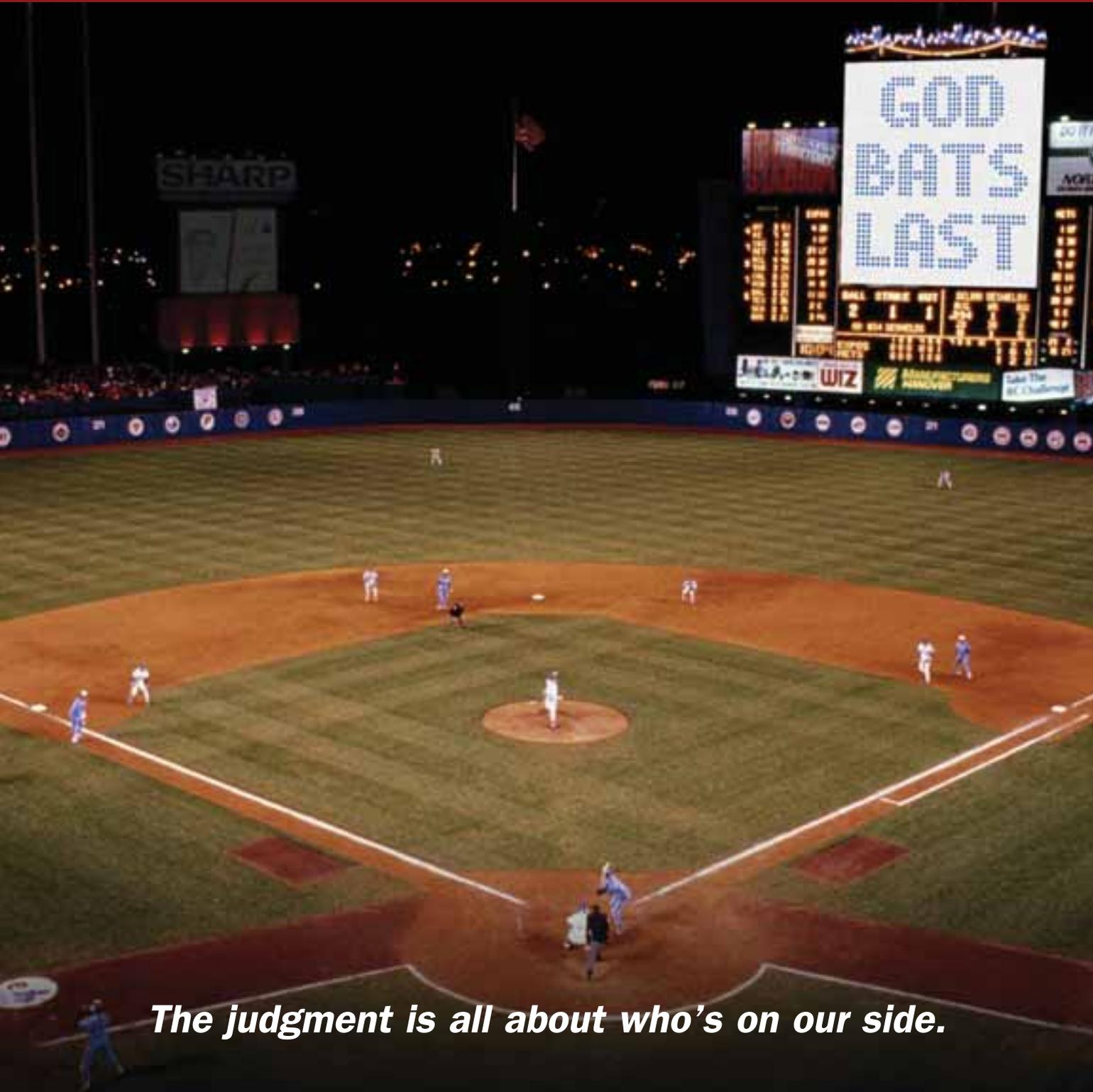


# ADVENTIST REVIEW

## *Cutting Edge*

May 11, 2006



***The judgment is all about who's on our side.***



# CONTENTS

## Adventist Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . .

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

**Publisher** General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

**Executive Publisher** William G. Johnsson

**Publishing Board:** Jan Paulsen, chair; Ted N. C. Wilson, vice chair; William G. Johnsson, secretary; Armando Miranda; Steven Rose; Charles C. Sandefur; Don C. Schneider; Robert S. Smith; Heather-Dawn Small; Robert Kyte, legal advisor.

**Editor** William G. Johnsson

**Associate Editors** Roy Adams, Bill Knott

**Managing Editor** Stephen Chavez

**Online Editor** Carlos Medley

**Assistant Editors** Kimberly Luste Maran, Bonita Joyner Shields

**News Editor** Sandra Blackmer

**Technology Projects Coordinator** Merle Poirier

**Projects Coordinator** Rachel Child

**Administrative Assistant** Larie S. Gray

**Marketing Director** Jackie Ordelheide Smith

**Art Direction and Design** Bill Tymeson

**Desktop Technician** Fred Wuerstlin

**Ad Sales** Genia Blumenberg

**Subscriber Services** Julie Haines

**To Writers:** Writer's guidelines are available at the *Adventist Review* Web site: [www.adventistreview.org](http://www.adventistreview.org) and click "About the Review." For a printed copy, send a self-addressed envelope to: Writer's Guidelines, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600.

**E-mail:** Internet: [letters@adventistreview.org](mailto:letters@adventistreview.org)  
**Web site:** [www.adventistreview.org](http://www.adventistreview.org)

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Adventist Review*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740-7301

Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this issue are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

The *Adventist Review* (ISSN 0161-1119), published since 1849, is the general paper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is printed 36 times a year on the second, third, and fourth Thursdays of each month by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Periodical postage paid at Hagerstown, MD 21740. Copyright © 2006, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

Vol. 183, No. 13



## Cover Story

### 8 God Bats Last

*Good news about the judgment: It isn't over 'til it's over.*

BY GREG BROTHERS

## Articles

### 14 A Marriage Made in Heaven

*Salvation is basically a love story.*

BY MIKE JOHNSON

### 22 Thanks, Mom

*Where would we be without our mothers? (Not here, that's for sure.)*

ADVENTIST REVIEW STAFF

### 24 Show Me the Nail Prints

*Maybe Thomas wasn't that much of a doubter after all.*

BY ROSALIE MELLOR

### 27 God's Vision, His Mission

*Lance Aubrey Carr never had a reason to believe in God, let alone love Him.*

BY ROBERT J. FISHER



## Departments

3 Letters

7 Give & Take

13 Journeys

17 Relevation

18 World News & Perspectives

30 Bulletin Board

31 Reflections



## Editorials

5 The Real Scoop

6 Questions

**Next Week:**  
**Living a Life of Holiness**  
*What does God expect of us?*

**Subscriptions:** Thirty-six issues of the weekly *Adventist Review*, US\$36.95 plus US\$28.50 postage outside North America. Single copy US\$3.25. To order, send your name, address, and payment to *Adventist Review* subscription desk, Box 1119, Hagerstown, MD 21741-1119. Orders can also be placed at Adventist Book Centers. Prices subject to change.

**Address changes:** [addresschanges@rhpa.org](mailto:addresschanges@rhpa.org). OR call 1-800-456-3991, or 301-393-3257

**Subscription queries:** [jhaines@rhpa.org](mailto:jhaines@rhpa.org). OR call 1-800-456-3991, or 301-393-3257

---

# LETTERS

---

## An Exceptional Issue

I was so richly blessed by the March 23 issue that I am compelled to write and thank all who had a part in it.

With James Nix and “Growing Up Adventist,” I rejoice that my church of the 30s, 40s, and 50s taught me what many might deem legalistic principles. Other articles in the *Review* called for getting back to these “landmarks,” as in Ellen G. White’s article, “A Higher Standard.”

Then there was another good piece by Clifford Goldstein (“Of Things Not Seen”). I really appreciate how he manages the Queen’s English.

The entire magazine was exceptional, although I enjoy every issue. Keep up the good work.

—**Eileen Lapree**

COLLEGE PLACE, WASHINGTON

---

## Evolution Sunday

Roy Adams’ “Evolution Sunday” (Mar. 23) gives new meaning to the phrase “the missing link.” It is not King Kong and his kind who bridge the gap between man and beast. The real missing link for Christians of all faiths is the fact that the weekly Sabbath still survives. It is my prayer that earnest Christians around the world will take a second look at the Savior and His real missing link. Thank you!

