

ADVENTIST Review

September 17, 1998

Cutting Edge

What Does He Want From Us?

Five words to consider

The Vanishing Middle
Burned Out and Broken



LETTERS

Adventist Hospitals

Thank you for publishing Delona Bell's timely and innovative "Why Adventist Hospitals Count" (July 16 Cutting Edge Edition). As I read it a second time I became even more convinced that it carried a message for every Adventist Christian.

—Elsie Jones

COLLEGE PLACE, WASHINGTON

Bear-y Creative

I was delighted to see a bear featured prominently on the July 16 Give &



Take page (see Jeff Emde's "Brownie Does Thailand"). This was quite a thrill for me, since I am a bear lover. This was a unique way to do a photo

portrayal of missions. Congratulations!

—Ginger Small

MOLINE, ILLINOIS

Matchmaker, Matchmaker . . .

Joanna Lynne's "Here We Go Again" (July 16) hit the nail squarely on its head for many of us in the 20-to-35 age group. This is exactly why so many of us no longer attend church "services," although we still remain Adventists in our thinking.

I would love to attend church to worship the Lord, but I can no longer

submit to being "serviced" by perhaps well-meaning but off-the-wall church members so consumed with their self-appointed role as matchmakers that they are totally insensitive to the feelings of others.

Polite social introductions, fine. For anything more, I'd like the Lord to do the leading in my life.

—Nancy Adams

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

What's Your Story?

We still meet a lot of *Review* readers who ask, "Why don't you do an article on ———?" To which we reply, "Why don't you write one?"

The *Adventist Review* is open to all Adventist writers—young and old. And though we can accept only 10 percent of the 60 to 80 unsolicited manuscripts we receive each month, we're always looking for fresh, clear, real voices.

Categories: story, devotional, theology, biblical study, news report, feature, current issues, lifestyle, opinion, interview, Reflections.

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This great article made me think about the times this has happened to me—and the many times I have done the matchmaking thing to others. Another thing is that the matchmakers expect you to decide immediately whether you like the person they are introducing you to.

Most people introduce you to someone because they know that person really well. In most cases the matchmaker simply wants to see you happy and is hoping that you can find that happiness with the person you are introduced to. I do not believe that this is a conspiracy to demand anyone get together with anyone. Most people simply do not know any better.

—Andrew Eide

REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA

Christian Care Medi-Share

Ella Rydzewski's interview with Bruce Hyde, M.D. (Cutting Edge Conversations, July 16), about Weimar Institute was informative and well done. One of the answers that may need clarification was regarding the question "What about insurance? Some companies cover such programs."

Dr. Hyde reported that Christian Care Medisure (actually, Medi-Share) was a carrier. This implies that Christian Care Ministry is an insurance entity, which it definitely is not. Our 20,000 members in all 50 states pay (share) one another's medical bills on a not-for-profit basis. Most of our members are quite hostile about insurance and came to us because they were either priced out of their

insurance programs or because they were tired of subsidizing lifestyles of people who have no regard for living a biblical lifestyle.

Christian Care Ministry (Medi-Share Program) has a very aggressive wellness program, thanks to my contact with Adventist members who provided me with sound nutritional literature and books and lived the *health message*. By experiencing my own positive changes in mind and body, our ministry moved to develop programs to avoid and reverse disease. The program features well-known Adventist authors and lecturers giving regional educational membership meetings and writing for our membership news publications. Of the 55 members of our board, Adventists are by far the most represented denomination.

We give our members the option of going to a lifestyle institute for less intrusive modes of curing disease. We believe this is the best possible stewardship of member funds. We've traded many \$3,000-\$5,000 stays at lifestyle centers (we always send the spouse) for \$35,000-\$50,000 bypass operations. Rather than invest in the inevitable long-range bills that come from diabetes' relentless degradation of health, we send them to a lifestyle center and allow our members the joy and victory of getting the disease behind them through reversal (only one known case was not reversed in two weeks).

So we are not a carrier and not insurance, just 20,000 practical Christians who decided to invest in health and wellness and benefit from the results. Our monthly share demonstrates the reality. While the insurance industry has increased costs 12 percent per year, we've remained steady for three years with monthly shares that run half of what insurance premiums cost. The program is voluntary and not guaranteed, but no members' eligible bills have ever gone unpaid.

—E. John Reinhold
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CHRISTIAN CARE MINISTRY
MELBOURNE, FLORIDA

Submitting Graciously (cont.)

Responding to the "submission" statement declared by the Southern Baptists, Myrna Tetz writes, "A committed Christian woman would have no problem with the submission issue if her husband had no problem submitting to Christ."

Stalemate! That is exactly what the problem has been in the Christian home. Ephesians 5 states very simply: "Wives submit. Husbands love." Now, the question is Who does what first? Husbands and wives waiting for the other to comply is the problem. The answer: true love always initiates the action (1 John 4:19).

In the wisdom of God, He gave the loving role to the husband, because a woman truly loved will respond naturally with submission. If the husband doesn't do his part, then it is up to the wife to take the loving role—loving him with unconditional love. He will respond because love begets love.

—Bob Simenson
RICE LAKE, WISCONSIN

The Southern Baptists are right on this point. The concept of the duty of a wife to submit to her husband when it does not conflict with a moral standard is clearly supported by the Bible (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-5) and the Spirit of Prophecy (i.e., *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 58, 59, 376). The thought of submission, which conflicts so dearly with our carnal natures, is in reality a foundational principle for the harmony we see wherever Divinity reigns.

My wife and I are now divorced because of her rebellion and unwillingness to accept this principle as a necessary part of our marriage relationship. I know of many other Christian homes destroyed for the same reason.

—Name Withheld

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A Coat of Many Colors

Many Adventists served the U.S. military in Operation Whitecoat. Twenty-five years later some questions have yet to be answered.

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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The Vanishing Middle

BILL KNOTT

My scarlet rental car shuddered to a stop beneath the floodlit billboard, grinding gravel into dust. Yards away, a rangy jackrabbit eyed me warily from the edge of deep alfalfa, ready to outrun even a Cavalier if I proved to be another of those dangerous marauders from the East. Downwind, a roaming coyote suddenly gladdened at the thought of warm jackrabbit on a bed of greens and crept a little nearer. The sunset dance of threat and counterthreat had started once again, inspected by a vulture wheeling on an evening updraft. Not until morning, clear and sunlit, would the world seem safe again.

Above me, 18-inch block letters on the billboard growled this month's aphorism: "A MODERATE IS USUALLY JUST A LIBERAL AFRAID TO ADMIT IT." Stark and inelegantly simple, it scornfully dismissed all middle ground, leaving little doubt where its author stood, at least when he entered the voting booth. In the dusklit world of reactionary opinion, the only thing more contemptible than being liberal is trying to live between extremes. Thanks to the billboard author and his pals, fewer people these days are willing to attempt it.

This could be just another meditation on the incivilities of the American political system, save for one sad and shameful fact: such language is increasingly common in the church of Christ. Schooled by the sound bite and the televised taunt to belittle that with which we disagree, even Christians walk away from middle ground, afraid that someone will discover that we have been dialoguing with "them." Those others—over there—who worship with their hands as well as their heads, who hold the "wrong" view of the nature of Christ, who play that music we can never understand, who call for higher standards in the church—they must be kept at more than arm's length for fear our kind will think we are abandoning the camp. Though common sense and uncommon grace would call us to reflection and respect, we fear the name-callers at the watercooler or in the committee room who can shame us with their chiseled talk. We stifle godly impulses that invite us to dialogue and disagree with Christlike generosity.

"Conservative" and "liberal" have been weaponized,

delivering highly effective warheads that chase reason from the field. Why waste time parleying with the "enemy" if you can smash his reputation with one well-aimed epithet? To

some who call for greater openness, who worry aloud about a legacy of legalism, who ask that all God's children—men and women—be allowed to serve His church with all their gifts, "conservative" has become the dirtiest of words, implying unreason, unfairness, ungracefulness. And some who strive for holy lives, who call for victory over sin, who urge the church to tread time-tested paths, can think of

nothing meaner than to tag their foes as "liberals," suggesting all at once a squishy softness on essentials.

In this perverse force field that threatens honest discourse in God's church, polarities do not attract. There is nothing magnetic or appealing about us or our faith when we refuse the gospel's call to change the way we think and speak. While we take aim to neutralize the opposition, honest seekers drift away, repelled.

And yet, for all of this, a Saviour stands between us, beckoning both ends to join Him in a new middle He is making. He who was so marvelously liberal with His love also magnificently conserved the truth of God's high calling. Any church that bears His name will keep those two together as well. He will teach us that old ways are not always God's ways and that real progress is always linked to real godliness. Most important, He will teach us to pray again—at first, for each other; then finally, with each other—as we say to Him the words we should be saying to each other. Conversation, difficult but sweet, will be the result of reconversion. Dialogue, too long denied, will redefine discipleship. Even when we disagree, profoundly and repeatedly, we will see new worth in all for whom He died.

Herein is hope for a movement tempted by the spirit of the age: Jesus stands between us. Agreeing individually with Him will speed that dawn when we are also in blessed agreement with each other.

*Dialogue, too long
denied, will
redefine
discipleship.*



Living Symbols—And Proud of It?

SARAH COLEMAN

I came within minutes of viewing the “world’s largest crucifix.”

The sign, posted near a narrow highway in northern Michigan, actually made us turn around for a second look. We followed its arrow down a winding blacktop road and into the country. When 10 minutes had passed, however, and we still hadn’t driven under a monstrous cross-shaped shadow, we stopped scanning the horizon and returned to our original journey. Probably just a tourist trap, after all.

A month later, while traveling in Texas, a friend and I again discovered the popularity of the cross as a symbol in our society.

“What’s that?” Chris pointed at a large white structure on the horizon. Its long square arms reached away from its body at perpendicular angles.

“A cross,” I suggested just as we passed a sign advertising “The Cross, Next Right.”

Moments later we pulled into the largest tribute to the Crucifixion that I have ever seen. The concrete-and-aluminum structure loomed at the center of a circle of stone statues depicting Christ on each stage of His journey toward Calvary. I had to wonder if *this* architectural feat actually deserved the title “world’s largest” instead.

The cross for Catholics, prayer shawls for Jews, pyramids for New Agers . . . what symbol can we identify ourselves with?

Traditionally Seventh-day Adventists steer clear of any symbolic representation that waltzes on the “graven image” border. This is good. But just for curiosity’s sake, what do we stand for? Have we too chosen the cross as a representation of our faith? Perhaps the fourth commandment highlighted in gold? (A non-Adventist friend recently spotted this picture in a stained-glass window and wondered if we worshiped “number four” above the others.) If we were listed on a computer-screen menu, would we recognize the icon that typically sits beside our name?

Seventh-day Adventist. What does society think of when they hear our name? when they meet our members? when they talk about us at work or in a bar with their friends?

I’d like to suggest that each church member is a moving, breathing icon for our church. To the girl in the grocery store,

the carpenter on the job, and the lawyer downtown, we’re the only real contact they’ve had with those “strange Saturday people” down the street. We are their icons for a church, embedded pixel-by-pixel in their memories.

