tuning in."

***Está Escrito* Makes a Breakthrough in Central and South America**

Está Escrito, It Is Written's Hispanic ministry, will now be available to 240 million Spanish-speaking viewers in South America and parts of Central America via satellite.

In the past year the program has aired in Chile, resulting in 1,000 baptisms," says Royce C. Williams, director of international services for IIW. "This new release quadruples the number of potential viewers."

Now the broadcast will be available in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela.

Adventist Health Ranks Third in North America

In a recent ranking of America's top 100 integrated health-care systems, Adventist Health (AH) was ranked third in the nation. The study, conducted by a Chicago-

based marketing firm, was reported in *Hospitals and Health Networks*, the official publication of the American Hospital Association.

The study evaluated 23 organizational factors, including physicians, financial position, services and access, and system-wide coordination. Based in California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington, Adventist Health has 85 distinct business units, including 20 acute-care facilities, numerous clinics and outpatient facilities, 19 home health agencies, nine hospices, and seven home-care services.

Other Adventist health-care organizations in the top 100 ranking included Glendale-based Adventist Health/Southern California (22), Orlando-based Florida Hospital Healthcare System (30), and Adventist Health System, based in Winter Park, Florida (92).

Four Adventist Publications Garner 12 ACP Awards

Four Adventist magazines, including the *Adventist Review*, won 12 awards at the Associated Church Press convention in Hendersonville, North Carolina, April 19-22.

Liberty magazine received eight Awards of Excellence, Awards of Merit, and Honorable Mention, in a variety of categories ranging from writing and editing to graphics and design. *Signs of the Times* received two Awards of



Test Your Global Mission IQ

1. Tim Winkelmann, a youth volunteer at the Greeley, Colorado, church, uses a new method of outreach. He calls it Net evangelism. Tim gets acquainted with people through the Internet and dialogues with them about their spiritual needs. He has referred two people to local pastors for baptism. He currently studies with five others on the Internet. How many of the following means of winning people to Christ is Tim using?

- A. Teaching Bible truths C. Giving Bible studies
B. Making friends D. Meeting them where they are

2. Malaitan coastal villages have known Christianity for years, but the mountain people have resisted it. Years ago Brian Dunn, a nurse at Atoifi Hospital on Malaita, was fatally speared when he tried to work among them. Global Mission has now funded Malaitan volunteers trained in evangelism to reach them. The volunteers' stipend is \$50 a week. Of what South Pacific island group is Malaita a part?

- A. Marshall Islands
B. Cook Islands

- C. Vanuatu (New Hebrides)
D. Solomon Islands

3. Along the coast of Lake Maracaibo and the state of Zulia, there were no Adventists, while the rest of the country had 310 churches and nearly 80,000 members. Groups of lay persons volunteered to go to other locations. After six weeks and 114 baptisms, four churches and two companies were organized. This region is nine degrees north of the equator and 550 miles east of the Panama Canal. What country is it?

- A. Venezuela C. Colombia
B. Suriname D. Ecuador

Answers

1. He uses all four methods.
2. D. Solomon Islands. One in 17 are Adventists here, but unentered areas still offer a challenge.
3. A. Venezuela. This Global Mission-funded project cost \$10,715, contributed by churches, the mission, the union, the division, and the General Conference, and \$1,381 from General Conference Global Mission funds.

—compiled by Don Yost, General Conference Global Mission Office

NEWS BREAK

Merit in the theological and seasonal writing categories.

The *Canadian Adventist Messenger* received an Honorable Mention for best publication redesign, and *Adventist Review* received an Honorable Mention for magazine graphics.

News Notes

✓ **The First Camp Meeting** ever held in Trinidad and Tobago attracted more than 13,000 persons. Conducted in a sports stadium, the church services were broadcast on national television. South Caribbean Conference president Errol Mitchell said the meetings were needed in an age in which people question the church's fundamental beliefs. After the meetings, 60 persons were baptized.

✓ **The Cayman Islands** prison ministry, led by lay church members, was responsible for a recent baptism of four new believers on the island of Grand Cayman. In the past three years the ministry has resulted in 35 baptisms, reports Jeffrey K. Thompson, Cayman Islands Mission president.

✓ **Jonathan Gallagher** and **Alberto Valenzuela**, assistant directors of the General Conference Communication Department, were recently appointed associate directors.