—**Nancy Troyer**

BANNING, CALIFORNIA

I can understand why some churches might do as Roy Adams reports. The

question arises, which Lutherans? Certainly not the Missouri Synod or the Wisconsin Synod. Also which Baptists? Would it be the Southern Baptists? Probably not. The article needs to be more precise for anybody who places a premium on accuracy and honesty. It is for such reasons that the Missouri Synod recently passed a resolution saying the ELCA was no longer Lutheran.

—**Ron Thomsen**

HOUSTON, TEXAS

I read with interest the editorial by Roy Adams. This phenomenon is a symptom of what’s wrong with the Christian church at large. From an online article in *The New York Times*, dated February 13, 2006, comes this significant statement: “Most of the signatories to the project [the Clergy Letter Project] were from the mainline Protestant denominations. Their congregations have shrunk sharply over the last 30 years.” They obviously fail to understand the direct correlation between the abandonment of the literal interpretation of Genesis 1-11 and the loss of membership. Most people are smart enough to figure out that if Genesis 1-11 can’t be taken seriously, then maybe we can’t be sure about John 3:16 or the Resurrection.

—**Walter Sumner**

CANAAN, MAINE

---

## Let’s Talk

Thank you for the article “Let’s Talk,” regarding the sessions Pastor Jan



Paulsen has had with young people in recent months. I have watched on 3ABN and the Hope Channel and enjoyed his responses to concerns of these mem-

bers. In one question concerning the standards for church music, I believe Paulsen indicated that a committee had been working for some time on an up-to-date philosophy for our churches. I have waited for some indication of its availability, but so far have seen nothing in our periodicals concerning this. Can you bring me up to date on this document?

I wait eagerly for each issue of the *Review*, read it cover to cover, and pass it along to a friend.

—**Ruth Van Sant**

ALAMOSA, COLORADO

*Questions about music regularly come in to the president’s Let’s Talk Web site—it’s an issue of concern to young people, no matter what their background or where they live. However, during Annual Council 2005, the General Conference voted on “A Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Music” guideline, available at [www.adventist.org/beliefs/guidelines/music\\_guidelines.html](http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/guidelines/music_guidelines.html).—Editors.*

With great interest I read the dialogue between our denomination’s president and youth around the globe. As an Adventist since the age of 2, subsequent to my father’s conversion from Catholicism, and now 50, I recalled my own views toward our church dur-

ing my teen years and early 20s. Privileged to have been educated in our school system up through academy days, I never felt I belonged anywhere other than with my SDA family and friends. This was in spite of the strong legalism issues dividing our church during the 50s and 60s. Yet by the time I entered a state college in the mid-70s, I had no doubt that an enormous dichotomy existed between the values taught by my church and those revered by my generation, both within and without the church.

Despite dating or making friends with other Christians and visiting their respective churches on Sunday, I never yearned for my church to modify its style of worship, change its criteria for membership, or revise its doctrines so I could feel welcome or comfortable. In fact, I proudly shared my Adventist heritage and frequently invited religious and secular friends to church on Sabbath. Our health message alone fascinated them.

Did my spiritual existence ever cause me pain? Absolutely! Were all of my nurtured needs met by my church family? Of course not. But in spite of the early rejection my parents and I bore from a select few church members, due to our ethnicity and lower socioeconomic class, our church family as a whole proved to be a heaven-sent lifeline for my family's survival. The majority of the constituents gathered about us with great love and reflected true Christlikeness, the kind that kept me from ever wanting to leave the church. In fact, my spouse joined our faith because I never considered the option of leaving or marrying outside the church.

While I sympathize with the issues surrounding our young people today in the current state of decadent moral, cultural, and spiritual values, my dilemma comes because I cannot comprehend why there are so many apologies by our church for the supposed 60-70 percent rate of young adults leaving the church. Am I to believe that the church has caused all that damage? Does not the home environment in which we have raised them—with

computers, video games, TV, and Hollywood glamour—contribute to their apathy toward spiritual core values? What about the nation's religious and political leaders' nonexemplary lifestyles, flashing daily before them on the news? Are not most denominations also experiencing this curse because of the secularism, relativism, and humanism prevalent in our society? For the familial and societal failures, does our church have to revise itself?

Are we to believe that our youths'

---

**“The real missing link for Christians of all faiths is the fact that the weekly Sabbath still survives.”**

—**Nancy Troyer**  
BANNING, CALIFORNIA

---

backsliding is primarily a reflection of the denomination's unwillingness to negotiate and accommodate the contemporary mind-set? Or could it be that we, as God's family, have sadly failed to keep our young people before the Lord in prayer? Have we neglected on their behalf, to grasp our Savior's nail-pierced hands and feet, to genuinely seek for *ourselves* a change of heart, or omitted to daily press His throne of grace with humble hearts?

—**Name Withheld**

---

### **Beyond a Handshake**

The March 9 article “Beyond a Handshake,” by Lisa Carreno,

reminded me of the visits my wife and I have made to churches during the past 10 years as a part-time auditor for the Southeastern and the South Atlantic conferences. I visited many churches in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida.

I am happy to say that at most churches we were welcomed in one way or another. At one church the pastor was there to greet us at Sabbath School. I recall only one church where we received no welcome at all.

On the other hand, I have found that it takes only one person to cause my wife and me, as visitors, to feel welcome. This person may be the official greeter, the Sabbath school teacher, or the person you happen to sit beside.

Making visitors welcome is something all of us can do.

—**Richard S. Norman**  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

---

### **Of Sinners and Sin**

I am writing in reference to the February 23 Give & Take quote by Jack Sequeira: “Our sins don't make us a sinner: They prove we are a sinner!”

If this is wholly true, then ask yourself: Did sin prove that Lucifer, Adam, and Eve were sinners? Or did their sin make them sinners?

—**Gerry Cabalo**  
WILKESBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

---

### **Letters Policy**

*The Review welcomes your letters. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: [letters@adventistreview.org](mailto:letters@adventistreview.org).*

# The Real Scoop

Even though the General Conference office is located less than 15 miles from downtown Washington, D.C., the area in which the church's world headquarters is located is remarkably full of wildlife. Deer, fox, raccoons, squirrels, and a host of other critters compete for space in the undeveloped areas among the shopping centers and housing developments that punctuate the landscape.

This part of the mid-Atlantic region must also be a flyway for the Canada geese that travel north to south during the winter and spring. On the property owned by the General Conference is a flood-control pond that is called "home" by a fair number of geese on their sojourn from here to there.

For some, the geese are a welcome reminder that this area hasn't yet been completely conquered by greedy developers. But for others, the calling cards left by the geese on the General Conference parking lot (read goose doo-doo) are more than just an inconvenience; they're annoyed by it. Some employees have wondered whether the virus that carries bird flu couldn't be carried into the building on the soles of our shoes, or on the wheels of the rolling attachés many people use to carry their lunches, laptops, and mobile telecommunications systems.

At a few meetings in which the subject has been brought up, people have demanded solutions, only to be reminded that most Adventists are noncombatants. And even if they weren't, it's against the law to hunt geese (or otherwise harass them) at the intersection of Old Columbia Pike and Randolph Road.

At the conclusion of a recent meeting at which the subject was raised, I suggested to Howard Karst, director of In-house Operations at the General Conference, that he give anyone who complains about the problem a picker-upper. At the very least, I told him, it would stop their incessant whining. At most, it would minimize the problem of having to watch our steps as we walk from our cars into the building.

Frankly, my idea has as much of a chance of being implemented as a snowball's chance in . . . well, you know. That's because most of us would rather talk about a problem than try to solve it. And heaven forbid that possible solutions would require any personal effort on our part!

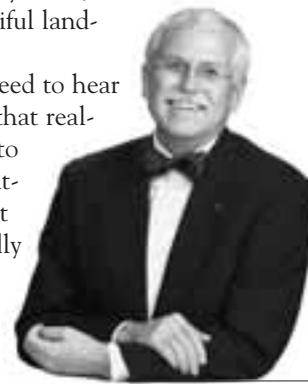
You'd think that a prophetic movement such as ours would be a little more proactive when it comes to dealing with society's problems. I'm talking about illiteracy, substance abuse, poverty, sexual promiscuity, violence. In His first public statement (according to the Gospel of Luke), Jesus quoted this prophecy from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18, 19). Jesus' ministry was a ministry of action, not just proclamation. He didn't run away from challenges; He

engaged them. He preached with power and authority because His actions reinforced His words.

There are, thankfully, Adventists who aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves, get their hands dirty, and be part of the solutions to society's problems. Their creative ministries take them to communities where people often live without hope. These followers of Christ learn people's names, identify their needs, and minister in Christ's name with no prospect of earthly reward or recognition. The problems that arouse their indignation go way beyond dodging goose droppings in the parking lot on their way to work.