I know. I’m not sure I like representing a worldwide church either. Someone out there may make their decision about Seventh-day Adventist church attendance based on *my* work ethic, *my* positive attitude, and *my* attention to standards. That’s restricting.

But what can I do? I should have thought of this when I committed my life to Christ. Being a Christian means I bear His name with pride. Being an Adventist means I know what Adventism stands for and should have no problems standing up for those beliefs.

I’ve noticed a trend in young Adventist circles (mine included) to downplay our differences with standard Christianity. True, we walk in the shadow of the same cross, rejoice in the light of the same Resurrection, and step in the footprints of the same Saviour. I’m the strongest advocate for unity you’ll ever meet. But why hide behind our similarities when we obviously know enough about the differences to check something other than “nondenominational” for our professed religion?

Don’t get me wrong. There’s a difference between beating people with our 27 fundamental beliefs and blushing whenever they’re mentioned. “Informed” is not synonymous with “offensive.”

I’m simply extending a challenge to educate yourself about your church. Enjoy the confidence that comes with finding and embracing the truth. Read Jeremiah 29:13 as your own personal contract with God, and fulfill your end of the bargain. Walk your dog, greet your clients, meet your neighbors with pride in who you are. After all, you (should) have knowledge on your side.

Sarah Coleman wrote this editorial during a summer internship with Adventist Review.



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GIVE & TAKE

HEARD AT SABBATH SCHOOL FOR 3-YEAR-OLDS

LEADER: "Sometimes we like to talk to Grandma on the phone. Who else do you like to talk to on the phone?"

3-YEAR-OLDS: "My daddy." "My grandpa." "My friend."

LEADER: "Do you talk to Jesus on the phone?"

3-YEAR-OLDS: "No."

LEADER: "How do you talk to Jesus?"

A 3-YEAR-OLD: "In Spanish!"

—Lily A. Cabansag, Keene, Texas

WE NEED YOU

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ADVENTIST LIFE

While I was baby-sitting my 3-year-old nephew, Aaron, he asked why an ant was crawling in and out among the leaves of a nearby plant. Not knowing what to say, I told him the ant probably liked being in the garden.

Aaron looked up at me with great conviction and said, "No, he is playing hide-and-seek with God."

—Heidi K. Banks, Leominster, Massachusetts

While driving, I was talking with my wife about Mary, the mother of Jesus, when my 6-year-old, Michelle, asked me who made Mary. When I answered "God," she made a very perplexed face and said, "Jesus made His mother?"

Fortunately, my 4-year-old, Evangeline, interrupted by asking, "Where are we going, Daddy?"

—Michael Bautista, Imperial Valley, California



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

HATS OFF TO ADVENTIST YOUTH

We haven't run this feature in a while, so this week we're honoring two Adventist youth.

Drawing her strength from Jesus Christ and the loving instruction of her parents, **Tiffany Williams** is a very active member at the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Brinklow, Maryland. A tenth grader, Tiffany is often asked to serve in adult offices and on committees. She is the youngest deaconess at Emmanuel-Brinklow and holds steady positions in her Sabbath school class, AYS, and the



CONTAGIOUS ENTHUSIASM: Tiffany Williams

Community Services department. She successfully represents her church in Bible Bowl events and is a three-time recipient of the Love Award. "Tiffany's enthusiasm," says member Yolanda V. Hoard, "encourages her peers and older generations to volunteer their services."

Meanwhile, at the Worthington, Ohio, church, 18-year-old **Daniel Thorward** is making a similar impact. An instructor at Camp Mohaven, Daniel also performs skits at children's church once a month and is a regular member of the Worthington church board. He also composes music and performs at both church functions and Thomas Worthington High School, where he recently graduated. Daniel also completed the Life Scout level in Boy Scouts (one level below Eagle Scout) and belongs to the Order of the Arrow. Says member Kevin Shaw, "Daniel has already shown that he has taken a position for Christ and for the church."

Congratulations to both Tiffany and Daniel on going the extra mile for God! Look for your *Review* caps in the mail.



REACHING ALL AGES: Daniel Thorward

What Does Jesus Want From Us?

Five Words a “Peculiar People” Ought to Consider

BY ANDY NASH

WHAT DEFINES Seventh-day Adventists? What sets us apart? What *should* set us apart? I remember what set

me apart as the only Adventist in my junior high school. In the cafeteria I didn't bolt for the sausage pizza. At football practice I didn't swear. At Friday night dances and Saturday morning golf meets I didn't show. And at Saturday night parties I didn't drink—not even a little.

My non-Adventist friends were nice, as nice as I was, and they didn't rib me about the things I didn't do. They knew it was my religion and all.

As I got older nothing much changed. I continued *not* to do many things everyone else did, and at times I questioned the point of it all—my friends weren't exactly lining up to be baptized. But then I'd get reminded in print and from the pulpit that we Adventists were called to be a “peculiar people” (Titus 2:14, KJV).¹ And it was enough.

My background, of course, is hardly unique. Thousands of us grew up measuring our distinctiveness by what we *didn't*

(or at least *shouldn't*) do. A documented though extreme evidence of this occurred a few years ago when a lawsuit necessitated that a certain 21-year-old Adventist woman, educated in Adventist schools, describe her church under oath. When asked “What are the basic beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?” she answered:

“They believe that women shouldn't wear pants and that they shouldn't cut their hair; they shouldn't wear makeup or jewelry; there shouldn't be any drinking of alcohol, drug use, or smoking. You should do all your housework before Friday sundown. Did I tell you that you shouldn't eat meat? . . . You shouldn't have affairs while you are married to others; and you shouldn't have abortions because it's like killing a life; and you shouldn't envy or lust after someone else's goods. Examples: their car, their house, their clothes, their wife, their children. And you should be an example to others. . . . That's about it. I think I covered it pretty much. Excuse me. You shouldn't go to discos, and you shouldn't wear bathing suits.”²

While portions of this list (no haircuts? no bathing suits?) misrepresent Adventist beliefs, a familiar message comes through: Adventists are often defined in negative terms.

And by much of the general public we still are. In 1994 the North American Division commissioned a survey in which the North American public were asked what they knew—and thought—of Adventists. Just 53 percent of North Americans recognized the name “Seventh-day Adventist” (down from 70 percent in 1980 and 65 percent in 1970). And when that 53 percent were asked the “first thing that comes to mind” when they heard the name Seventh-day Adventist, several of the top responses had a disturbingly negative tone. (See Table 1.)



A People of Don'ts

It's no secret that historically one of our primary emphases has been purity—pure minds, pure bodies, pure actions.

And purity is important. The Ten Commandments, mostly a list of don'ts,³ are about keeping pure. Jesus Himself not only modeled purity throughout His life, but spent much of His earthly ministry emphasizing purity, even challenging His listeners to higher levels of purity (i.e., Matt. 5:17-37). And after Jesus' ascension, His messengers continue to stress holy living (i.e., Rom. 12:1, 2).

What, though, is the

reason for purity—for our traditional don'ts? Because God said, "Don't"? Yes. But would God give a list of don'ts arbitrarily—or do these don'ts have a greater aim, a deeper purpose? Is purity an end in itself . . . or a means to an end?

Further, is purity what we want to be known for—as we often are?

If Jesus were counseling us, a group concerned about—and known for—our purity, what advice would He share? I think He'd share the same advice He twice shared with another group concerned about—and known for—their purity . . .

Scene 1: Matt. 9:10-13

"While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and 'sinners' came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax

Table I: How Adventists Are Perceived

The most frequent responses from North Americans when asked to name the "first thing that comes to mind" when they hear the name "Seventh-day Adventist":

1. Observe Saturday as the Sabbath
2. Religious group/church/religion
3. Strict dietary laws
4. Mormons/LDS
5. Not happy with SDA Church/not interested/resent it
6. Names of SDA friend or relative
7. Cult/sect/David Koresh
8. Christian church and people
9. Door-to-door sales
10. Far-fetched religion/fanatics

Source: Monte Sahlin, Carol Luke Kilcher, and Paul Richardson, "What Does the Public Think of Us?" *Adventist Review*, Feb. 1995, p. 19.

collectors and “sinners”?’

“On hearing this, Jesus said, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”’”

Scene 2: Matt. 12:1-8

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, ‘Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.’”

“He answered, ‘Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven’t you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.’”

Some Background

“*I desire mercy, not sacrifice.*” The five words Jesus quotes here—first found in Hosea 6:6—echo a major Old Testament theme: empty ritual makes God sick. Rarely did God speak more squarely to any issue than He did to this one:

“‘The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?’ says the Lord. ‘I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out

your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage

“ *I desire
mercy,
not
sacrifice.* ”

the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow’” (Isa. 1:11-17).

“Reform your ways and your actions,” He continues a book later, “and I will let you live in this place. Do not trust in deceptive words and say, ‘This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!’” (Jer. 7:3).

Again and again throughout the Old Testament God laments the sacrifice-to-service ratio among His chosen people. Disregarding the commands that challenged their comfort zones, the remnant settled into routine and ritual, thinking that that would be enough. “Many of them,” writes Ellen White, “regarded the sacrificial offerings much as the heathen looked upon their sacrifices—as gifts by which they themselves might propitiate the Deity.”⁴

But as His prophets repeatedly urged, God wanted something *more*.

“With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God?” writes Micah. “Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with

calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:6-8).

“This,” adds Zechariah, “is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another’” (Zech. 7:9).

Unpacking “Mercy” and “Sacrifice”

Clear enough, one might say. The God of the Old Testament valued mercy more highly than animal offerings—sacrifice in its most literal sense.

But what does “I desire mercy, not sacrifice” have to do with these two scenes in Matthew? After all, animal offerings aren’t even mentioned, and at least in the grainfield scene, mercy—as we commonly understand it—doesn’t seem to be an issue. Let’s take these terms one by one:

Sacrifice. Jesus here applies “sacrifice” (Hebrew, *yabah*) to the empty don’ts of His day—*don’t* associate with unclean people, *don’t* desecrate the Sabbath, *don’t* do this, *don’t* do that. Whereas animal sacrifices had become the religion of Jesus’ ancestors, the don’ts had become the religion of His contemporaries. “Sacrifice,” notes *The SDA Bible Commentary*, “stands for the forms of religion, which have an unfortunate tendency to eclipse practical religion. . . . The forms of religion without the vital spirit of religion, Christ says, are worthless.”⁵ Eugene H. Peterson helpfully paraphrases “I desire mercy, not sacrifice” to mean “I’m after mercy, not religion” (Matt. 9:13, Message).

Mercy. Like sacrifice, this term also might be read too narrowly. The original Hebrew word, *hesed*, used in Hosea 6:6 meant “right conduct toward one’s fellowman or loyalty to the Lord or both” and can be translated “love.”⁶ Certainly by having dinner with Matthew and friends, a sign of friendship, Jesus was exhibiting “right conduct toward one’s fellowman.” And by

Making Sense of Standards

What Adventist Youth Need to Understand

BY ANDY NASH

In his foreword to *Shall We Dance*, a discussion of Adventist standards, V. Bailey Gillespie tells of an Adventist youth describing how she and her friends witness to other high school students. “We tell them,” said the girl, “that Adventists have high standards. And we usually say that Adventists, for example, don’t go to movies.”¹ Interestingly, notes Gillespie, this girl and her friends *do* go to movies.