In his new role, Gallagher becomes the news director for the Adventist News Network, responsible for gather-



Jonathan Gallagher

Alberto Valenzuela

Raj Attiken

ing and distributing news to the global church. Valenzuela serves as the department's director of strategic development. "Our objective is to create an image that would identify Seventh-day Adventists as people of hope," he says.

✓ **Raj Attiken**, Ohio Conference secretary, was recently elected conference president. Attiken replaces Edward Motschieder, who became Columbia Union secretary.

What's Upcoming

June	13	Women's Ministries Day
July	4	Vacation Witnessing Emphasis
July	18	Home Study International Day
Aug.	1	Global Mission Evangelism Day
Sept.	5	Lay Evangelism Day

What's Love Got to Do With It?

Eight things love is not; four things that love does.



BY KEITH A. BURTON

TWO OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING society and church today are serial polygamy and marital infidelity. It is estimated that one out of every two marriages will end in divorce. Many of these marriages end on the grounds of irreconcilable differences when one of the partners discovers that he or she is no longer *in love* with the other.

A large percentage of divorced persons will become serial polygamists as they enter into new marital relationships and

repeat the same vows of lifelong commitment to their new spouses. Of those who remain married, it is estimated that two thirds have been involved in extramarital affairs.

As with serial polygamy, *love*—or the lack thereof—is blamed for marital infidelity. After witnessing a talk show episode featuring a woman who had been unfaithful to her marriage vows, the pressing question in my mind was *Why?* She confirmed to her audience that her husband was neither physically nor verbally abusive. He provided for the family. He loved his children. He loved her. But she was “turned off” by him. She had fallen out of *love*. She now *loved* some-

one else. This new object of her affection was “tender and kind.” He knew how to make her “feel like a woman.” He took the time to listen to her problems. He bought her gifts and showered her with attention. Oh, I almost forgot. He was also married, with children. But in her words: “He has shown me how to *love* again.”

My mind—always in an etymological mode—forced me to blurt out the question “What’s *love* got to do with it?” A double crime has been committed here. Not only was a husband being deprived of attention and loyalty, but another person’s wife was too. And let’s not forget the children. What if both of these marriages end in divorce? Who will answer for the pain, the heartache, the irreparable psychological damage? “What’s love got to do with it?”

This type of *love* is defined by the Greek term *eros*. This erotic expression is driven purely by emotion and is the

type of *love* that leads to fatal attractions. *Eros* is sometimes addictive, and requires individuals in committed relationships to transfer amorous feelings from one person to another.

While *eros* will enhance a marriage relationship, it cannot serve as the foundation. Because it is based on emotion, it can be affected by changes in circumstances. *Eros* is unstable. Indeed, it is for this very reason that God does not found the marriage relationship on *eros*, but establishes it on *agape* (Eph. 6:24; Col. 3:19). *Agape*, a uniquely biblical term, defines a love that is based on principle. *Agape* is not a mere feeling; it is an intentional action. The love between a husband and wife should be focused and calculated—not whimsical and serendipitous.

Perhaps the most poignant definition of *agape* occurs in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Paul commences by providing two general characteristics of love. Love, he says, is “patient” and “kind” (verse 4, NIV). The Greek word translated “patient” suggests a love that is

“wide hearted,” that takes everything and everyone into consideration, that has a logical basis. Love is also “kind.” It has good intentions and is driven by moral integrity. Love is sensitive to the feelings of those it affects.

As we read on, we find that the majority of Paul’s definition is dedicated to describing eight things that love is *not* (verses 4-6). These eight disclaimers are intended not only to expound on the two general characteristics of love, but also to attack popular opinion on the nature of love:

1. Love is not jealous. The word translated “jealous” can also mean “zealous.” Many who are trapped in fatal relationships are obsessively con-

trolled by the situation. Recently a woman in Alabama was charged with killing her children because her fiancé felt they were in the way. She is accused of murdering for love. While the vast majority of those who offend will not go to such extremes, one who violates the marriage bond is choosing paramour over children.

However, true love is not blind. It sees the pain caused by jealous actions. Love does not provide the grounds for actively coveting the attentions of a third party. Love does not encourage one to steal another’s spouse. Love is kind.