Given the choice, we'd all prefer to live and work in neighborhoods far removed from the problems of this fallen world. I suppose that's why many of our church's administrative offices (conference and union conference) migrate farther from major population centers and closer to rural areas, where they often look like country clubs, with their manicured lawns and beautiful landscaping.

But most of the people who need to hear the gospel are far removed from that reality (if that's reality). We can try to escape society's problems by isolating ourselves from them. But that wasn't Christ's way. And it's hardly a worthy approach for those who call Him "Lord."



*Jesus' ministry was a ministry of action, not just proclamation.*

# Questions

I got into one of those “whatever happened to” conversations recently at the General Conference. I ran into a college buddy, and we started reminiscing about some of our former college classmates. We soon centered on one name and the incredibly shocking news that not only was this person not knocking on the GC presidential door, but they had left the Adventist Church. “Doctrinal issues,” was my friend’s take on the matter. “Something about legalism.”

I’ve been pondering ever since. *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* gives this definition: “strict, literal, or excessive conformity to the law or to a religious or moral code <the institutionalized ~ that restricts free choice>.” What loaded words!

Taken in parts, some sense is evident. For example, if I strictly believe that my claim to eternal life is in accepting the gift of salvation that came from Jesus’ sacrificial death, then I am conforming to this religious belief. Does that make a rule or code? Perhaps some would argue that it does.

But “strict” and “literal” certainly don’t mean “excessive.” And if something, once it is institutionalized, restricts free choice, how can it be good? God created human beings with free choice: does that mean once we are Christians and part of an “institution,” our freedom is restricted? Perhaps the choice of accepting salvation is a self-imposed restriction that we freely chose.

OK, before I give myself a headache getting into things probably better left for the philosophical eggheads among us, I must come back to my original musings: Has the Adventist Church imposed institutional codes that restrict a person’s free choice? Or are the freedoms still there, protected by a moral bearing that comes directly from God?

What is it truly that causes some to dismiss Adventism? Our doctrines? Or is it our application of them? Have we obfuscated them with a dictatorial welding of the law?

I did a bit of Internet research on former Adventists. Here is some of what I read: “I am so glad to be free from the legalism of my past, to find my security in Christ alone, not in a denomination, or anything else.”

“What an awesome revelation to know that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone! . . . I couldn’t believe that I had been missing out on experiencing the fullness of Christ and developing a true relationship with Him all of this time.”

Saved by grace. Security in Christ alone. I am not ready to take my name off the church books, and I believe almost exactly the way these two people do. What has happened? Are we not a Christ-centered, Bible-believing people? Did the message somehow get lost? Have we codified Christ? If so, how did it happen? Who is to blame?

## Did the message get lost?

Structure is vitally important. And as a novice parent, one thing I’ve learned from various experts is that discipline and structure are crucial to the development of a child into a healthy adult. I’ve also learned that within structure, within (gasp) the rules there can be lots of freedom. Disorder is binding. But there is a

point when structure can become restrictive. When doctrine is no longer measured by or understood through the Bible.

It was Mrs. White herself who declared: “The Bible must be our standard for every doctrine. . . . We are to receive no one’s opinion without comparing it with the Scriptures. Here is divine authority which is supreme in matters of faith. It is the word of the living God that is to decide all controversies” (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, vol. 1, p. 201).

“We are to believe truth, not that which is pronounced truth upon the authority of popes or councils, not because a minister pronounces his decision as to what is truth, but on the only sure and safe ground, ‘Thus saith the Lord’” (*Sabbath School Worker*, Apr. 1, 1893).

I don’t have definitive answers to the questions I raised. But I do see a problem in the way we have explained our faith to members and nonmembers alike. It cannot be said too much that we are saved by grace alone, and that we are a Christ-centered, Bible-believing people. And more than saying it, we all need to live it.

Structure and standards are important. People also need to know the whys and hows of the system—and know that for all the “rules,” Christ is still the Ruler. If more emphasis is placed on these, perhaps things will be different.



# GIVE & TAKE

## ADVENTIST LIFE

One Friday I was busy preparing for Sabbath, and my granddaughter, Judy, was watching me make a pie for dessert.

“Nana,” she asked, “will you make a preacher pie?”

“What kind of pie is that?” I asked.

“Oh, you know preacher pie makes your teeth dirty.”

I thought of blueberry pie, and then it dawned on me, “You mean elderberry pie?”

“Yes, that’s it!” she exclaimed. “I couldn’t think of the elder part.”

—Anna Dietz, Knoxville, Tennessee



ILLUSTRATIONS BY TERRY CREWS

Springtime has come again. Today I’ll begin my spring housecleaning, beginning in my “unforgiveness room.” I can open the door enough to get inside. It’s filled from wall to wall and floor to ceiling with 60 years of anger, hatred, bitterness, grudges, hostility, and all that other baggage that comes with unforgiveness. This should have been thrown in the trash a long time ago instead of being stored and taking up space, leaving no place for healthy constructive thinking that leads to spiritual growth.

Today, with God’s help, I’m calling in His 18-wheeler garbage trucks to carry it all away. Then after I’ve cleared the cobwebs, mold, and mildew, I’ll repaint the entire room, wash the windows, which are so dirty that no light has entered for decades. Then I’ll ask God to implant His Holy Spirit in there, with lots of plant food so deep healthy roots can grow and produce all the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control . . . Well, I’d better get started. (It would have to be the biggest room in my house.)

—Marilyn Ann Kramer, Dayton, Tennessee



Heidi, our 3-year-old granddaughter, loves to swing in the backyard. She had just learned in Sabbath school that Jesus was up in heaven beyond the clouds.

As her mother was pushing her on the swing she exclaimed excitedly, “Push me higher, way high so I can see Jesus!”

—Judy Newton, Alvarado, Texas

## BULLETIN BLOOPER:

“Forever Friends for Single Adults——Happy relationships that can lead to a godly courtship with Pastor Dave. Plus, Questions and Answers.”

—Edna Craik, College Place, Washington; as seen in the bulletin of a church she visited in Vancouver, Washington

*Revelation 14  
is a message  
of hope.  
A message  
of cheer.*

# God Bats

BY GREG BROTHERS

**I**T'S GAME ONE IN THE 1988 WORLD SERIES; bottom of the ninth, with two out, and the Dodgers are behind by one. Kirk Gibson is batting for the Dodgers; there's a man on second, but Gibson is fighting a bad leg and already has two strikes against him. Pitching for the Oakland A's is Dennis Eckersley; with 45 saves for the season, he is every batter's nightmare come true.

It doesn't look good for Kirk Gibson; it doesn't look good for the Dodgers . . . and already, the smart fans are heading for the exits. And they all know that nobody in a situation like this has ever come from behind to win a game.

Likewise, there are times we feel like giving up. Our bud-

get's a mess, our love life is in shambles—and even the dog has been acting up lately. Like Kirk Gibson, it's the bottom of the ninth, with two out—and we already have two strikes against us.

That's when we need the three angels' messages of Revelation 14—a message of hope. A message of cheer. A message for desperate times. In the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, we learn that it doesn't matter how bad things may seem just now. God always bats last.

## Judgment Day

Revelation 14 follows two of the most gruesome chapters



PHOTO © DUANE RUEDEK/GETTY IMAGES

because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

In our language, we’d say that God wants everybody to put Him first, “because it’s judgment day.”

To most people today, “God’s judgment” is bad news. We think of “judgment day” the same way most drivers think of traffic court: simply put, you don’t want to go there!

But back in the days of the Bible, “judgment day” was good news. It was the day God stepped in to deal with *everything* that gave His people a hard time:

- war and death,
- disease and poverty,
- loneliness and all the other things that are symbolized in these

verses as  
Babylon—  
that ancient  
enemy of  
God’s people.

God has set a day when all these things will come to an end!

You see, God is like your mother when you were small . . . and you were out in the backyard eating a Popsicle . . . and a yellow jacket came along and discovered that Popsicle.

And pretty soon you didn’t have one yellow jacket; you had a whole *swarm* of yellow jackets! And those yellow jackets didn’t just want your Popsicle. No, it wasn’t long before they were after you!

So what did you do? You screamed for Mom!

And what did she do? As soon as she could, she was out there—and when Mom showed up, it was *good* news for you . . . but it was *bad* news for the yellow jackets!