Apparently she thought she had given the right answer.

I find this situation—and those like it—distressing. When a teenager doesn’t personally support that which she thinks her church cares most about, it’s a recipe for separation. How long will she remain in a church whose standards, whose boundaries, seem nothing more than an arbitrary list of don’ts?

Not long.

If the purpose of all standards is to facilitate the two greatest standards—loving God and loving people—then they must always be taught in that context. We must do a better job of showing young and new members how every standard, every tradition, strengthens our capacity to love.

At the same time we must constantly monitor our standards to make sure they’re doing just that.

It’s interesting to note which standards young Adventists support—and which they don’t. The conclusion of the Institute of Church Ministry’s 10-year longitudinal study on Adventist youth, launched in 1987, yields these levels of agreement with church standards:²

93 percent of the youth returning the survey agree with the church’s stand on drug use

92 percent, tobacco

88 percent, Sabbathkeeping

77 percent, alcohol

75 percent, modest dress

74 percent, extramarital sex

33 percent, jewelry

32 percent, rock music

22 percent, dancing

16 percent, theater attendance

Should this data automatically dictate which standards we should keep and which we should throw out? Of course not.

But youth aren’t stupid, and at some point we had better rethink a sweeping “It’s always wrong” stand against these last four activities—or else be prepared to explain how the exuberant college senior waving her engagement ring, the misty-eyed drummer playing “Forever Grateful,” the silver-haired couple dancing romantically on their porch, and the vanload of devoted but exhausted high school teachers cruising off to see *Mr. Holland’s Opus* are somehow weakening their capacity to love.

Most youth have a lot of love in their hearts. When we choose standards sensibly and present them as a path to loving God and people *better*, we might be pleasantly surprised at the results.

¹ *Shall We Dance*, edited by Steve Case (La Sierra University Press, 1996).

² These figures were reported by Monte Sahlin in the summer 1998 edition of *Adventist View*. Roger Dudley is preparing a book that will analyze the data in depth.

having dinner—albeit a grain dinner—with Jesus on the day He created, the disciples were demonstrating “loyalty to the Lord.”⁷

Both of these behaviors were not only *not* wrong; they were extremely right.

Jesus teaches here that while purity is important to Him (just as sacrifice was important to His Father), it isn’t what He desires most. Purity in itself is hollow, meaningless (just as sacrifice in itself was hollow, meaningless). If purity were the pinnacle of Christianity, then your houseplant—assuming you have a houseplant—would be the ultimate Christian. After all, your houseplant doesn’t swear, doesn’t gamble, doesn’t drink anything but water, doesn’t watch cable TV late at night, and as far as you know, doesn’t lust after other houseplants.

What Jesus desires most, of course,

is *hesed*, mercy, love—love for God and love for people (see Matt. 22:34-40).

These are, were, and always will be the two greatest commandments; all other commandments “hang on these two” (verse 40). And this was the Pharisees’ mistake—they stopped at the lesser commandments and therefore stopped too soon. They kept the Sabbath holy, but they didn’t use that holiness to commune better with the Lord of the Sabbath. They kept their minds and stomachs pure, but they didn’t use that purity to better minister to the filthy around them. They focused so hard on the don’ts that they never got around to the do’s.⁸ Figuratively speaking, they didn’t clutter their homes and yards so that when company came over, they could serve better. Except that when company *did* come, they trembled at what

might happen to their homes and yards.

Jesus helped people understand that the purpose of purity, of not sinning, is to facilitate love for God and people. “Sin is sin,” writes Martin Weber, “because it destroys our relationships, by ruining our capacity to love and to be loved.”⁹ Never did Jesus urge purity *outside* the context of love. When the rich young ruler asks what he must do to “inherit eternal life,” Jesus doesn’t tell him only to “sell everything” he has but also to “give to the poor” (Luke 18:22). It wasn’t just purity that the ruler needed—he already had a list of purity (see verses 20, 21). He needed the experience of *mercy*, of helping people whose presence in heaven would be more “treasure” (verse 22) than he had ever known. Likewise, when Peter sought reinstatement (see



PROJECTING A NEW IMAGE: In light of such studies as the 1994 public awareness survey, this statement was presented at 1995 General Conference session: "Seventh-day Adventists will communicate hope by focusing on the quality of life that is complete in Jesus Christ." (The statement was later incorporated into the North American Division communication strategy—see photo.) As important as the Adventist "quality of life" is, we might ask: Is this the best way to communicate hope? An alternative strategy might read: "Seventh-day Adventists will communicate hope by loving God and people passionately, rejecting anything that threatens that love."

selves with love? Love isn't distinctive enough. The local rock station already blares love 24 hours a day." Exactly. That's why we must blare it better—intensely, furiously, *distinctively*.

It's time we learn what truly defines a "peculiar people." It isn't just labor-free Sabbaths and lust-free eyes and pork-free dinners and smoke-free lungs. It's *love* in action. It's being "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14, KJV), "zealous for good deeds" (RSV), "eager to do what is good" (NIV), "energetic in goodness" (Message). *This* is what causes onlookers to "glorify God" (1 Peter 2:12). *This* is what must define this church.

And for that to happen, we need to keep our priorities straight. Sacrifice must never outshine mercy. Purity must never outshine love. Our don'ts must never outshine our do's. If our don'ts continue to outshine our do's, then we *deserve* to be known as a cult.

The goal—and we must teach our kids this—is not to catch the public

John 21), Jesus didn't simply help Peter to stop lying; He urged him to start loving. Peter's fresh start was not an end in itself; it was only the beginning.

At the same time Jesus never settled for a form of love. After rescuing a woman caught in adultery, He didn't simply tell her to keep loving the best she knew how; He directed her—"Go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11)—toward a purity, toward a law, that would help her realize what *real* love was. As Edward Heppenstall used to say, "The law makes love intelligent."

In short, to those who understood purity, Jesus said, "Channel that purity into love."¹⁰ And to those who understood love, Jesus said, "The best way to love *better* is purity."

"Peculiar": The Real Deal

All of which brings us back to our church today. I continue to believe that this church, because of its handle on purity, on holiness, has the *potential* to love God and people¹¹ like no other group can. Just as Jesus' holy love soared above that of His society, so can ours. So *must* ours.

"Love?" I can hear some Adventists counter. "Why would we concern our-

"The Last Message of Mercy . . ."

Ellen White's (Literal) Call to Arms

The theme for this fall's NET '98 meetings will be Ellen White's declaration at the close of Christ's Object Lessons: "The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love."

But as the rest of that passage indicates, this message can't only be preached by one person. For that matter, it can't only be preached . . .

"The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.

"The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works—in words of truth and deeds of holiness.

"Christ, the outshining of the Father's glory, came to the world as its light. He came to represent God to men, and of Him it is written that He was anointed 'with the Holy Ghost and with power,' and 'went about doing good' (Acts 10:38). In the synagogue at Nazareth He said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are

bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord' (Luke 4:18, 19). This was the work He commissioned His disciples to do. 'Ye are the light of the world,' He said. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' (Matt. 5:14, 16).

"This is the work which the prophet Isaiah describes when he says, 'Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward' (Isa. 58:7, 8).

"Thus in the night of spiritual darkness God's glory is to shine forth through His church in lifting up the bowed down and comforting those that mourn.

"All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery.

"Practical work will have far more effect than mere sermonizing. We are to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. And we are called to do more than this. The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy. If Christ is abiding in us, our hearts will be full of divine sympathy. The sealed fountains of earnest, Christlike love will be unsealed."

—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 415-417.

eye by what we *don't* do, but by what we *do*. Then when people ask how we do it so well, we can direct them to the don'ts and explain how the don'ts facilitate the do's.

I *don't* ruin the Sabbath—not so I can rub it in Sundaykeepers' faces, but because the blessing of the Sabbath helps me better love my Creator and His creations all week long.

I *don't* cheat on my wife—not just because it breaks a commandment, but because doing so would destroy my capacity to love her.

I *don't* take junk into my body and mind—not just so I can live longer, but so I can *love* longer. What's the point of living longer if I'm not ministering to anyone—if I'm not helping, comforting, encouraging, mentoring, feeding, forgiving, relieving, restoring, supporting, surprising, sweeping people away with love? I might as well get off the planet and do everyone a favor.

What does Jesus want from us? He wants us to avoid evil so we can do

good. He wants us, like Daniel, to be "neither corrupt nor negligent" (Dan. 6:4). He wants us to jolt our communities with love as He jolted His with love. It is love that distinguishes His "disciples" (John 13:35). It is love that makes perfect, as the "heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). It is love that enables "eternal life" (Matt. 25:46). It is love that set Jesus apart. It is love that will set His people apart.

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth *so that* you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Peter 1:22). ■

¹ All scriptural references are from the New International Version except where noted.

² Kent Hansen, "Cross-examined at 30,000 Feet," *Adventist Review*, April 1996, p. 9.

³ Of course, a list of don'ts is less restrictive than a list of do's.

⁴ Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 113.

⁵ *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 370.

⁶ Hosea 6:6 study note, New International Version.

⁷ As *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 392, points out, if the Temple itself were exempt

from the Sabbath restrictions against labor, the Master of the Temple ought to be too.

⁸ Of course, Jesus' contemporaries did get around to some "do's," such as fasting, praying, and tithing their "mint, dill and cummin" (Matt. 23:23). But they didn't *do* much loving—the focus of this article.

⁹ Martin Weber, *Wrestling With Reality*, p. 49.

¹⁰ Someone might ask: Wouldn't purity automatically convert into love? Not necessarily. Just as "mercy" comes before "pure" in the progressive beatitudes, so must a base level of mercy be understood and practiced before purity can contribute to the process. Otherwise, purity might not only be useless, but dangerous—a helpful thing to remember as we schedule topics for our evangelistic meetings. (For an example of dangerous purity, see Steven Mosley's *Burned Out on Being Good*, p. 28.)

¹¹ As Matthew 25:40, Hebrews 6:10, and a host of other texts tell us, one of the ways we love God is by loving people.

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Burned Out and

There was only one solution—but I didn't know what it was.

BY ANN E. ANDERSON

IT WAS THE SUMMER OF 1992, AND I felt desperate. I had a lucrative job as a software engineer, yet I felt burned out. I had gotten divorced and filed bankruptcy the year before, and I thought that the worst pain in my life was behind me. Yet I felt an overwhelming and unreasonable guilt for my failed marriage. The emotional pain was excruciating.

I was broken, as low as I had ever been and sinking lower. I wondered about a possible way to escape from the pain I was experiencing, but I had no idea where to turn.

On the Right Track

I had already given up many of the crutches I had previously used to cover up and deny my pain. My desire for these things had inexplicably been removed over a period of about a year.