2. Love is not boastful. Love does not cause one to feel smug about the latest conquest. Love does not view the invitation of a stranger into the marriage bed as a trophy to be sought. Love does not enable a person to glory in sin. It does not drive one to proclaim, “You have the ring, but I have the woman.” Love is kind.

3. Love is not arrogant. The word translated “arrogant” is derived from the Greek word for “nature.” The Sophist philosophers of antiquity suggested that nature was opposed to law. Nature was seen as emotional and free-spirited, while law was viewed as disciplined and principled. Nature followed the flexible law of soap opera romance, while law was committed to God’s ideal of lifelong fidelity. Love is not full of itself—not “puffed up.” Love is patient.

4. Love is not rude. The same word for “rude” is used in 1 Corinthians 7:36, where Paul refers to the improper conduct of those engaged to be married. Rudeness has to do with behavior that goes against specified norms, that violates proper codes of conduct, that repulses another to the point of discomfort and disgust. No one can ever claim that love compels flagrant disrespect for a spouse or violation of the marriage bed. Love is kind.

5. Love does not insist on having its own way. Love is aware that there are consequences to every action. It does not have a bulldozer mentality. It is not in the habit of forging paths, cutting corners, and breaking rules to achieve the object of its desires. Love takes the feelings of others into account. How will my actions of infidelity affect my children, my parents, my siblings? What impact will this have on the stability of my community? How will people view my church and my God? Love is patient.

6. Love is not irritable. A true act of love should not evoke feelings of vexation and hatred in another. Love does not “get under your skin” and cause discomfort to the point that you yearn for relief. A betrayal that drives a spouse to the divorce court can never be identified with love. A disloyalty that results in a lifetime of pain and never-fading memories can never be equated with love. Love is kind.

7. Love is not resentful. The original literally states that “love does not plan to do evil.” I once heard a person



state that she felt justified in her affair since her husband had been unfaithful to her. She was giving him a taste of his own medicine. For sometime she had planned that if the opportunity arose, she would seize the moment. And so she nurtured a relationship with the husband of another. And now she *loves* him. She probably did not even realize that not only was she avenging her husband, but she was attacking her paramour's wife. And she confuses this with love? Love does not glory in another's pain. Love is not vengeful or cruel. Love is kind.

8. Love does not rejoice at unrighteousness. One of the biggest fallacies of our era is that a married person can have a "love affair" with someone other than his or her spouse. One can be emotionally attached. One can be sexually attracted. But a love affair? If it is indeed God who joins together, how can *genuine* fulfillment come from one to whom you are not espoused? "Love does not rejoice at unrighteousness, but rejoices together with the truth." Love recognizes the pain experienced by spouses whose marital loyalties have been redirected by circumstance. It empowers them to fidelity and provides the power to resist temptation. Love is patient.

These are issues we should take seriously. Am I currently involved in an extramarital affair? Have I formed a deep relationship with a member of the other sex who is not my spouse—one that may well lead to a tight and sinful emotional bond? While the person in such a relationship may make me feel complete, may know just the right words to say, I should not be deceived into thinking that I'm experiencing love. Love is from God. The same God who commanded us not to covet our neighbor's spouse. Who commanded us not to steal. Who commanded us not to kill. Who commanded us not to commit adultery. Who warned that no one separate those whom He has joined together. True love can be found only in Him.

In concluding his definition, Paul elevates four things that love does (1 Cor. 13:7).

A durable love has a lifetime warranty from God Himself.

First of all, love bears all things.

The full impact of this claim is evident only when it is realized that the word translated to "bear" is derived from the Greek word for "roof." Love provides shelter, shade, and security from potentially dangerous elements. Love screams "No!" at every foe who threatens to violate the haven of marriage.

Second, love believes all things.

Love is driven by a faith that sees potential happiness in the most sullen marriage relationship. Love believes that God is able to restore the romance to any decaying marriage. Whatever may have occurred between partners that has caused one to seek attention elsewhere, love believes that they can learn to accept and appreciate each other again.

Third, love hopes all things. It provides a basis for optimism. Hope is more than a wish or desire. Hope is akin to faith. There is a certainty in hope. Any marriage in which love is present has a chance of survival. Love enables positive strides toward the ideal relationship. Love knows that with the help of God, *eros* with a spouse is possible again.