It was good news for you—but it was bad news for the yellow jackets—just as the first angel’s message is good news for God’s people, but bad news for anything that’s out to get us. And just to make sure that we get this point, God gave us the second and third angels’ messages, as we read in verses 8-12:

“A second angel followed and said, ‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.’ A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sul-

*It doesn’t look good for Kirk Gibson; it doesn’t look good for the Dodgers . . . and already, the smart fans are heading for the exits.*

# Last

in all of Scripture—chapters that describe a world in which it *seems* as though the bad guys have won everything, chapters that describe a world in which God’s people *seem* to have been utterly crushed.

And then God steps in . . . and it’s over. The bad guys disappear; God’s people show up without a one missing. And just to make sure we don’t miss the point, God sends a special messenger, as we read in Revelation 14:6, 7:

“Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give him glory,



*In the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, we learn that it doesn't matter how bad things may seem just now; God always bats last.*

fur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.' This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus."

We read this, and we say, "Whoa! That's not very nice!" And the fact is that nothing here in these verses is very nice. These verses are not meant to be nice—and that's because these verses are not meant for us; they're not intended for anyone who lives on this earth!

### **Stay Out of the Trash!**

What God says here through the second and third angels is like me telling my daughter, "Don't wrap your retainer in a napkin and put in on the table—because, if you do, it's going to go into the trash, and the trash is going to get thrown out, and you don't want to lose your retainer . . . again!"

Likewise, verses 8-12 tell us not to put our trust in Babylon—not to trust *anything* that tries to take on God; not to trust *anything* that tries to take on

## Fundamental Belief 13

### The Remnant and Its Mission:

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jude 3, 14; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Rev. 21:1-14.)

God's people. "Don't trust them," God says, "because all of these things are going into the trash—and believe Me, you don't want to go with them when they do!"

And the fact is that we can look back over our own lives, and we can see that this is true. For how many of us can think back to a time we wanted to do something that God did not want us to do—but we went ahead and did it anyway because it seemed like the easy thing to do?

How many of us can think of a time we did that . . . and looking back, we can say right here and now that we made a real mistake?

That's the message of the second and third angels.

Likewise, how many of us can look back to a time we did something right—something God wanted us to do—even though it was tough? Even though it was hard? Even though we thought we were going to lose out big-time by following God?

How many of us can think of a time we did that . . . and looking back, we're glad that we did so?

That's the first angel's message right there.

### Don't Worry. And Don't Give Up.

So don't worry—don't worry when it seems as though the odds are against you. Don't give up when the going gets tough. Or ever get discouraged just because it's the bottom of the ninth with two out, and two strikes against you.

Think of Kirk Gibson, standing there at the plate in game one of the 1988 World Series. Talk about pressure—with a runner on second, he could win the game! But remember, Gibson is hurt. He's been injured. He can't even swing the bat without wincing in pain—and already, he's swung twice and missed.

Eckersley winds up . . . then throws it straight down the middle.

Gibson swings . . . and drives the ball into the right-field bleachers. For the first time in the history of the World Series, someone has won a game with a home run in the bottom of the ninth with two already out, and two strikes against him.

But none of this would have happened, notice . . . none of this would have happened if Kirk Gibson had given up.

Likewise, it's not always easy for us to play on God's team. But at least we don't need to worry about the way the game will end, because God bats last. God bats last—and He always hits a home run.

*Greg Brothers is pastor of the Adventist church in Lincoln City, Oregon. He publishes a blog at: [adultsabbathschool.blogspot.com/](http://adultsabbathschool.blogspot.com/).*



### SoyaPower, the Super Soymilk Maker Improved upon the award-winning SoyaJoy

- Six-glass, 1.5-liter (50. oz.) capacity
  - Makes rice milk, almond milk, and milks with other nuts/seeds!
  - Microprocessor-controlled cooking; no "bean" taste
  - Easy to use - add water and soybeans; press one button
  - Fully automatic plus manual settings for max flexibility
  - Stainless steel construction with thermoplastic outliner for lower noise and high energy efficiency
  - Extra large stainless steel filter to process more soybeans
  - Add cereals such as oats to improve taste and creaminess
  - Longer heater element—more even heating without any chance of burned soymilk on the heater
  - Larger soybean feeding window for easier feeding of soybeans
- Includes color user manual, color recipe book and super cleaning kit. Starter soybean pack (one batch) plus dripping pan
  - 100% refund for returns within 30 days and one-year warranty.

**Price: \$119.95 with free shipping**

**Order at: 1-888-228-3082 or online at [www.soyapower.com](http://www.soyapower.com)**

"The SoyaPower retained all the wonderful features and advantages that I loved about the SoyaJoy. However, in my opinion, the SoyaPower added extra features that work well for me, both in my testing and in regular usage in my own kitchen."

— Vickilynn Haycraft

Sanlinx Inc. 4755 Fowler Dr., Morristown, TN 37814



# The Sounds of Music

The film version of the Rogers and Hammerstein musical opens with a sweeping view of the Austrian Alps, pans across the town of Salzburg, and zooms in on Maria, who is skipping through a meadow singing for the sheer joy of music and nature. For many, Salzburg is defined by a film that is inaccurate as it is appealing.<sup>1</sup> Who wouldn't cheer for the plucky Von Trapp family as they sing catchy tunes and defy the Nazis?

I was 10 when I first watched *The Sound of Music*, a film I had long heard my parents discuss, a film I was certain I would abhor. I was, of course, wrong. I was charmed—the Alps, the love story, the children, the singing. Years later, when I learned I would be teaching in Salzburg, part of the appeal lay in a film, which I now enjoyed as much for its kitsch as for its optimism.

I arrived in Salzburg on a cold February night. And for the first two weeks it snowed nearly every day—a quiet, beautiful, hushing snow that settled upon the town like a shawl. So, *this is Salzburg*, I thought as I walked through the old town, bells clanging overhead, their sound interrupting an hour of stillness. The stone buildings were shades of pastel and looked as soft as chalk. Everywhere I went, I was surrounded by Mozart: Mozart chocolate, Mozart postcards, Mozart's house, Mozart's music.

I had come expecting the Von Trapps and had instead discovered a musical virtuoso. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born here 250 years ago, making 2006 a momentous year to visit Salzburg. I could catch a Mozart concert every night of my stay.

In an era when classical music was flourishing, Mozart stood out. At one of his concerts, Beethoven reportedly whispered to Ferdinand Ries: "We'll never think of anything like that!"<sup>2</sup> Mozart was born extraordinary. At 2, he heard a pig squeal and recognized the sound as G sharp. At 10 he'd composed a symphony. As an adult, his work came to epitomize the new classical (as opposed to Baroque) sound. At his death at only 35 he'd written 626 musical pieces.

It's difficult to imagine a world without Mozart, more difficult still to imagine a world without symphonies and concertos, and impossible to imagine a world without any music at all. The earth itself is an instrument—from the singing of birds to the clicking and whirling of insects to the lashing of rain against a jungle.

We've grown up with music, learned our ABCs through

song, sung in the shower, brightened when a favorite tune came on the radio, and perhaps even played a musical instrument. We've all hated some songs and been drawn to others. And if you're an Adventist, you've probably discussed the role of music in church: What's sacred? What's frivolous? What the conversation often leaves out is joy.

Music taps into emotions—whether it's sorrow (a requiem), patriotism (a national anthem), or romance (anything by Bach). "There is a time for everything," Solomon once wrote, "and a season for every activity under heaven."<sup>3</sup> Certainly there should be a time for joy, a time to gather and praise God not just intellectually but also emotionally, with happiness and yes, even with repetitive lyrics.

I love the *Adventist Hymnal*. I'm spiritually filled when I stand in church and the organ plays and the congregation sings "A Mighty Fortress." But I've been most blessed by praise music. I think of singing "Deep Persuasion" in Thailand, my two Buddhist friends playing their guitars, other friends sitting on couches, it's nearing midnight, and no one wants to leave. We sing song after song, ending with a Thai version of "This Is the Day."

Praise music might not be to everyone's tastes, but it speaks to a growing number of Adventists. And while it might seem a new phenomenon, it is in fact as old as Scripture. In Psalm 100, David exhorts us to "shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs."<sup>4</sup>

Here in Salzburg, I look to the hills where the snow is fast melting, and I think of music. I think of being so filled with emotion that one must burst into song or write a symphony. I feel blessed that God created music as well as mountains—and that He created a variety of sounds and sensitivities.



<sup>1</sup>While the Von Trapps were an actual family, they little resembled their screen characters. The family sang classical pieces rather than folk songs; Georg's oldest child was a boy; Maria was the strict one in the family; and when the Von Trapps fled Austria, they went to Italy (not Switzerland), and by train (not on foot).