First to go were the drugs; no more marijuana or cocaine. These had been the two main drugs in my life, though I had also used others. Next to go was alcohol. Finally I no longer had even nicotine to fall back on, since that desire had disappeared, incredibly enough, just as I started divorce and bankruptcy proceedings. Now in the summer of 1992 all these chemical influences on my brain were gone.

Gone also was the idea of using casual sexual relationships as a crutch. I had tried this for 10 years of my life (before and after my divorce), and I found no peace of mind in them.

Al-Anon had been a tremendous help in working through the trauma of divorce and dealing with some of my own unhealthy habits and attitudes, but by the summer of 1992 it no longer seemed to have anything for me. In fact, there were few people in my life who understood or really wanted to listen to my sad story.

So here I was at age 40 with no idea where to turn, just knowing that I wanted out. I had graduated at the top of my class in high school, near the top in college; successful in my career, I was pretty close to being a perfectionist. Brainy, I guess, but totally lacking in wisdom. I thought I had all the answers, but obviously I didn't have the ones that mattered.

I was spiritually bankrupt and without hope.

The only thing I could think of was to quit my job and find a commune to live in. I had actually purchased some books about communal living.

Someone to Lean On

In August there was still one person I was talking to (I say “to” and not “with” because I did a lot of talking, while he did a lot of listening). Ralph Gifford was the only one who seemed to be consistently willing to listen. He was a colleague from work who happened to be a Seventh-day Adventist.

I had visited his church twice in the spring of 1991, but found nothing to interest me at the time. He had invited me back from time to time, as he did again that August. He also mentioned that Rick Trott, a Christian counselor and chaplain at Atlantic Union College, might be willing to talk with me. I went to church one Sabbath, met Rick, and scheduled an appointment.

I remember vividly a conversation that took place in the interim. It was with another friend from work late one evening. This friend, about my age, had been raised Catholic and had been on a conscious spiritual search for much of his life. (I had been on a spiritual search too, I suppose, although I didn't recognize it as such.)

Unfortunately, my friend had apparently come up empty. Yet interestingly, our conversation that evening triggered something in me. He asked me the key question: “What do you really want in life?”

Through my sobbing I blurted out, “I want true love—someone who will love me just as I am, someone who will love me without making me earn it.” I didn't realize it, but this cry had cracked open the door of my heart, and Jesus took advantage of it. Changes were rapid, and it's been a glorious uphill climb ever since.

One Step at a Time

The first time I met with Rick Trott, I spent most of the time

Broken



crying about what had become of my life and the shame I felt. “What about communes and retreat centers?” I asked.

“Let’s talk about some other things first,” he offered.

I was heading off for a week on Cape Cod, and Rick encouraged me to take along a Bible plus the book *Celebration of Discipline*, by Richard Foster.

From the Bible I chose to read the book of Ephesians that week, to study it in depth. I found myself identified in it—dead in my sin and without hope. This book described a new life and a new hope that apparently could be found in Christ. I didn’t know how to get it, but it was something I desperately needed and wanted. This was a great revelation. *Perhaps other books of the Bible would generate the same spiritual insight*, I thought. My hunger for Bible study had definitely been whetted.

When I returned from my vacation, I bought another book, *The Desire of Ages*, by Ellen White. By October I had devoured it along with the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

I began keeping the Sabbath, going to church every Saturday with Ralph and his family to worship God, and then getting together with a group of 20-40 people for potluck and fellowship.

The clincher came in the form of a sermon by Pastor John Nixon that shot

straight to my heart. The sermon was entitled “Assurance of Salvation,” and I’ll never forget how Pastor Nixon admonished me not to “harden my heart” against the love of Christ. That October I knew with certainty that Christ loved me, that I loved Him, and that I would commit my life to Him.

After more study and counseling I was baptized in January 1993. I had found my true love. And I had found that life-supporting community, the community of believers, that I had been looking for. I felt at home.

The Next Step

Some of my friends and family members thought I had been brainwashed or that I needed church because I was too weak to stand on my own.

They were right! My brain was badly in need of washing—it had been cluttered with cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, failed relationships, shame, and guilt. I had so much to learn about living in a Godless society that stresses independence and a reliance on self to get ahead, that encourages people to disguise problems instead of admitting them, and teaches that we mustn’t rely on anyone for support.

Accepting Christ as my personal Saviour has not been the end of the story, nor was it the end to my strug-

gles and problems. It was just the beginning of a lifelong process of dealing with life’s inappropriate behaviors and attitudes.

A desire to know Jesus intimately had been born in me. And as I came to know Him more fully, I wanted to become more like Him. Through His love and sacrifice on the cross, He broke down the barriers of race, gender, nationality, wealth, education, intelligence, culture, and status. I wanted to break through those same barriers that existed in me. In the meantime, as my daily commitment to developing a loving relationship with my Creator and Redeemer became greater, so also did the joy and blessings I received.

Reaching Others

In June 1994, a year and half after my baptism, I developed a repetitive stress nerve injury in my arm. I’m convinced that had this happened at an earlier point in my life, it would have crushed me. But now I had Jesus, and to tell the truth, I was still burned out in my work.

Since Jesus had come into my life, I had longed to devote more time working directly for Him. Perhaps this injury would bring the opportunity I had been waiting for. As the injury continued to worsen in spite of a doctor’s care, I began to pray and seek for

what I might do for Jesus.

In February 1995, just before I underwent surgery, the possibility of volunteering with International Children's Care (ICC) came up. Three invitations within 24 hours got my attention, so I excitedly telephoned ICC. When Alcyon Fleck asked if I might be interested in going to Romania, there wasn't much question. After my arm had healed sufficiently and my preparations were made, and after my church had raised almost \$5,000 to support my mission, I found myself in August on a plane headed to Romania.

Again, a few of my unchurched family and friends didn't think this was a good idea. They worried about me the whole time.

But I felt that God wanted me to go to Romania. I had the assurance of His love. Since I was now committed to knowing Him more fully in a growing personal relationship, I thought some struggles would be good for me. I survived with a minimum of "suffering," only some minor irritations and frustrations; no wars, no earthquakes, no pestilence. I give the glory to God for my safety and well-being.

Where Now, Lord?

And now I'm here in beautiful North Carolina. I have settled quite comfortably and become active in my new home church. And for the first time in my life I have become highly involved in my community.

Before I met Jesus, I had occasionally wondered about my apathy, my lack of interest in a cause (especially when I would come into contact with someone who was "on fire" for some idea).

Thanks to God, He has enabled me to break away from my tendency toward self-centeredness (basic human nature), to get me out of my comfort zone, and help me reach out to others. It's been exciting, exhilarating, and tremendously rewarding.

So much has changed for me. I have been blessed beyond belief. Seven short years ago I considered myself an agnostic. I thought of Jesus as a myth, a fable, a fantasy created

from someone's imagination. I was stubborn and closed-minded.

Strangely, I was afraid of God, yet I didn't believe in Him. Probably it was because I had never tried to know Him. But was I afraid to get to know Him because then I might believe in Him? Would I be forced to acknowledge Someone greater than myself?

So how have I come to where I am today, from where I was seven short years ago? It's a mystery to me, nothing short of a miracle. Jesus had been ever near me, and He knew the right time and the right way to knock on the door of my heart. It's fascinating to me that He found me when I was not consciously seeking Him, when I was seeking something quite different.

I praise God for the good news of Jesus Christ, the gospel of a God who tries to be close to His creatures. I praise Him for giving His one and only Son, Jesus, as a revelation of His love. I've come to know that love.

I thank God that He met and loved me just as I was; that Jesus Christ now lives in me, filling my emptiness, walking with me every day, working in me to remove my bad attitudes and behaviors, and healing my broken relationships with others.

I thank God for the wonderful fellowship I have had the privilege to enjoy with Him in the company of so many fellow believers in such a short time.

I can testify to the power of this promise because I have experienced it in my life: "Come to me, you who are tired and worried, and I will give you rest. Work with me and learn from me, for I am gentle and kind and you will discover a peace in your soul beyond anything you thought possible" (Matt. 11:28, 29, Clear Word). ■

Ann E. Anderson writes from Naples, North Carolina, where she is active in the local Seventh-day Adventist church.



Read the Life, Not the Label

A. ALLAN AND DEIRDRE MARTIN

There seems to be a growing trend for this generation to be socially active, environmentally aware, kindhearted, and basically “Christlike” *without* any religious motivation or awareness. This squeezes Christ out of Christianity. How can we be faithful to our calling without offending the Generation X lifestyle?

Deirdre’s reply: Is it possible to be Christlike without being religious? Is it possible for God to use some in our generation—or anyone, for that matter—without their awareness of how He is doing good through them? I believe so. Because Christ is sovereign.

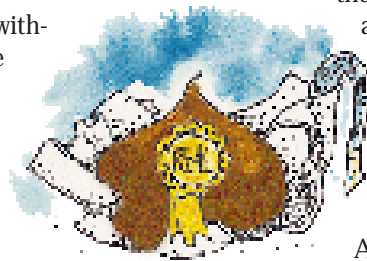
Labels aren’t important to our generation; if anything, we detest labels. Calling myself a Christian doesn’t make it so any more than sticking a Hershey’s wrapper on an onion makes it chocolate.

Young adults also detest people who say they are one thing and act like something else. It’s important to be authentic in action—to be a social activist, not because you’re a liberal or conservative, but because you care about others in our society; to be conscientious about our environment, not because you pay membership dues to the Sierra Club, but because you want to be responsible with our planet; to be compassionate, not because of your religious dictates, but because your heart goes out to people around you. For today’s young adults, actions speak louder than stuck-on labels.

I disagree with your evaluation that our generation is squeezing Christ out of Christianity. But I believe such moral behavior is an unconscious reflection of Christ’s character. I’ll grant that some young adults may act virtuously and completely refute any religious influence. But maybe their actions can serve as a wake-up call to some of us “labeled” Christian.

Iwant to invite a friend to NET ’98, but I have some misgivings about inviting her to watch a “talking head” on a video screen. Sometimes, especially around evangelistic meetings, my church seems plastic—nice, but not really wanting any more than to baptize people. I think my friend will be receptive to Christianity, but I’m uncertain how best to approach her.

Allan’s reply: I admire your candor. I believe God is using you in some very important ways. Here are some ideas that may be of help to you.



First, customize and personalize your witness. The satellite broadcast of NET ’98 is only a tool. It’s important to realize that the downlink with Dwight Nelson is only one component of NET ’98. There’s great flexibility by which each congregation can customize the program to suit their individual needs. Some churches will use the broadcast as the centerpiece of their evangelistic effort; others will tape the series and use it later to supplement a small group Bible study.

Nelson’s presentations will be powerful, so I encourage you to use NET ’98 but not feel restricted in how you use it. Customize.

Second, remember, you are the church. You are the warmth in your “plastic” church. Allow Christ to use you to transform your church. I hear your concern about superficiality, but you’re part of the solution. As an extension of Christ’s body, you have already shared your heart and your care with your friend. Christ will give you the courage and the finesse to address your concerns with your church and begin to melt the plastic.

Third, rely on God’s timetable. Act upon the Holy Spirit’s prompting to give your friend an invitation to hear our message. Christ is coming very soon.