Last, love endures all things. True love perseveres in spite of all the obstacles. Love enables the offended spouse to extend the arm of forgiveness. Love functions with the tender arms of God wrapped around the injured couple as they work through their ordeal. Love acts as the agent that silences the desire to file for divorce, or suppresses the longing to fall back into the arms of a mesmerizing other.

A principled love always performs to the best of its ability. It may get difficult and discouraging at times as our head and our heart fall out of

sync, but love never ends. For "better or worse," we continue to love the one to whom we pledged ourselves before God and witnesses. Love may receive damage and require the help of a counselor, but it has a lifetime warranty from God Himself. Everything worth anything needs to be meticulously maintained and carefully cultivated. If love for your spouse has become difficult, practice loving until it becomes natural.

"What's love got to do with it?" Everything. ■

Keith A. Burton is assistant professor of New Testament at Oakwood College, Huntsville, Alabama.



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At Rest

CALLENDER, Lynn R.—b. Jan. 14, 1922, Plainview, Tex.; d. Dec. 21, 1997, Redlands, Calif. He served as an educator with positions in Pennsylvania; at Gem State, Sandia View, and Thunderbird academies; and at Pacific Union, Walla Walla, and Canadian Union colleges. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; one daughter, Cherry Brandstater; and four grandsons.

CALERONE, Joseph—b. Dec. 8, 1917, Chicago, Ill.; d. Jan. 26, 1998, Anaheim, Calif. He served as a pastor in the Southern states and in California.

CRANE, Eugene A.—b. Dec. 9, 1904, Wichita, Kans.; d. Mar. 5, 1998, Dayton, Md. He served as an evangelist, pastor, and administrator in Burma, Canada (youth and education director), Sri Lanka (president of the Ceylon Union Mission), and the Georgia-Cumberland, Carolina, and Michigan conferences. He is survived by his wife, Lena Levy Crane; one son, Donald; one daughter, Betty Calloway; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

DAWSON, Merrill Edward—b. Sept. 18, 1902, Fitchburg, Mass.; d. Oct. 15, 1997, Columbia, Md. He served at the Review and Herald Publishing Association for most of his 46 years of work (12 years as treasurer). For three years he was general manager of Sentinel Publishing Company in South Africa. He also directed the Takoma Park, Maryland, church choir for 35 years. He is survived by his wife, Doris; two sons, Robert and Donald; two daughters, Marjorie Woodruff and Shirley Reading; two stepsons, George and Jonathan Follmer; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

DAWSON, Theodore C.—b. Nov. 25, 1903, Richmond, Va.; d. Feb. 5, 1998, Loma Linda, Calif. He was known throughout the Loma Linda community as an ardent promoter of Christian education. He initiated a student work program at Loma Linda Academy, where he served as head custodian for 23 years, and gave financial assistance and solicited donations for students attending Adventist colleges. He pioneered the work in the Black community of north Fontana, resulting in the organization of a church. He is survived by one son, Theodore, Jr.; three daughters, Pearl Runnels, Shabethai, and Wanda; five grandsons; and seven great-grandchildren.

ECKENROTH, Margaret L.—b. Aug. 29, 1915, Trenton, N.J.; d. Mar. 15, 1998, Takoma Park, Md. She served with her husband, Melvin K. Eckenroth, in evangelistic, pastoral, educational, and administrative positions for more than 40 years. She also taught in the Maryland public school system. She is survived by two daughters, Margaret Rose Bagrowski and Ruth Ann Parish; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

GREENE, Howard E.—b. Feb. 23, 1908; d. Feb. 15, 1998, Medina, N.Y. He served as pastor in Southern New England, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, West Virginia, and New York. He was also a principal and teacher in Rochester, New York, and Pontiac, Michigan.

HOLLOWAY, Marie—b. Sept. 26, 1917, Raleigh, N.C.; d. Dec. 16, 1997, Orlando, Fla. She served as a church school teacher in the Carolina, Alabama-Mississippi, and Florida conferences. She is survived by two sisters, Billie Brown and Eloise Reifsnnyder.

LEGGETT, Hugh—b. Mar. 30, 1924, Allen, Miss.; d. Jan. 15, 1998, Portland, Tenn. He served more than 35 years as a chaplain, pastor, evangelist, and administrator in the Carolina and Kentucky-Tennessee conferences. He is survived by his wife, Ida Lee; three sons, Hugh, Vernon, and Dennis; and one daughter, Ida Joy Andal.