<sup>2</sup>"Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart." *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia. April 1, 2006. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang\\_Amadeus\\_Mozart](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang_Amadeus_Mozart).

<sup>3</sup>Ecl. 3:1.

<sup>4</sup>Ps. 100:1.

*Sari Fordham is a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, currently taking part in an exchange lectureship program at the University of Salzburg in Austria.*

# A Marriage Made in Heaven

*What does this most intimate of human relationships have to say about our union with Christ?*

BY MIKE JOHNSON

**M**ANY EXAMPLES EXIST OF HOW things in the physical realm mirror or shadow things in the spiritual realm.

The sacrificial services with the priests and the lambs were a shadow of the more perfect example, the sacrifice of the guiltless “Lamb of the world” Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:11-14).<sup>\*</sup> The Communion service reminds us of Christ’s sacrifice for us. However, the first act recorded in Scripture that reveals a spiritual purpose was in the Garden of Eden, when God performed the first marriage.

Whether you are married or single through choice or circumstances, I’m sure that you realize the deep nature of marriage, and that we must continue to guard its sanctity and mere existence. If we don’t, we may lose one of the most visible examples of God’s plan of salvation: *His plan to save you and me.*

The beauty of God’s salvation is that you do not have to be married to learn from marriage’s example. Even if you entered marriage under less-than-ideal circumstances, God can use it to help you understand His salvific purposes. And whatever stage of a relationship you are at, a spiritual implication exists.

The relationship timeline goes something like this:

- First encounter
- Courtship
- Engagement
- Marriage ceremony
- Honeymoon
- Setting up home

Many of us will have gone through some, if not all, of the above phases. To fully appreciate what is being said, you

need to think back to when you were involved in a relationship, or to the one you’re in now.

## **First Encounter**

Think back to when you first met. What were the circumstances of the meeting? Who was pursuing at this point? How was the approach received? Were you welcomed, or were you knocked back?

How does your experience compare to our first encounter with Christ? While many of us came across Christ before we can remember because our mother sang us songs or repeated verses from the Bible, others may not have met Him until later in life. But how was it for Jesus? He said to Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart” (Jer. 1:5).

That goes for you and me too. Before you and I were born, He knew some of the dastardly things we would do, and yet, knowing all this, He was still prepared to pursue us. He said that the purpose of His coming to earth was to “seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10).

## **Courtship**

For some couples, it’s love at first sight. For others, it may take months or years to realize their deep affection and love for each other. But for most of us at this stage, we are still on our best behavior. We go out of our way to do and say nice things and give gifts. We are also assessing each other to see if this is the right person for us. We make phone calls, write letters, send text messages or e-mails, and simply find any excuse to be with each other.

So what’s Jesus saying to us? He says things like: “I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my peo-

ple” (Lev. 26:12) and “‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isa. 1:18).

Christ showed His love when the relationship between us and Him was at its lowest because “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

### Engagement

Engagement takes place when the answer “yes” is given to the question, “Will you marry me?”

We become engaged to Christ when we say “yes” to His offer of eternal life and receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit is a vital component in our day-to-day living and, ultimately, the plan of salvation. Here are a few of the ways the Spirit works in our lives:

- He gives us power (Acts 1:8).
- He comforts us (Acts 9:31).
- He brings life and peace

(Rom. 8:6).

- He causes us to be sons and daughters of God (Rom. 8:14).
- He produces love (Gal. 5:22-25).

### Marriage Ceremony

You’ve arrived at the big moment—the day when you are united in the sight of God and others. You’ve invited scores of friends and loved ones to your public declaration of your love. The groom stands patiently up front while his bride walks up the aisle to meet him.

No matter how grand our wedding was or plans to be, when we are united with Jesus, it will be the ceremony to beat all ceremonies! As we are baptized and scores of our friends and loved ones are watching, we make this public declaration of our love for Christ; the “bridal party” includes the whole of heaven! Thousands of thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of angels are in attendance.

Another spiritual reality that we can learn through

today’s marriage ceremony is that of the bridegroom who waits for the bride. In the spiritual realm, the roles are reversed: the bride is waiting for the bridegroom.

We have heard about the promise of Christ’s return for many years, and still He has not arrived. But ask yourself, “Is God ever late?” We must accept that His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. We know too that “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise [to come

again] . . . but is . . . not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9, NKJV).<sup>†</sup> We can conclude that this apparent delay is for the benefit of the bride, so that she can “come to repentance.”

*This ceremony of the righteous meeting their Lord will be so large that no place on earth can hold it; it will be in the air (1 Thess. 4:17).*

### Honeymoon

Newlyweds tend to escape to some secret hideaway to start their married life together. It’s a period of freedom from all other intrusions; a time of relaxation, travel, and intimacy. Some couples, still fresh with the glow of newly married love, get away for only a few days; others take an entire month; others travel the world in 80 days! And some couples carry the glow of these first days and months of newly married love their entire lives!

There will also be a spiritual honeymoon for the redeemed. After their baptism, some carry the glow of newly committed love for several weeks, some for months, and others never lose their “first love.” And after their Bridegroom comes to take them away to their heavenly home, there is also a honeymoon. But it won’t be for two weeks or one month. The saints will spend *1,000 years* in heaven basking in the love of God and understanding more of how His love sought to save everyone! “Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection . . . they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

### Setting Up Home

The honeymoon is over, and it’s time to establish the home. The redeemed will also be moving into their new homes. Where will they live and what type of home will they have?

In the earth made new there will be no more sea. And when you consider that 75 percent of the current earth’s surface is made up of ocean, there’ll be lots of



room. There will be mansions for homes, streets paved with gold, perfect health, everlasting life, and freedom from crime, pain, and death. No government on earth can deliver these conditions.

### **Yes! But**

You may have agreed with what has been discussed thus far, but wondered how divorce fits in with the principles outlined. If you've accepted the premise that all the stages leading up to the wedding and setting up of the home have a spiritual bearing, to be consistent it must also apply to the "not so pleasant aspects of marriage" as well.

After the glow of the first love has softened, and the responsibilities of life bear down on us, we can take this most important relationship for granted. Our time is given to other pursuits, communication breaks down, and we can question the importance of our relationship. It is then that unfaithfulness to our marriage covenant can become a dangerous temptation. Adultery takes place when one partner has been unfaithful to the other and has entered into another relationship, no matter how brief, with another "partner."

In the spiritual realm, when you and I sin we have become the unfaithful partner in our relationship with Christ. Jesus has the right to put us away. Does He do that? No.

If you accept the premise that the way God treats us is to be an example of how we should treat others, and that marriage is designed to shadow our relationship with Christ, how should we treat erring partners? Should divorce exist among God's people? Should we be forgiving of partners who have broken the most intimate of covenants? It may be the ultimate betrayal, and that's why it took the ultimate sacrifice by Christ to redeem us.

Don't be mistaken—this is not a charter for us to commit adultery, expecting our partners to forgive us, just as God's forgiving grace is not an

excuse to continue sinning against Him. The point here is that when we have the right to dispense justice for a wrong that has been committed against us, we should ask ourselves, "What if God were to dispense justice the first time each of us sinned?" David says, "He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities" (Ps. 103:10).

Forgiving a partner who has been unfaithful is perhaps the hardest thing to accept (I write as one who has never gone through this painful episode). But that does not change the

*We become engaged to Christ when we say yes to His offer of eternal life, and we receive the Holy Spirit.*

fact that forgiveness is part of God's plan for all of our sakes.

But doesn't God sometimes punish? Yes. On several occasions, God has had to "put away" or "divorce" Himself from His people. Take, for example, the expulsion from the Garden of Eden or Israel's captivity in Babylon. His people were scattered, but always with the proviso that "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

There are times when a partner in a marriage is abusive to the other or to children. Situations such as this should not be tolerated—especially among

those who profess to be Christians. It would be wrong to suggest that the abused should remain in such a state.

If we go down the route of separation, it should be with the intention of taking back the wayward spouse when/if they have come to their senses, just as God woos us to return to Him even after He has had to discipline us. And just as God works on us through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we should be working on our estranged partner through prayer, and asking the Spirit to intervene and change hearts. At the same time, our hearts have to be changed in order to receive them and treat them as though they had never sinned.

### **Hope and a Future**

Wow! That's how God treats us. Can we do the same for others?

God has placed within our lives a mechanism for revealing His plan of salvation: marriage. Even though there are those who choose to remain single as an act of faithfulness to God, there are still stages within the marriage relationship from which they can learn lessons about God's love and salvation.