But if your friend declines, be careful not to take it as a personal insult or rejection. If your friend finds your church distasteful, be cautious about passing judgment on the church. Rely on God’s wisdom and seek His timetable. Regardless of your friend’s decision about your invitation, continue to foster a relationship of integrity with her and continue to be an agent for growth in your congregation. God is doing a good work in you as His ambassador, for both your church and your friend.

For NET ’98 information, go to <http://www.net98.org>.

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

Allan and Deirdre Martin are cofounders of *dream•am VISION* ministries, dedicated to empowering young people in Christian lifestyle and leadership. Visit their website at <http://www.tagnet.org/dvm>.



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

Class With a Mission

Practical instruction prepares students for real-life experiences.

BY PETER W. SUNDIN, WRITING FROM COLLEGEDALE, TENNESSEE

You go to a hospital; you have the medicines, the syringes, the instruments, the beds. Well, a lot of people don't have that. You have to learn ways to do without that kind of stuff."

"My fiancée and I plan to go out and do medical missionary work somewhere. I grew up in Malawi. It's in the blood."

"My people are Native Americans in New Mexico and Arizona, and I want to be able to help them."

These are the responses of students



HEALTHY LUNGS? Students Wendy Guptill (left) and Jenny Reifsnyder check a baby's lungs as instructor Laura Nyirady looks on.

enrolled in the Frontier Mission Nursing class at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. Instructor Laura Nyirady believes that the class is unique in North American Adventist colleges. Her students learn the special needs and problems they may face in remote mission outposts, and they participate in a medical mission trip to either the Dominican Republic or Nicaragua.

Nyirady comes by her love of missions naturally. She was born of mis-

sionary parents in China's Szechwan province. She grew up in Taiwan and Singapore and didn't become a permanent resident of the United States until she entered college. Later on she and her husband, Steve, a biology professor, served as missionaries in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

"I was working with nursing students at Philippine Union College, taking them out into the villages, and I thought it would be awesome if I could somehow incorporate this kind of information into a course in the U.S."

It was a meeting with Pastor Tony Torres, of Tennessee, that provided the catalyst. Torres, who spent 10 years as a doctor in the Dominican Republic, had been going back every year with physician Jim Thurman to give medical help. When Nyirady mentioned her desire to teach a mission nursing class, Torres volunteered his assistance. When he asked if Nyirady would be interested in bringing her class to the Dominican Republic, she jumped at the chance, and the annual medical mission trip was born.

It has grown since. Word got around quickly, and more doctors offered their services. Now there are two trips each spring. Nyirady took one group to Nicaragua in March, while fellow nursing instructor Shirley Spears led another group to the Dominican Republic. The instructors, their students, and the physicians who accompany them treat more than 1,000 patients each year. It's not a vacation.



TEACHING THE BASICS: Wendy Guptill (right) teaches the eight laws of healthful living in a Nicaraguan village as volunteer Mariani Cabana translates.

Frontier Mission Nursing is not a requirement for SAU nursing majors, but 17 students have taken it as an elective each of the past three years. The majority of them come from missionary backgrounds, and a lot of them would be going into mission service even without the



DOES IT HURT? Premed student Susanna Swilley and volunteer medical technician Bruce Dixon check a patient.

class. The students learn skills that they would not normally use in the U.S.

"We teach them nursing skills here [at Southern]. We teach them to function in this country. But when I teach this class, it's not related to this country at all."

Said one student who had already served as a student missionary, "We learned how to suture. Regular nursing classes don't teach you that, but you have to know it in the mission field."

But Frontier Mission Nursing doesn't just deal with medicine and treatment. "We teach them to appreciate culture," says Nyirady. "You can't just walk in and change everything. You have to really understand culture and how to work within it, and also try to show the concept of Jesus as the great physician. We're not going out there just to heal the sick, but as the right arm of the gospel. I want that to be the focus of this class—not just health care, but in a

relationship to spreading the gospel, because that's our whole purpose!"

For Nyirady the Frontier Mission Nursing class is the fulfillment of a dream, but she takes no credit for its success. "God's in charge of the whole thing," she says. "He's smiling on this class. There's no other way to explain some of the things that have happened!"

One of these "happenings" involved the acquisition of a Doppler machine, which registers fetal heartbeat.

"We went to Nicaragua in December, also, and there I examined a pregnant woman who said she couldn't feel any movement," Nyirady explains. "I had no way to assess the condition of the fetus. I was really frustrated. I thought, *If I just had a Doppler, I could verify the baby's condition.* I determined to find one, and when I came back, I got the number of a company that makes them. I just called them and told the woman I spoke to about our trips, our goals, and our pur-

poses, and asked if her company would be willing to donate such a machine. 'I don't know why not' was her reply. It's just a miracle, a gift from God."

Nyirady also teaches the use of natural remedies. "I've learned a lot of stuff not covered in my other nursing classes," exclaimed one student, "[including] ways to deal with things with simple medicines and home remedies. We learned how to do things in a more natural way."

"We can use a lot of this stuff right here at home, not just in the mission field," added another.

If the enthusiasm of the students and the instructor is any indication, it looks as though Frontier Mission Nursing is going to be part of the university's nursing curriculum for quite a while.

"After all," says Nyirady, "God is leading in this program. He's the only reason it's been successful at all."

N E W S B R E A K

Beating of Adventist Reflects Religious Intolerance in Russia

The beating of a Seventh-day Adventist in the Black Sea city of Anapa is indicative of the local impact of the new Russian law restricting religious minorities, according to John Graz, secretary general of the International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA).

Yury Salov, part of an outreach team selling religious books in Anapa, was "arrested" by two uniformed men of the National Organization of Cossacks. They took him to their headquarters, where he was interrogated and beaten with metal-tipped whips. Salov was accused of betraying the Orthodox Church, and his books were confiscated.

Salov reacted by saying that if his beating brought glory to Christ, then he was not sorry for all the pain he suffered.

"This incident reflects the situation at the local level, which has been made more difficult by the passage of the law in 1997 restricting religious liberty," said Graz. "While there are no major problems on a national level, locally religious minorities are on the defensive. It is as if the new law has legitimized discrimination against those not of the majority faith."

Attempts to challenge the 1997 law are ongoing, with lawyer Vladimir Ryakhovsky leading an appeal to the

constitutional court in Moscow.

The law "contradicts both the Russian constitution and all Western legal norms on human rights," says Ryakhovsky.

Fellow lawyer Yekaterina Smislova concurs. "Russia is now a member of the Council of Europe and a signatory of the European Convention on Human Rights, so this law has attracted great interest abroad. Russia's credentials as a free, open society that respects basic human rights are what are at stake here."

According to Graz, the IRLA is supporting the legal challenge to the new law. "IRLA's Russian chapter is actively involved in the attempt to have the law ruled unconstitutional. It is discriminatory, restrictive of religious liberty, and contrary to agreed human rights."—*Adventist News Network.*

Papua New Guinea Disaster Update

General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg reports that 24 of 52 Adventists in the Arop church in Papua New Guinea died in the recent tidal wave disaster. In the Warapu church three children also died.

The disaster claimed at least 1,600 lives, with more than 8,000 homeless being cared for by humanitarian agencies, including the Adventist Development and

Wrong Parents, Right Decision

BY RENÉ ALEXENKO EVANS, PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANT, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Three-year-olds Callie Johnson and Rebecca Chittum were born hours apart at the same Virginia hospital in 1995 and went home with the wrong mothers—although no one is yet sure how it happened. That is just the latest installment in the sad tales that are these girls' short lives.

The mistake was discovered when Paula Johnson, 30, hauled Carlton Conley, her ex-boyfriend, into court over child support payments for Callie. Johnson insisted Conley was the girl's father, but was shocked when DNA testing showed that neither of them were biologically related to the little girl.

Johnson and Conley have a less-than-ideal history. Conley carries an assault-and-battery conviction against Johnson. Johnson has a state permit to carry a concealed firearm and was herself convicted for "curse and abuse" against a school official.*

Meanwhile, Kevin Chittum, 25, and Whitney Rogers, 19, the couple who believed Rebecca was their daughter, had been killed on July 4 along with five other people in the nation's worst car accident that day. The unmarried couple were also

parents to another daughter, Rebecca's younger "sister."

Four unmarried parents. A violent relationship and a nasty child support battle. Teenage pregnancy, tragedy on the highway, and two young orphans. There was more than enough adversity for these two innocents before discovering that they were living with the wrong families.

Rebecca Chittum's grandparents say they love her and want to continue the shared custody arrangement they worked out after their children's deaths. Johnson says she too loves the daughter she has been raising and is not interested in yanking Rebecca away from the family she knows. The families have met and say they plan to leave the girls where they are but to include liberal visitation on both sides.

That is almost more common sense than we can expect out of either human nature or the courts. Let's hope, for once, the best interests of two little girls prevail.

* *Time*, Aug. 17, 1998.

NEWS COMMENTARY

NEWS BREAK

Relief Agency. "Please continue to pray for the tragic situation in this beautiful land," Folkenberg says.

ADRA Staff Safe After Sudan Bombing

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency staff are safe and things are relatively calm in Khartoum, Sudan, following the recent cruise missile attack by the United States, says Peter Truscott, country director for Sudan.

ADRA's warehouse in Sudan was not damaged despite its close proximity to the pharmaceutical plant, believed to be a chemical weapons facility, that was the target of United States missiles.

ADRA conducts emergency feeding programs for refugees. At this point there are no plans for evacuation, but the ADRA staff is maintaining contact with the United Nations as well as ADRA offices in the Middle East Union. There are about 20 expatriates stationed in Khartoum.

In a separate incident, the ADRA director in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was safely evacuated because of increased fighting and political instability. Date Vanderwerff was evacuated to neighboring Zambia until the fighting subsides. The United States Embassy has already suspended operations and advised all

American citizens to evacuate, ADRA officials say.

Anti-Drug March Brings Puerto Rican Capital to a Standstill

The two-hour parade by 6,000 young anti-drug marchers through San Juan, capital of Puerto Rico, brought traffic to a standstill and caught the attention of the city's half-million residents.

Organized by the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency in conjunction with the Walk Around the World 2000 program of the Adventist Church, the march promoted a positive, healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

"These young people want to tell of the dangers of drug, tobacco, and alcohol use," said Reg Burgess, one the Walk Around the World organizers. "This walk is just one of many such events worldwide. Next month a similar walk will take place in New York City, while in Brazil many thousands will take to the streets in a similar way to get their anti-drug message across."

Young marchers from 34 countries accompanied marching bands and others giving out literature on drug prevention and recovery. "You see what happens when the youth get involved," said Baraka Muganda, General Conference youth director. "Their enthusiasm

Did You Know?

Clinton Vetoes Education Savings Tax Breaks

President Clinton has vetoed legislation that would have provided tax breaks to parents saving money for education, including for private and religious school tuition. The bill would have expanded existing savings accounts for higher education so tax-free withdrawals could be used for education expenses from kindergarten on up.

In vetoing the bill, Clinton said it would use the \$3 billion lost in taxes to fund tax benefits for richer families while doing "virtually nothing for average families."