MCANALLY, Nonie Aldridge (Bill)—b. Feb. 9, 1912, Cleburne, Tex.; d. Dec. 29, 1997, Redlands, Calif. He began as a farmer in southern California and developed McAnally Enterprises, an egg producer with more than 400 employees. He was a philanthropist and a founding member of the Loma Linda University Councillors. He was also a member of the board of trustees of Loma Linda University and served on the executive committee of Southeastern California Conference. He is survived by his wife, Irma; one son, Larry; one daughter, Raye

Torrey; five sisters; one stepdaughter, Louise Allen; one brother; six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

METCALE, Harold E.—b. Mar. 18, 1918, Akron, Ohio; d. Nov. 20, 1997, Georgia. He served as an evangelist for 42 years in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Oregon, Washington, Tennessee, and Georgia. He was also ministerial secretary of the Southern Union. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; two daughters, Sharon and Marjeanne; and a number of grandchildren.

MILES, Florence—b. Sept. 16, 1905; d. Mar. 14, 1998, Fort Myers, Fla. She served the church as a teacher in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

NELSON, Axel C.—b. Aug. 5, 1892; d. Feb. 23, 1998, Angwin, Calif. He served as an educator and administrator for the Department of Education at Pacific Union College and the General Conference. He is survived by his wife, Madge Haynes Nelson.

REILLY, Rozann Hall—b. Aug. 5, 1944, Orlando, Fla.; d. Feb. 1, 1998, Altamonte Springs, Fla. She worked in cardiology at the Florida Hospital. She is survived by one daughter, Terri Reilly.

STONER, Clifford—b. May 6, 1908, Indiana; d. Dec. 22, 1997, St. Helena, Calif. He served for 40 years in the publishing departments of the Dakota, Central California, and Northern California conferences.

STRAND, Kenneth A.—age 70; d. Dec. 9, 1997, St. Joseph, Mich. In the 1950s he pastored churches in Michigan. He taught in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary for nearly 40 years. As an author and scholar he wrote 20 books and numerous articles. He was one of the principal architects of the bachelor's degree program in theology at Caribbean Union College in Trinidad.

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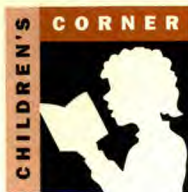
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Addresses

ROSY TETZ



Imagine that you just got a letter. You went out to the mailbox and there it was. How did that letter get there? How did the mail carrier know to bring it to you? It has your address on it, of course.

Do you know your address? It starts with your name. Next there is your house or apartment number and the name of your street. Then there is your city, state, and zip code. It is as if your address starts out with a small circle (you) and each part of the address makes a wider and wider circle. If you were going to make even wider circles, next you would list your country, then your continent, then perhaps your

hemisphere, and last of all, the name of your planet. I suppose you could go even wider with your solar system and galaxy. But you don't need all of that to mail a letter. You can stop after the zip code.

Think about those circles. As the circles get bigger, they enclose more and more people. You know what that leads to? Government. All those people need to have leaders and laws and someone to build the roads and deliver the mail.

There are leaders in your house, on your street, and in your city, state, and country. Many of them chose to work for the government because they want to help people. They want to be good citizens.

And they need your help. It's not that easy being a leader. You can pray for the leaders of our country.

You can pray that they will be safe and healthy—it is important for your leaders to be strong. You can pray for their families—it is hard to be related to a public leader. But most important, pray that your leaders will know God better and follow Him closely. Pray that God will give them the wisdom to make wise decisions and be good examples. Pray that God will help them be good leaders.

The Bible says, "You should pray for kings and for all who have authority. Pray for the leaders so that we can have quiet and peaceful lives" (1 Timothy 2:2, ICB).

You are in the middle of an "address circle" that gets wider and wider. You can also be in the middle of a "prayer circle." Pray for yourself. Pray for your family and your neighbors. But also pray for your leaders. They need your prayers.

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Preferring One Another

Her name is Vera (pronounced "Vee-ih-ra," with a roll of the "r"). Her primary characteristic is not that she has multiple sclerosis and uses a great deal of energy to accomplish even the slightest of movements. It wasn't even that she had single-handedly tackled the job of washing the dust-strewn floor of the church in Vladimir, Russia, which seated 350. What caught my attention was the incredible smile that swallowed her facial features, sending beams of light in every direction.