There's nothing we can do about past relationships, unless the situation is recoverable. But let's examine our present relationships in the light of God's divine plan, and draw closer to each other for the purpose of demonstrating His love.

\*Unless otherwise noted, texts in this article are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

†Texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

*Mike Johnson is first elder of the Milton Keynes church in the United Kingdom. For the past 25 years he has promoted many of the Adventist musical performers in the U.K. and Europe through Number Seven Promotions.*



# Bring Back Church Discipline

Some terrible things have been done in the name of church discipline. So perhaps it's hardly surprising that in many churches the whole concept has largely been allowed to fall away. It's an easy answer to a complicated problem—but easiest is not always best.

The phenomenon probably also reflects a changing attitude to and relationship with church. Haddon Robinson describes it like this: “Too often now when people join a church, they do so as consumers. If they like the product, they stay. If they do not, they leave. They can no more imagine a church disciplining them than they could a store that sells goods disciplining them. It is not the place of the seller to discipline the consumer.”<sup>1</sup>

Church was never meant to be a spiritual supermarket or shopping mall, a retailer whose primary focus is to meet our needs and make us feel good about ourselves and our lives, whatever they may be. Instead, it should be an organic community of those sharing their experiences and faith, committed to urging and assisting one another to greater godliness and goodness.

As such, we need to engage in discussion as to what church discipline might mean in our cultural and church circumstances, how church discipline can best be done, and how this can again become a positive component of church life and membership. There is much work to be done, but we must bring back church discipline.

In writing to the Corinthian church, Paul set out two reasons for such a process. After describing how the church should meet together to discuss the issue and “cast this man out of the church,” first Paul urged them that this was primarily for the good of the man involved, “so that his sinful nature will be destroyed and he himself will be saved when the Lord returns” (1 Cor. 5:5).\*

This is hard: sometimes we do best by someone when we are not “nice” to them. It must be done carefully and prayerfully, but because of our love for our fellow believer and because of our belief in the eternal consequences of the choices we make, sometimes we must—as a corporate community of faith—call a member back to obedience.

This will work best when we have

healthy relationships within our church community and when we have a proper understanding of what church discipline means. “Church discipline, even the final stage of excluding persistent sinners from church membership, is really just using our last resort in pleading with an erring brother or sister to forsake sin and return to the loving arms of the Lord who longs to forgive him or her. Church discipline is finally simply watching over one another in love.”<sup>2</sup>

The other reason Paul urged the Corinthian church to act in this way was the good of the larger community of faith. “Don’t you realize that if even one person is allowed to go on sinning, soon all will be affected?” he wrote. “Remove this wicked person from among you so that you can stay pure” (verses 6, 7). Paul is saying that it is important to maintain godly behavior for the sake of other members, the faith community as a whole, and perhaps even for the wider community that observes, learns from, and judges the faithfulness or faithlessness of the church.

But that’s not the end of the story. In his next letter Paul followed up these instructions with another vital element of church discipline. Perhaps even referring to the same person, he urged the church to include redemption as part of their dealings with a former member: “Now it is time to forgive him and comfort him. Otherwise he may become so discouraged that he won’t be able to recover. Now show him that you still love him” (2 Cor. 2:7, 8).

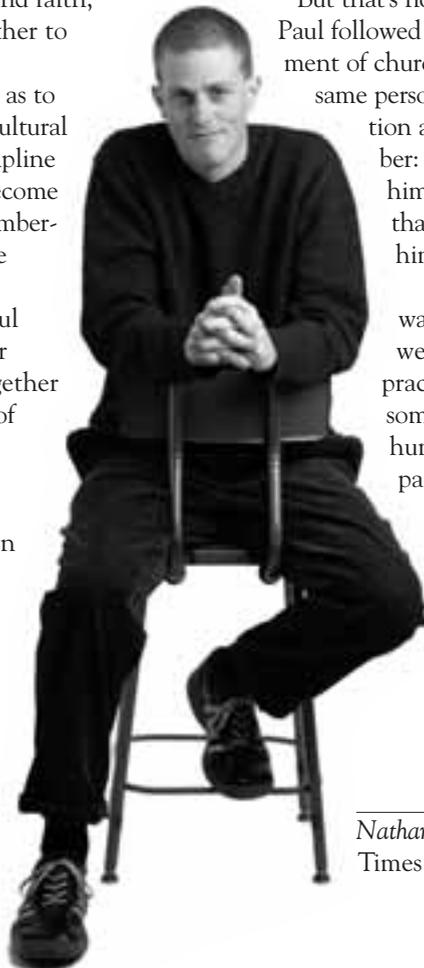
As people we are still the same in so many ways as those in Paul’s day. And as a church we should continue this important spiritual practice: “If another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path” (Gal. 6:1).

\*Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Ronald Sider, in *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience*.

<sup>2</sup>Sider, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience*, p. 115.

Nathan Brown is editor of *South Pacific Signs of the Times* and the *South Pacific Division Record*.



# AWR Listeners Fill Soccer Field in Ethiopia

BY **SHELLEY NOLAN FREESLAND**, COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR OF ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO

The plan was simple. Challenge each of the four producers in the Adventist World Radio (AWR) Ethiopia studio to form at least one listener club before the end of 2005.

As Robel Gezahegn, the AWR producer for the Tigrinya language, traversed up to the northern part of Ethiopia near the border with Eritrea, his determination to meet the challenge seemed to be the only thing compelling his feet to go one in front of the other. Robel arrived at the Shimelba refugee camp in Ethiopia, about 57 kilometers (35 miles) from the border. This is the recent home to more than 10,000 Eritreans who have been displaced as a result of the Ethio-Eritrean border conflict.

Robel arranged a place for a small group to meet to listen to the AWR Tigrinya program. But as he went out to invite people to come to hear the program, news of a pastor visiting the camp quickly spread throughout Shimelba. The following evening, the place originally prepared for only a small group meeting could not accommodate the unexpectedly large number of attendees.

*Where can we possibly fit all these people?* Robel asked himself. With several newfound friends who were helping him, he found a large open space where people in the camp come to watch the soccer games of the English Premier League through satellite receiver.

All the soccer games were canceled for the week, and Robel suddenly had an evangelistic audience. Each evening attendance increased until nearly 1,200 refugee camp inhabitants were

attending—12 percent of the camp's entire population.

Robel testifies that God blessed his efforts with nine people dedicating their lives to God. To many, nine may not appear to be a large number. But for a startup of new outreach work with just a few meetings, and considering the challenges of religious freedom in northern Ethiopia, nine could be considered tantamount to delivering a hundred times the same figure in another area.

"AWR is considered by these people to be the best religious broadcaster in Eritrea and this part of Ethiopia," says Robel.

AWR plans to continue to use the influence of its radio broadcasts to reach the hearts of listeners in that region.

*AWR is the mission radio arm of the Adventist Church. It uses shortwave, AM/FM, satellite, and Internet broadcasts to carry the gospel message to people*



ILLUSTRATION BY CLAYTON KINNEY

*who are difficult to reach because of political restrictions on religion, cultural barriers to Christianity, or geographic barriers. Currently, it broadcasts in Africa, other parts of Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America, and northern Australia in nearly 70 languages for more than 100 hours a day.*

*For more information, go to [www .awr.org](http://www.awr.org).*

## NAD Youth Exhibit Robotics

BY **ANH PHAM**, A SENIOR JOURNALISM MAJOR AT SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, AND **BETTY COONEY**, COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

Children and youth in grades 5-12 recently had the opportunity to exhibit their robotic creations in the Adventist Robotic League (ARL) held recently in Adventist schools in four unions throughout the North American Division (NAD)—Lake, North Pacific, Pacific, and Southern. ARL is a partner of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a nonprofit

multinational organization that promotes math, science, engineering, and technology among children and youth.

FIRST conceived the idea of robotics challenges with its LEGO League, which typically holds events on Saturdays. ARL was developed two years ago by Mel Wade, Information Technology director of the Michigan Conference, to provide the opportunity for Adventist children and youth to

participate in challenges held on Sunday or during the week.

The local leagues will be followed by a national exhibition to take place during the NAD Teachers Convention, August 7 and 8, at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

The following are highlights from two local league events:

**Southern Adventist University**

Children and youth from Adventist academies and home-schools throughout the Southern Union began warming up in Iles P.E. Center at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, on the morning of April 9, to participate in the second annual Adventist Robotics League Southern Challenge, hosted by Southern's School of Computing.

The teams had spent months designing, building, and programming autonomous robots capable of performing tasks during the robotics challenge. Each year, students create robots from LEGO brick kits to perform on challenge courses representing real-world problems on a 4- by 8-foot field.