"By sending me this bill, the Congress has instead chosen to weaken public education and to shortchange our children," he said in his veto message.

Clinton's action was criticized by a host of groups, including the National Catholic Education Association, the Family Research Council, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

The Catholic group said the veto would harm poor families trying to escape the public schools.—*Religion News Service*.

For Your Good Health

Pressured to Remember

A Swedish study of 999 men uncovered a connection between hypertension at age 50 and thinking ability 20 years later. Men with the lowest blood pressures had the most cognitive skills, while men with the highest pressures had their cognitive abilities diminished most.—*Johns Hopkins Medical Letter*.

Violent Evenings

Violence on prime-time television has increased during the past three years, despite efforts to lessen the number of violent acts portrayed in entertainment programming. Even more discouraging, 40 percent of the violent acts are committed by characters who are offered as attractive role models, and in 70 percent of violent scenes the offenders showed no remorse and faced no penalty. Researchers say that television violence increases the chance that viewers, especially children, will become desensitized to aggression or fearful of harm in their own world.—*American Medical News*.

—For Your Good Health is compiled by Larry Becker, editor of Vibrant Life, the church's health outreach journal. To subscribe, call 1-800-765-6955.

N E W S B R E A K

is contagious, and their sincerity is clearly seen."
—*Adventist News Network*.

ASI Members Raise \$3.8 Million

"Sharing Christ in the Marketplace" was the theme of the annual Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) Convention in Palm Springs, California, August 5-8.

More than 1,200 delegates registered for the annual convention, and about 3,000 persons attended the Sabbath services, making the program the largest ever in ASI's history, says Dwight Hilderbrandt, ASI director. The program was broadcast by the Three Angels Broadcasting Network and was viewed via satellite by thousands more.

Convention attendees donated \$3.8 million on Sabbath morning. The offering will fund 23 ministry projects (including *It Is Written's* "ACTS 2000" satellite evangelistic series), provide hundreds of bicycles for lay missionaries in Africa, and build 250 church buildings for congregations in India.

News Notes

✓ **Planting Seeds of Faith.** In the 10 months between the Seeds '97 and Seeds '98 church growth conferences,



Monte Sahlin

125 new churches were planted, about 12 per month, reports Kermit Netteburg, assistant to the North American Division president for communication.

✓ **Monte Sahlin**, an assistant to the North American Division president and regional vice president for North America at the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, was recently elected vice president for creative ministries for the Columbia Union.

He replaces Richard Duerksen, who became vice president for spiritual affairs at Florida Hospital in Orlando. Sahlin served 12 years on the NAD staff.

What's Upcoming

Sept.	19	Youth Spiritual Commitment Celebration
Sept.	19	Family Togetherness Day
Sept.	26	Pathfinder Day
Sept.	26	Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Inter-American Division
Oct.	4-10	Health Emphasis Week
Oct.	10	Sabbath School Guest Day

Virtual Veritas

Finding God's Word on the World Wide Web

BY DAVID A. PENDLETON

HAND-COPIED FOR CENTURIES BY monks, secretly distributed by Reformers, and so highly valuable that it was frequently chained to the walls of medieval cathedrals lest overzealous students steal it, the Bible remained largely unseen by the masses throughout most of the Christian Era. Not until the fifteenth century, when Johannes Gutenberg's invention of movable type made vernacular translations commercially viable, did the average man or woman in the Western world begin to have access to a personal copy of the Word of God.

Today the Bible has become widely available in most parts of the world through the tireless efforts of Bible societies, mission movements, and numerous church organizations. After half a millennium of understanding the Bible as a printed object, the world is now poised to discover God's Word in cyberspace, where information traverses the globe almost instantaneously via the Internet. While print resources still command the larger market and are much more widely available, Bible translations, commentaries, study aids, and theological works are increasingly available to both serious Bible students and Web surfers. Persons of all economic levels can read deeply from God's Word and avail themselves of a host of biblical aids if they have access to a personal computer and Internet service in their homes, schools, or workplaces. Rapidly expanding Internet technology and websites have opened the world of biblical scholarship to anyone with a modem and a little patience.

Here are some of the best places to begin:

www.imt.net/~anchor/follow2b.html

The Bible Online is a great place to begin exploring the Bible on the Internet. The site features an extensive set of links to Bibles available in more than 30 languages, including such diverse offerings as Arabic, Latin, Swahili and Vietnamese versions. *The Bible Online* website is a virtual

Bible library in itself. English versions available on this site include the widely used New International Version and Revised Standard Version. Also available is the *Blue Letter*

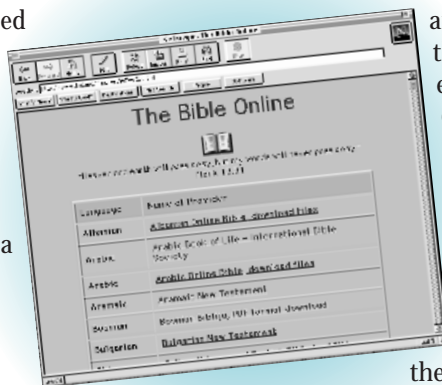
Bible site, popular in southern California and known for its convenient linkages to the somewhat dated but nonetheless long-esteemed *Matthew Henry's Bible Commentary*.

ccel.wheaton.edu/wwsb/

The World Wide Study Bible is produced and maintained by Wheaton College, one of America's leading Evangelical colleges. This website is particularly useful to serious Bible students because of

the many study aids included with this

Internet Bible. In addition to being able to read the Bible in half a dozen English translations, browsers can read sermons, commentaries, and lectures on a particular book, chapter, or verse. For example, if you want to compare Genesis 1 in the American Standard Version of 1901 with the more recent *New American Standard Bible*, a simple mouse click makes it happen. Moving easily between the two versions, you can study the translators' word choices. Online and downloadable commentaries on this same chapter make available the textual commentary of John Calvin, the devotional reflections of Victorian preacher Charles Spurgeon, and sermons on this passage from such diverse characters as Methodism's founder John Wesley and the fourth-century bishop Athanasius. Even church hymns that relate to the passage can be called up.

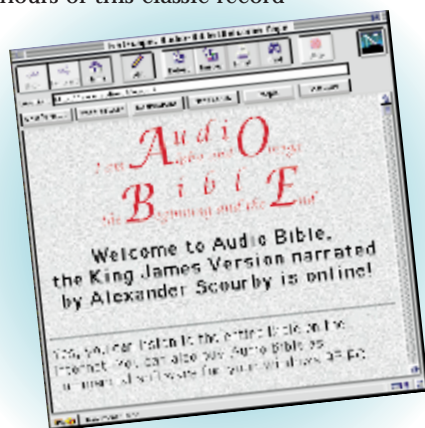


www.goshen.net/osl

The Online Study Bible features a searchable database of 10 English versions complete with the extensive *Multi-Translation Bible Concordance*. It is simple to conduct comprehensive searches by looking up a key word or phrase. Another helpful feature of this website is the *Study Bible Companion*. While it requires Java Script software, when it is selected, a separate smaller browser window opens on-screen, allowing one-click access to continued searching of God's Word on the Web.

www.audio-bible.com

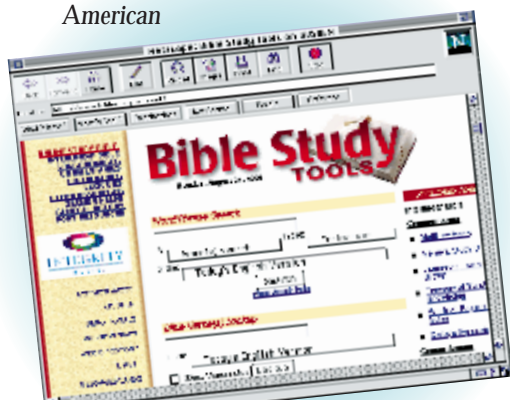
Audio Bible is a remarkable website featuring the complete King James Version as read by narrator Alexander Scourby. Originally recorded more than 50 years ago on 67 albums, all 72 hours of this classic record-



ing are now available free of charge on the Internet. To listen, simply download the free Real Audio software and select a chapter. The text of the chapter appears on the screen in large print as the recording plays, making it a useful tool for memorizing portions of Scripture.

bible.gospelcom.net/

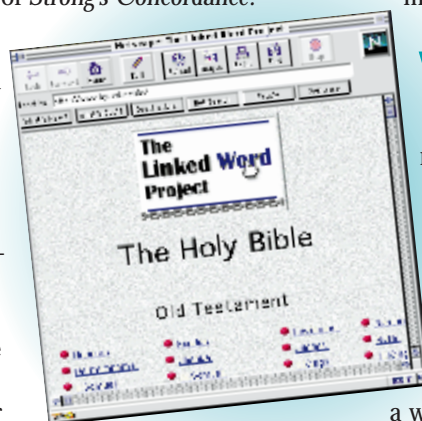
Bible Gateway allows users to search for key words in six English versions of the Bible, including the New American



Standard Bible and the King James Version. With a graphically attractive and easy-to-use interface, the *Bible Gateway* website is a convenient way to search through the Bible quickly, aided by both cross-references and footnotes. Bible students can type in a topic and immediately locate relevant biblical passages on even obscure and esoteric topics that might be difficult to locate using the conventional concordance method.

www.bju.edu/bible

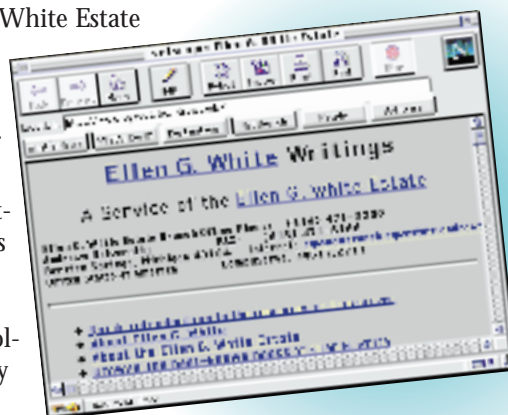
The Linked Word Project combines the elegance of the King James Version with the depth of *Strong's Concordance*. Each word in this Internet Bible is directly linked to its entry in the concordance, where one can locate the original word in Hebrew or Greek, read the definition, and search for other texts that use the same or similar word or words. This website will prove to be an invaluable tool for both scholars and diligent laypersons seeking to deepen their understanding of Scripture.



In addition to locating the Bible on the Internet, Seventh-day Adventists and other Christians will find other helpful materials available on the Internet. Here are a few examples:

www.egwestate.andrews.edu

The **Ellen G. White Estate** provides a searchable database that includes all of Ellen White's published writings, as well as grandson Arthur L. White's six-volume biography



and D. A. Delafield's *Ellen G. White in Europe*. The *Conflict of the Ages* series and several other classic Adventist works are also available in continuous text format for easy reading.

www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/christian-books.html

A Guide to Christian Literature on the Internet is an online library of well-known Christian writings and resources. Tens of thousands of pages of material are readily available, ranging from Flavius Josephus's histories through works by Martin Luther and other Reformation giants to more modern classics.