There she was, mop (of sorts) in hand. With labored, awkward movements she removed the scant cotton rag from the end of her makeshift mop handle, dipped it in her small bucket of gray-tinged water, and then squeezed the dripping cloth as best she could before tottering back and forth across the next section of flooring.

As our company entered the open door of the church, her smile, which already seemed fully radiant, stretched wider still as she dropped her cleaning device so that she could will her hand toward us in a warm handshake. The welcoming smile was coupled with vibrant eye contact as she struggled to form words of greeting. Her words were incomprehensible to me, but her message was loud and clear.

We were a group of four individuals representing Mountain View Conference in Parkersburg, West Virginia, returning to Vladimir to take part in the dedication services of four sister churches. Donated money from Mountain View constituents and others had provided the needed funds to construct this house of worship. The church construction had spanned a five-year period because of tremendous inflationary changes.

The next time I saw Vera was on Sabbath morning, when our trolley stopped to pick up riders—Vera included. I wondered if she would get aboard before the all-too-anxious driver hit the gas pedal, which he did often before the door was fully closed. It was obvious she had traveled this route previously, for as she stepped up into the trolley she grasped for a hand to hold as quickly as her condition allowed. The ever-present smile dominated her

countenance as she soon noticed that I was on board. Again her smile broadened.

At our destination she waited for me to inch my way out of

*How I longed
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but she would
have none of that.*

the sardine-packed trolley before beginning a half-mile trek to the church. I wondered if she would be able to negotiate the footpath, but she slowly and deliberately picked her way up and down the lane—all the while wearing her special radiance.

At the church she welcomed the guests and members, treating them to one of her hugs. It was with whole-hearted commitment that she entered into the worship events, and at the end of the afternoon services she was one of the last to leave the church.

The pastor had offered to take my companion and me to our place of rest. As we drove away from the church, we waved at Vera as she made her way back to the trolley stop. Oh, how I longed to give her my place in the car, but she would have none of that, "preferring" her sister instead. Tears filled my eyes as I beheld her happy face.

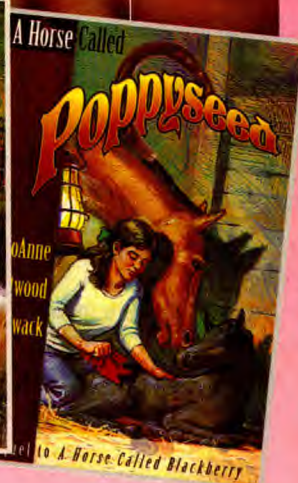
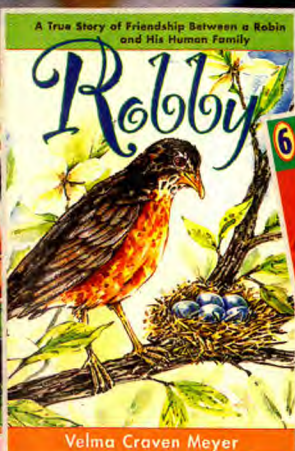
It should have been no surprise that Vera noticed my lack of a warm sweater. (Had I remembered our previous two trips, I would have planned better, but I'm a slow learner.) Later as I entered the church to conduct a Sabbath school seminar, there was my smiling friend holding a warm sweater for me. Small though it was, I gratefully squeezed my large frame into it, hoping not to ruin it for her. Once again this "ray of sunshine" permeated my soul to its very depths.

Vera's smile will always live in my heart. As thoughtful as she is of others, I wonder if she will even notice her wholeness when she enters the gates of heaven. Paul reminds us to "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10). Certainly Vera has sat at the feet of her Saviour and learned this truth.

Feryl Harris is children's ministries and Sabbath school director for the Mountain View Conference, Parkersburg, West Virginia.



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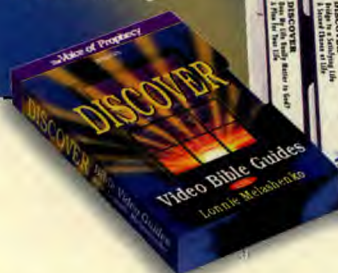
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