In keeping with this year's theme, "The Ocean Odyssey Challenge," teams directed their robotic creations through tasks such as deploying a submarine, releasing a dolphin, and cleaning up a cargo shipping accident.

"It makes learning math and science fun," says event organizer and School of Computing professor Tyson Hall. "It's a learning experience that gives students an opportunity to develop creative problem-solving skills."

The overall winners of the challenge were three homeschoolers: 12-year-old Andrew Donesky, 13-year-old Evan Richards, and 11-year-old Ellis



PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

**GETTING READY:** Placing her robot on the challenge table, a Southern Adventist University Robotics League participant prepares her robot for its next task.

Students and coaches from Adventist Christian School in Ridgecrest; San Gabriel Adventist Academy; and Santa Barbara Christian Homesteaders, a Protestant home-school group, demonstrated their entries in six 2½-minute trials of performing practical on-water or underwater activities. Students prepared by studying about oceans and activities related to



PHOTO BY GLEN BAKER

**COOL THINGS:** Southern California Conference superintendent of schools Richard Carey (right) talks with students from Adventist Christian School in Ridgecrest, California, at the robotics tournament.

Richards. Their team, Brick Boys, received the Directors Award, which allows them a berth in the national exhibition.

**Southern California Conference**

Focus and intensity were high for the three student teams that participated in the ARL tournament hosted by Glendale Adventist Academy in Glendale, California, on March 13.

them. Entries reflected student responses to the project's challenge to "find solutions that will sustain the health, biodiversity, and productivity of the world's oceans."

"Robots do cool things," said Conar Dela Rosa, a fifth grader from Adventist Christian School. "I like working with friends and learning."

According to SCC superintendent of schools Richard Carey, who served as one of two tournament referees, all three teams received a number of awards for their levels of performance.

Added Robert Dennis, SCC associate education superintendent and tournament coordinator, "The judges worked with a very specific scoring system to arrive at best scores within categories, not just to have one top winner. It is possible that all teams could earn first-place awards."

The Director's Award trophy was awarded to the team from Adventist Christian School.

For more information about Adventist Robotic League, go to [www.adventistroboticsleague.net](http://www.adventistroboticsleague.net).



PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

**PRACTICAL THINGS:** Robots made from LEGO bricks were programmed to complete different tasks such as raising model flags.

# Faith's Fading Glow

BY JEAN KELLNER, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT OF THE ADVENTIST REVIEW

It isn't a pretty picture.

Only 59 percent of born-again Christians believe in a personal bodily resurrection. This news comes from a Scripps Howard/Ohio University poll announced during "Easter" week. The news shocked pastors and theologians, since it puts many Christians at odds with the Apostles' Creed and the Bible.

Also in the news that same week, according to an article in the *Journal of Paleolimnology*: Jesus didn't actually walk on water. It seems cold weather and atmospheric conditions caused some of the water on the Sea of Galilee to ice over.

Next, the "rediscovery" of the Gospel of Judas clears up a basic biblical misunderstanding for us: Judas wasn't so bad after all. He and Jesus secretly planned the whole betrayal. This news appears to have some serious mileage left, with the *Da Vinci Code* opening in theaters and the *Gospel of Judas* (along with other Gnostic gospels) being featured in bookstores.

Summing it up so far: Jesus is a fraud; Judas is a hero.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

An earlier report highlighted the results of a decade-long scientific study about prayer and healing. According to the study, prayer doesn't work for healing, particularly for cardiac patients—in fact, they can develop complications *because of prayer*.

And finally, on Good Friday, *Christianity Today Online* featured an article titled "Nothing but the Blood" informing us that many evangelicals believe Christ's atoning death is "merely a grotesque creation of the medieval imagination."

Ironically, during Passion Week the very truths that form the foundation of our hope and give joy, assurance, and definition to our Christian faith are under attack from without and from within as feel-good preaching replaces biblical teaching in the pulpits.

Evidently, Jesus' question, "When the Son of man returns, will He find faith left on the earth?" is becoming a profound reality of our time.

"Even so, Lord Jesus, come!"

## NEWS BREAK

### World Church: Adventists Affirm Role of Ten Commandments

Noting recent public interest in the Ten Commandments, the Adventist Church voted April 12 in its Spring Meeting held in Loma Linda, California, to affirm the Decalogue's importance in society.

"The Ten Commandments provide a moral compass in an age of relativism. Through God's law, the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and brings us to a sense of utter helplessness. The law of God is the instrument by which the Spirit calls us to repentance," the statement reads.

Many biblical scholars and teachers have noted two categories within the Decalogue. The first four commandments speak of humanity's relationship to God, and are items that human governments should not try to legislate. The last six commandments deal with relationships among people in society and are, Adventists believe, proper subjects for legislative action.

While noting its endorsement of the "fundamental

principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state," the statement suggests that it is permissible for governments to legislate the modes of behavior "in keeping with these principles of human conduct . . . common in civil societies."

The statement notes that "it is the duty of Christians to obey these laws, insofar as they are in keeping with God's law, and to actively support efforts to improve them."

The statement concludes with an appeal to society at large, as well as a call for tolerance: "Seventh-day Adventists hold the Decalogue in highest esteem and appeal to men and women in all societies to live in harmony with its principles as a foundation for lives of loving service to humanity. At the same time, they recognize the need for tolerance, Christian humility, and respect for the rights of others

in making application of these principles."—*Adventist News Network/AR*.

### MARYLAND: Emanuel Pedersen Dies at 101

Emanuel W. Pedersen, a veteran Adventist Church



PHOTO BY RAIMUND DABROWSKI/ANN

**CONSIDERING THE ISSUE:** Adventist world church general vice president Mark Finley speaks during consideration of the Ten Commandments statement at the church's Spring Meeting.

## Did You Know?

### Pursue Your Calling, Not a Career

In his book *48 Days to the Work You Love*, Dan Miller writes that increasingly people are saying, "I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up." And this isn't coming just from 20-year-olds, but from people in their 40s and 50s.

Consider these sobering statistics from his book:

One third of Americans say, "I hate my job."

Two thirds believe they labor in the wrong career.

Others find employment success, but no satisfaction.

Heart attacks occur more frequently on Monday mornings, compared to other times of the week.

In a 45-year working span, a person can expect to have 14-16 different jobs.

The good news: Christians need not labor under the world's false perspectives about career success. God calls us to serve others, honor Him, and impact the world around us, in whatever current job we hold. Whether you stay put or change careers, take Christ to work and make Him your boss.—*Jean Kellner, editorial assistant, AR.*

## Health Notes

### Make Your Steps Count

If your goal is to walk the recommended 10,000 steps a day (the equivalent of 30 minutes of brisk exercise), consider these counting tips:

- One mile = 2,000 to 2,100 steps.
- Nine holes of golf (without a cart) = 8,000 steps.
- One city block = 200 steps.
- Ten minutes of nonbrisk walking = 1,200 steps.
- Two hours of watching television = 0 steps.

If you walk in a shopping mall, the public relations office should be able to tell you the distance you're covering.—*HealthWise*

*Health Notes is compiled by Charles Mills, editor of Vibrant Life, the church's health outreach journal. To subscribe, call 1-800-765-6955.*

## NEWS BREAK

leader who helped pioneer the establishment of both Bugema Adventist University in Uganda and Cuba Adventist Seminary, died March 30 at his home in Silver Spring, Maryland, just two months short of his birthday. He would have turned 102.

Born in Odense, Denmark, Pedersen had been a field secretary of the world church (1966-1971), as well as a Bible teacher, pastor, evangelist, missionary, department director, and a president of fields and unions. He served in several areas of the world including Denmark, Uganda, Kenya, and Britain.

His wife, Esther, preceded him in death. He is survived by two children.—*TED/ANN/AR.*

### News Notes

3 The Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) has received approval from the International Board of Education of the General Conference to offer a Ph.D. in Business degree program. This marks the first time an Adventist institution of higher learning has received the approval from the highest level of church administration to grant a doctoral degree in the business field. While there are some recommendations to be addressed, the program is scheduled to begin in mid-2007.—*Adventist International*

*Institute of Advanced Studies/AR.*

3 John K. McVay, dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary on the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, has accepted the invitation of the Walla Walla College Board of Trustees to become president of the college upon Jon L. Dybdahl's retirement this summer. Dybdahl has served as president of Walla Walla since 2002, and has completed 40 years of service to the Adventist Church. McVay, 47, has been dean of the Seminary for the past six years, and professor of New Testament there since 1998.—*Walla Walla College/AR.*

### OAKWOOD COLLEGE: Notice of Regular Meeting of Members

To the constituency of Oakwood College, an Alabama nonprofit educational corporation: Pursuant to the laws of the state of Alabama, notice is hereby given that the regular meeting of the Oakwood College Constituency will be held in the auditorium of the Business and Technology Complex on the campus of Oakwood College, Huntsville, Alabama, on Sunday, May 28, 2006, at 9:00 a.m. The purpose of the meeting is to elect the members of the Board of Trustees and to conduct such other business as may be necessary.