While Internet Bibles will never completely replace printed ones (it is difficult, for example, to take a computer and a modem hookup on a Sabbath afternoon hike), the new technology does have much to recommend it. The Internet can make a wealth of information available to those who live far from seminary libraries or cannot afford to buy the printed versions of the Bibles and Bible study aids they would like to own. ■

David A. Pendleton, an attorney and state legislator, attends the Manoa Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church with his family in Honolulu, Hawaii.



The Church Nursery:

A Worship Alternative

Three churches share their methods for child care during church.

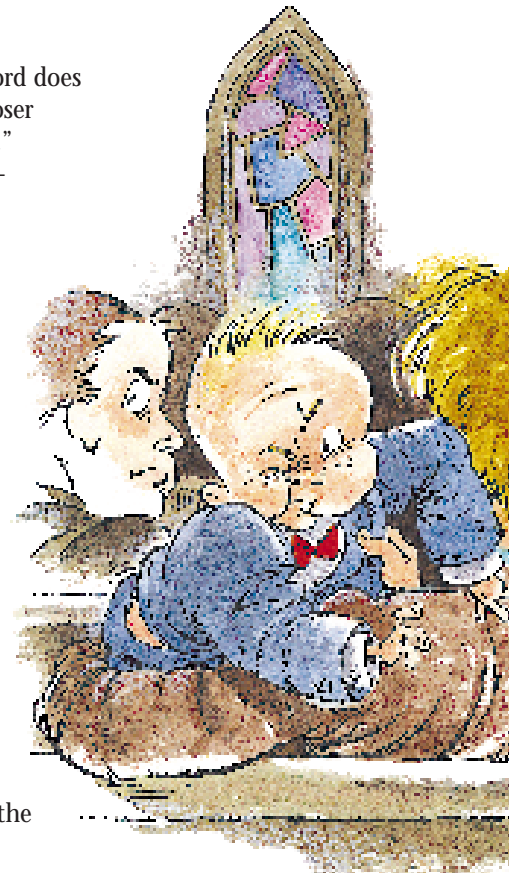
BY CAROL AXELSON

OUR CHURCH HAS traditionally encouraged parents to bring their children into the worship service right from birth in order to train them properly and establish a good habit. Many of us were raised with the idea that children learn reverence by sitting quietly in church. To many members the idea of letting kids be in another room during the worship service seems almost sacrilegious.

However, today's parents are not willing to settle for the old theories just for the sake of tradition. Brad Forbes, director of AdventSource, puts it this way: "While there are many ideas and activities we can use to divert our children's attention, I believe the real question is Should we expect our children to be quiet in church? Kids are created to be expressive, and I am sure that making them 'reverent' in the

Puritan sense of the word does not bring them to a closer relationship with Jesus."

Let's face it, the typical church service is not friendly to young families. Children are out of their normal routine on Sabbath. Church often comes during naptime or snacktime, when they may be more fussy and less cooperative. Children don't understand most of what is happening; they don't know the songs, and they don't understand the preacher.



With all the demands today's society puts on families, parents may desperately need the spiritual boost the weekly worship service provides, yet it can be so stressful that some become discouraged and leave after Sabbath school—or quit attending altogether. Many of those who remain feel it is time to search for alternatives.

A few churches have begun organized child care during the worship service. The methods used by these churches vary greatly; they might include simple baby-sitting or hands-on learning experiences for the children.

■ At the Mountain View church in Las Vegas, Nevada, volunteers keep children up to the age of 4 each week in a nonstructured setting, with toys available. Children's church is offered for ages 4-7. Shirley Burrow, kindergarten leader, shares her philosophy: "The worship service is not meaningful to infants and toddlers except too often as a time when parents make impossible demands. Parents need the support of the church in rearing their children, and child care is one way the church can show its love and concern for young parents."

■ The College View church in Lincoln, Nebraska, in addition to having a mothers' room and providing "quiet boxes" for church, also has a nursery for infants to age 2½, a tiny tots program for ages 2½-5, and children's church for children in kindergarten through fourth grade. The nursery is

informal, with age-appropriate toys, crib, walker, snacks, etc. The tiny tots program uses the *Hands-on Bible Curriculum*. Children have snacktime, then for 15-20 minutes they play at different centers that have activities related to the lesson theme. This is followed by songs, a lesson, prayertime, and a craft or other activity that reinforces the Bible lesson. Puppets are frequently used. Angel Bock reports that kids now beg their parents to come to church and not stay home, and parents continually express their gratefulness for this service.

■ The Marietta, Georgia, church hires nursery attendants to care for children up to age 2 each week in an informal setting. Their church, being mission-oriented and with lots of young families, feels that child care is a priority worth including in their budget. They also offer children's church for ages 3-8 and may soon hire a coordinator for that as an adjunct to their pastoral staff. Pastor George Pangman feels that child care can be especially beneficial for new members, single parents, large families, and parents whose child has a condition that affects behavior control, such as attention deficit disorder.

Other suggestions

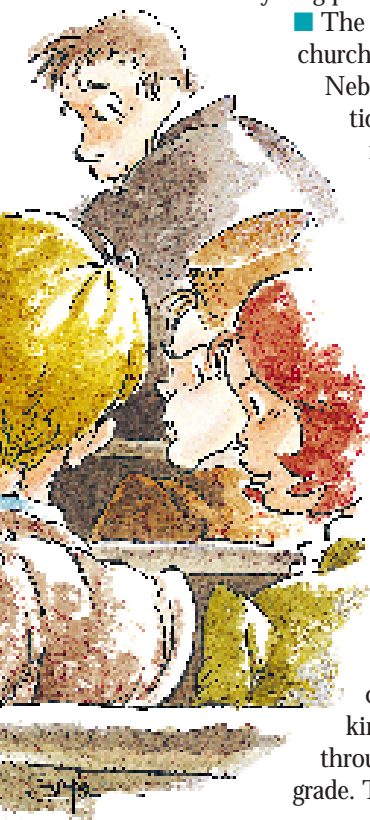
Barbara Manspeaker, former church ministries director for the Columbia Union and currently a self-employed consultant and writer, has seen informal baby-sitting done successfully by adults, with earliteen helpers as needed. She suggests that deaconesses organize a schedule for people to take turns

baby-sitting, and a supply of coloring books, puzzles, felts, and other toys keeps most children occupied for an hour or so.



Noelene Johnsson feels that some type of child care through age 3 is a good idea, preferably with a nursery for infants and separate activities for toddlers. She emphasizes that the toys and activities should have a spiritual theme as opposed to action heroes, cartoons, or secular nursery characters. A church could offer training for older children in child-care skills and then rotate them in the child-care program. Tuition scholarships for church school could be offered in return for this kind of trained help.

College View children's church coordinator Carrie Bordenaro suggests forming teams to take turns running the child-care program. Their teams rotate one week a month for a year. This gets more people involved, and they are often more willing to help when it's not such a big commitment.



Resources

BY CAROL AXELSON

Organizing a nursery: Noelene Johnsson, director of children's ministries for the North American Division, recommends *The Nurturing Nursery* as a good starting point. This handbook includes tips on arranging and decorating the nursery, obtaining and maintaining supplies and equipment, making policies and schedules, and recruiting and training staff, and addresses legal issues and emergency situations. *David C. Cook Publishing Co., 850 N. Grove Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. 1-800-323-7543.*

Hands-on Bible Curriculum: This is a nondenominational program with activities for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children. Included is a learning lab filled with hands-on teaching tools and a teachers' guide with enough programs for one quarter. *Group, P.O. Box 485, Loveland, CO 80539. 1-800-447-1070.*

Recruiting and screening child-care workers: *Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in Your Church* is recommended. *Christian Ministry Resources, P.O. Box 1098, Matthews, NC 28106. 1-800-222-1840.*

A software system: Offered by Secured Personnel Data. Some churches may be able to get in under the umbrella of another Adventist entity at a lower cost. *Myra Frasier, 1930 San Marco Boulevard, Suite 207, Jacksonville, FL 32207. 1-800-454-6982 (message service).*

Baby-sitter training program: This is now available on computer software from the Health Connection. *Safety First: A Guide to Safe Child Care* (item No. 33064) is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Please specify MS-DOS or Mac version. Fax: (301) 790-9733.

Safety guidelines

It is imperative that guidelines and procedures be established for ensuring the safety of the children—not only to avoid lawsuits, but most important, to

protect the children. Increasingly attorneys and insurers are urging churches to require anyone who works with children in any capacity to fill out a volunteer clearance form that asks

for references and background information (see box).

One rule of thumb is to consider only people who have attended your church regularly for at least six months

Church Survival Tips

BY CAROL AXELSON

If child care during the worship hour is not an option for you, here are some suggestions to make the church service more bearable for everyone.

■ Give kids plenty of time to get their wiggles out and take a bathroom break before going into church. If possible, wait until well into the preliminary activities before going into the sanctuary.

■ Have a special Sabbath bag or box filled with quiet toys, felts, religious or nature books, and a snack. Try to save it until after the sermon starts so the kids don't get bored before they really have to be quiet.

■ For preschoolers, try "playing church" at home. Line up the dolls and stuffed animals, sing songs, have a story, read a Bible verse, then have a "sermon." Play part of a sermon tape while your child uses a Sabbath bag to help the toys be quiet. Or let your child "preach" while you help the toys be quiet. Just make it fun, and they'll get the idea of what's expected.

■ If your child normally takes a late-morning nap but is too easily distracted to fall asleep in church, try going for a car ride after Sabbath school. If your child goes to sleep, wait in the car until after church has started and the foyer is quieter. Then take the child, car seat and all, into church.

■ Experiment with different seating arrangements. Some toddlers do better in the front rows, where there are fewer distractions. A more energetic child may need to sit in the back, where there is lots of visual stimulation—and where you can make a quick escape.

■ Children vary greatly in their ability to sit still, so be alert to *your* child's cues. When your child has reached his or her limit, don't hesitate to take a break.

■ Consider talking with your pastor about ways to make the church service more interesting for the children. After all, everyone listens to the children's story! If the sermon is geared toward the children, the adults can usually appreciate it too, but it rarely works the other way around.

■ See if there are other parents who could take turns watching all the kids. That way all of you could hear a whole sermon now and then.

■ Remember that your child really will learn to sit quietly someday! Praise your child when he or she does well. And when your child doesn't . . . well, try to keep in mind that a child's salvation depends less on his or her ability to sit still than on your reaction to it.



Photo © PhotoDisc

to serve in any position involving children. Churches that have this rule are a step ahead of molesters, who will often move on rather than wait the required period of time.

Another good precaution is always to have at least two adults watching the children. Some churches have a two-way mirror that serves as a security measure and also allows parents to check on their kids without disturbing them. Doors with top and bottom halves opening separately are helpful in controlling traffic in and out of the nursery. Children and bags can be handed back and forth over the latched bottom half. Noelene Johnsson suggests that involving parents in child care on a rotating basis not only gives them the opportunity to have input into the program but also reduces the risk of child abuse accusations.

Churches with a large membership or a high percentage of visitors should consider using some type of identification to make sure children are picked up by the appropriate people. The College View church requires parents

to sign their children in and out. The Mountain View and Marietta churches return children only to the person who brought them if they don't know the family members. Another method churches have used is to have three sets of numbered cards, which can be purchased or easily made with index cards (they can be reused indefinitely if laminated). One card is attached to the baby, one to the diaper bag, and one given to the parent. Parents must present their numbered card before the child is released.

It is a good idea to formulate and post plans for dealing with emergencies ranging from a sick child to a natural disaster. According to Jack Wetmore, associate director of risk control for Adventist Risk Management, there should always be someone immediately available who is currently certified in first aid and CPR. It's also important to remember precautions such as covering unused electrical outlets and using only fire-resistant decorations. He stresses the importance of screening workers and filing the volunteer clear-

ance forms, available from your conference children's ministries department.

Computer software is available that will perform background checks on potential employees or volunteers (see sidebar on page 26).

A New Tradition

There are numerous worship alternatives for children, and ultimately each church must decide for itself how best to meet the needs of its members. But regardless of the option a church chooses, it's time every church started a new tradition—including children as active participants in the worship service—wherever they are. ■

Carol Axelson is a secretary at the Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. She writes from Topeka, Kansas.



Needless Braking or Belly Flopping? No Way!

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear"
(1 John 4:18).¹

I like the story of the man who meets an angel walking down a road. The angel is carrying a bucket of water in one hand and a torch in the other.

"Why are you carrying that torch and water?" the man inquires.

The angel replies, "The water is to put out the flames of hell, and the torch is to burn down the castles of heaven. Then we'll see who really loves God."

Fear is a major part of many people's faith. A crisis of fear taught me an eternal lesson during my drivers' education class at Chaffey High School in Ontario, California. As a scared young driver under the guidance of our instructor, Mr. Heald, I was steering down Mount Baldy and braking cautiously with every curve. Eventually Mr. Heald advised, "You don't have to brake in this section. Just let the car go."

I'm driving with a madman, I thought, and continued braking. After all, the lives of two fellow students grimly clutching knees (their own) in the back seat mattered to me. I felt responsible. I was mindful also of sailing over the nearby cliff. Following two more brake taps, Mr. Heald calmly spoke.

"If you touch the brake again before I say you can, I'm going to flunk you."

Ahhh! We're all gonna die! I clutched the wheel in a death grip and focused my energies on the pavement, preparing to negotiate turns at 90 miles an hour. I didn't want to die, but at that time in earth's history, flunking was worse than death. *Farewell, world . . .*

We glided through the next six curves. I barely had to nudge the steering wheel. "OK," Mr. Heald said as we approached a steeper section, "you can brake now." After that I braked only when necessary.

Many times since, when following an epileptic braker down a mountain, I have wished that Mr. Heald and his absolutes could be in the front seat for everyone. For all its "educational" benefits, fear is irrational.²

Fear can also create unnecessary pain. One week before his seventh birthday, my son Geoffrey wanted to learn how to dive off a diving board at Aunt Mary's pool. I explained that Geoff should first curl into a ball and roll in. Time and again he poised with toes

dripping, crouched, leaned toward the water, and opened like a jackknife to splat on his belly. It couldn't have felt good.

"Geoff, you're opening up," I explained. "Just roll in. It won't hurt as much, either."

Dive. *Splat*. Dive. *Splat*. Seventeen or more tries later, we decided to wait for another day. He couldn't bring himself to stop "braking."³

In life, especially when encountering new ideas, we must work from a platform of love, trust, and confidence.

Otherwise, as Dr. Robert Anthony contends, "the thing we run from is the thing we run to." We live our lives landing directly on our fears.

What happens when we fear God?

Obedience that springs from terror will not last, cannot last. We'll live cautious, resentful lives, hiding behind fences and braking with every curve, belly flopping on dives and wondering all the while, *Why does God make this so difficult?* When the Bible says "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10), it speaks of the healthy respect we extend to any terrific power, be it electricity, lioness, or locomotive. God deserves this respect. But note that this respect is the *beginning* of wisdom. Beyond respect extend the infinite reaches of fearless love—wisdom's destination.

Jesus Himself counsels, "Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27). As He walks on the water toward the disciples (fearful sight!), He affirms, "It is I; do not be afraid" (John 6:20). Elsewhere He comforts, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

When the Son of man comes again, will He find fear in our eyes? For Jesus' sake, let us live in peace.

¹ Scripture quotations in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

² Mark Twain points out that a cat will never sit twice on a hot stove, but it will also never again sit on a cold one.

³ The following day he dove successfully without the all-important teacher.



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

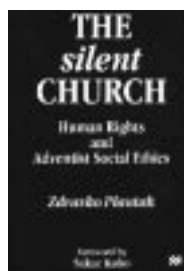
Chris Blake drove a Jet Ski up the narrow canyons of Lake Powell this past summer. He enjoys teaching English and communication at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska.



BOOK

• M A R K •

The Silent Church



Zdravko Plantak;
foreword by Sakae
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Reviewed by David Marshall,

Stanborough Press editor, Grantham,
Lincolnshire, England.

Zdravko Plantak, a pastor in the South England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (he recently accepted a teaching position at Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland), asks his church some tough questions. Why did the church employ more women in senior positions 80 years ago than it does today? Where and why has the church, and individual members, become involved in politics? Why has the church not responded when human rights have been under attack? Why did the church remain silent in Nazi Germany? What part, if any, did members play in the “ethnic cleansings” of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda?

If you feel that answering such questions is “displaying our dirty washing in public” and should not be spoken of in polite circles, you may be part of *The Silent Church*. Faced with

human rights abuses or pressure from the hypernationalism in imperial and Nazi Germany or the powerful state in Communist Russia—what would you have done? Stand out against the system? Cave in to it? Actively support it to save your own skin?

Plantak believes that we can face the future and understand the present if we come to terms with our past. He believes that all arguments need to be aired, that the pressures that have made us “the silent church” need to be resisted, and that it’s time to say “Hush!” to the “hush-hush” honchos. He says that honest dealings and defensible stances are best fostered by openness and a free interchange of ideas in a no-holds-barred context.

The author’s aim in researching this book was to examine the response of the church to a whole raft of ethical questions. What he has achieved is much more—a clear picture of the church as it shapes up to the challenges of the twenty-first century and seeks to shed the dark shadows of the past.

Yawn!

ROSY TETZ



Imagine that it’s a warm day—not too hot, just nice and warm. Imagine that you just ate lunch—a really good lunch, maybe a little too much lunch. Now you are sitting at your desk. Let’s say it’s time for social studies.

You’re not really bored—well, maybe just a little. You’re not really sleepy—no one has ever accused you of wanting to take an afternoon nap.

But you can’t seem to concentrate. Your brain feels a bit dull. Fortunately, your brain knows what it needs to do. The next thing you know, you’re yawning. Your mouth opens wide, and you gulp in a lot of air. Why did you yawn?

You yawned because you weren’t

getting enough oxygen. You were a little tired and a little bored. Your brain was getting sluggish. The respiratory center in your brain made you yawn. Once you sent the extra oxygen to your brain, it cleared up and you became awake again.

You don’t usually yawn on purpose. Your brain tells you to do it automatically whenever it feels that you need it. Sometimes your brain wants you to yawn when it’s not an appropriate time to yawn. Then you either have to try to stop it or try to hide it. Good luck.

One of the oddest things about yawns is that they are contagious. When you see someone else yawn, it usually makes you want to yawn. And

even stranger, sometimes just talking about yawning makes you want to yawn. I bet you have yawned at least once since you started reading this.

It would be cool if we did other things automatically, the way we automatically yawn when we need to.

Wouldn’t it be great if we automatically helped someone who needed it? Wouldn’t it be great if we always shared what we had? Wouldn’t it be great if we were kind and loving and thoughtful without even stopping to think about it?

That’s the kind of greatness Jesus would like to bring to our lives. He says, “You should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do. Live so that they will praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, ICB). Jesus will give you the light. He is “the light of the world” (John 9:5, ICB).

One of the best things about living this way is that it is contagious. When someone sees you being kind, it makes them want to be kind too. Don’t try to hide it. Let your light shine.

From One Nineveh to the Next

BY RACHELLE NEWBOLD

It is a form of Russian roulette. Though not as deadly, I think the suspense for me is almost as intense. As soon as I have settled in my seat for the five-hour flight to Sacramento, I wonder, *Who am I destined to sit next to for this forever-long flight?*

Trying to appear confident and casual, I look down the long line of travelers. Will it be the woman with the dark red lipstick and huge turquoise clip-on earrings? What about the beboppin' teen with the massive headphones throbbing with repeated rap rhythms?

With their odd, intensely human habits, my seatmates pique my interest. Who are they, and where are they going? Sometimes we'll make small talk. I'll comment that it's impossible to sleep on airplanes, and usually my seatmate will chuckle in agreement, then fall blissfully asleep five minutes later. When that wanes, I'll poke my nose in a book or whip out my journal and scribble down my pseudointellectual thoughts—all to keep my mind from thinking about the inevitable.

I don't know what turns my thoughts in such a serious direction when I fly. Perhaps since I am way up above the fluffy clouds I feel closer to God. Maybe it's because I've heard wonderful stories of good Christians witnessing to those around them on airplanes. Or maybe I realize that Jesus' encouragement to "Go . . . and teach all nations" is as applicable to my airborne journey across the country as any journey I might take overseas. I know my duty; I know that I am responsible, and I am petrified.

It's a fear so nagging and constant that it surpasses my fear of spending my last moments in a doomed plane. It's the overwhelming feeling that I am somehow letting God down as well as those around me.

All through the flight I feel compelled to clear my throat and say to my seatmate, "Scuse me . . . um, did you know that Jesus died for you, and He's coming back to pick you and all of us up so we can live forever and ever with Him? Great, huh? Just thought I'd mention it." Somehow I don't

think that would work. And for the remainder of the flight I try not to agonize over the best way to approach the subject.

It's during these moments, when I've propped my head against the window, that I suddenly remember I am

hurtling through the great blue sky with 200 people I've never seen before. And all I want to know is Who will clue them in to the best-kept secret of their lives? *I would. I should.* I want to. But how?

It's easy to think about the salvation of the world when I'm sitting in church. There 300 or more smiling faces surround me. Yes, God is love. Sure, He's coming soon. Of course I'll tell the world—right after I pig out

at potluck and take a tiny snooze. It's too easy to save the world from my church pew.

The view from 30,000 feet above the world is different, however. The earth is a patchwork quilt of farmland, stitched together with roads and knotted with tiny farmhouses. And then suddenly the country is swept away by a sprawling city. From my window Chicago is a toy city with toy cars and buildings. Then I see the nearly microscopic ant people and realize that this is more than a toy city. The crimes committed and heartaches felt by those toy people are life-size. Jesus gave His life for each of those teeny-tiny people, and how will they all ever know?

Sometimes I feel like Jonah flying from one Nineveh to the next. I know I can't tell every person about the one Person who loves them even when no one else will. But I can tell *some* of them. Then I land in Sacramento—my very own Nineveh.

And I can tell some of them. ■

Rachelle Newbold wrote and read this piece for English Club vespers at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee.



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