# Thanks, Mom

*AR staff walks down memory lane this Mother's Day.*

My mother, who was blessed with a beautiful soprano voice, frequently urged my brothers and me to “keep on singing.” On one level, she meant “Stay involved in music, join the choir, consider voice lessons,” but on a more profound level, she meant “Sing through both the joys and sorrows that come to every life.” It is the latter meaning that has stayed with me in times of exhilaration and of grief, for the power of song sustains the heart in moments when speech is wholly inadequate.—*Bill Knott, associate editor*

My mother gave me this great piece of advice: “Always keep a good sense of humor, and be able to laugh at yourself.” She exemplified it, too. People just loved being around her and laughed a lot when in her company.—*Jean Kellner, editorial assistant*

I was being teased by neighborhood boys who wouldn't let me ride my bike down the sidewalk. My mother came flying out of our house to my rescue, scolding the boys and saying, “Stop harassing my daughter!” They left me alone, and at that moment I realized my mom loved me a lot, enough to “take on” the mean boys for me.—*Kimberly Luste Maran, assistant editor*

My fondest memories of my mother come from the left-field bleachers of Dodger Stadium. Dad used to work Sundays so he could have Sabbaths off, and often Mom took me, my sister, Cindy, and my best friend, Rick, to watch the Dodgers play. In the glory days of Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale, and Maury Wills, \$1.50 per ticket was an economical and enjoyable way to spend a summer afternoon.—*Stephen Chavez, managing editor*

The best advice my mother gave me was to believe that “with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26). This is something she stressed to me especially when things seemed

dark and weary. Even though she continues to be there for me, she always encourages me to seek God when I need help, no matter what the problem is.—*Larie S. Gray, administrative assistant*

When I was 4 years old, my finger got caught in a door, and the top third was sliced to where it was hanging on by a thin thread of skin. My mom held my finger on with a towel all the way to the hospital, and wouldn't let it go until the doctor saw it. I don't think she realized how important her action was. But it was because of her loving care and foresight that I didn't lose that finger or the use of it.—*Bonita Joyner Shields, assistant editor*

Appreciate, appreciate, appreciate. You can *never* express appreciation enough for what another person does. (Yes, I am listening. What better place to take your advice than the *Adventist Review*? Thanks for everything—you make it look easy.)—*Merle Poirier, technology projects coordinator*

Mother lived in assisted living for a number of years before she passed away. When I would leave after a visit, she always said, “Don't work too hard” or “Take it as easy as you can.” I never did follow either counsel, but it is great advice. Maybe it is still not too late for me to change!—*Marilyn Petersen, volunteer prayer request coordinator*

One of the best things my mother did for me was encourage me to learn to play the piano. Although I am clearly not an accomplished musician, I am capable of hammering out a recognizable hymn on the piano. I've been thankful for this skill to share in some rather unusual situations, and it has been a blessing for me and to others (so they say) many times in my life.—*Jackie Ordelleide Smith, marketing director*



An Anglican lady in those days (she later became an Adventist), my mother would gather her children every New Year's Day for a blessing. Not as a group, but individually. We'd each bend before her, half kneeling, whatever. She'd place her hands on our head and express her hopes and dreams for us for that year. I can't remember if she always did this—or even if she did it every single year—but I remember still how seriously I took it, and the deep impression it made on me.—Roy Adams, associate editor

I was 17. The evangelist had just made a call. I was sitting near the back of the auditorium, and battling with myself. *Too many things would have to change. I would have to give up so much. What would my friends think?*

My mother had become an Adventist Christian five years before, and I had been fighting the convictions of the Holy Spirit—and with my mother—ever since. The decision to attend this series of meetings was made so I could try to understand better what my mom believed. *But was it a mistake?* I wondered.

My mother looked at me, understood the struggle I was having, and said, “Just go forward.” Somehow, those words were what I needed to hear. I stood and walked down the aisle to the front of the auditorium—and never looked back.—Sandra Blackmer, news editor

**I did not have a good relationship with my mother, but in a telephone call 18 months before she discovered she**

**had life-ending cancer she said something I will always hold dear: “Linda, be good. I’m awfully proud of you.”**  
—Linda Guldin, online administrative assistant

The best advice my mother gave me was “to treat others as you would want to be treated.” She is this “rule” personified.—Rachel Child, projects coordinator

My mother was an active member of our church, helping out wherever help was needed. She had a deep yearning for young people, teaching in the children's division of Sabbath school, and she conducted a Vacation Bible School in our home. As a sponsor to our children's choir, she was instrumental in providing our robes, and she planned several events.

At home, Mother opened our home to disadvantaged children, making them a part of the family. She always had an encouraging word for everyone she met.—Carlos Medley, online editor

I was born smack-dab in the heart of the Great Depression. We didn't have much money, but we had lots of love. The public high school I attended specialized in math and science, which entailed added expense. Mother took a job cleaning at the local school. On hands and knees she scrubbed the wooden floors so I could go off to the city in my school uniform with the blue-and-gold tie.—William G. Johnsson, editor-in-chief

**W**hy has Thomas been singled out among the disciples as the doubter? Why not also call Peter “the reactionary” or John “the zealot” or Nathanael “the obscure”? But it’s Peter “the rock,” John “the beloved”; and Nathanael fades away into little more than a name. Where did the label “the doubter” come from? Certainly not the Bible.

In his Gospel John gives insight into the probing mind of this disciple through story. Nothing reveals character as stories do, and in the stories in John we see Thomas interacting with the other disciples and with Jesus. In chapter 14, right after the Last Supper, realizing the time is short, Jesus is outlining some of the issues they will face: His mission, the trouble ahead, their weakness and betrayal. Wanting to encourage them, He tells them to not let their hearts be troubled. “In My Father’s house,” He said, “are many mansions. . . . If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself” (verses 2, 3).<sup>\*</sup> Concluding His beautiful and moving assurance, He said: “And you know the way where I am going” (see verse 4).

The disciples stood around Him speechless and wondering. It’s unlikely if any of them understood what Jesus was saying. Yet no one said a word until Thomas spoke up. “We do not know where You are going; how do we know the way?” (see verse 5).

That question, as all good questions, opened up the discussion that follows, clarifying Jesus’ plan of salvation, His mission, and their mission. Beginning with the powerful and significant metaphor of the vine and the branches, it develops into a sermon, in which Jesus lays out His plans for the church and prepares them for what will happen. He emphasizes the necessary connection to the Father through the Son and the spiritual nature of His kingdom. Up to this point, the disciples were focused on a worldly kingdom, missing entirely the essential spiritual nature of Jesus’ message.

Thomas’ question, “We do not know where You are going; how do we know the way?” was not a frivolous bid for attention, nor was it asked to cause trouble. Rather, it showed his prudence and the working of a probing mind looking for truth. And it didn’t come out of the blue. Jesus had warned about false christs: “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matt. 24:24).

### I Want Proof

Later, after the Resurrection, in another telling scene, perhaps the one who caused some to call him the doubter, Thomas asks for proof that this is indeed the risen Christ. Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus came to them after the Crucifixion, spoke with them, and showed them His hands and His side. When the others told Thomas they’d seen the risen Lord, Thomas was guarded and skeptical. “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails,” he

said, “and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25). It is easy to call Thomas “the doubter” here, but remember that the others did not believe without proof, either.

This is quintessential Thomas (and I hope a model for Christians today)—unwilling to accept as truth every rumor on the wind, every self-proclaimed Christ as the real thing. False christs appeared in Jesus’ time and still appear today. Do we believe any pied piper who comes along playing a pretty tune, proclaiming, “I am Christ,” or do we insist that he show us “the nail prints”?

What else will keep us from following a David Koresh or a Jim Jones but caution and prudence and a demand to see the nail prints? Many good and intelligent people followed these false christs to their death, simply because they did not demand to be shown the evidence. We tend to be fearful and lazy, unwilling to do the research and think things out ourselves.

We let someone else tell us what to believe. The Thomases among us step forward, demanding: *Show me the nail prints!*

# SHOW ME NAIL

*We’re called to be people of faith*

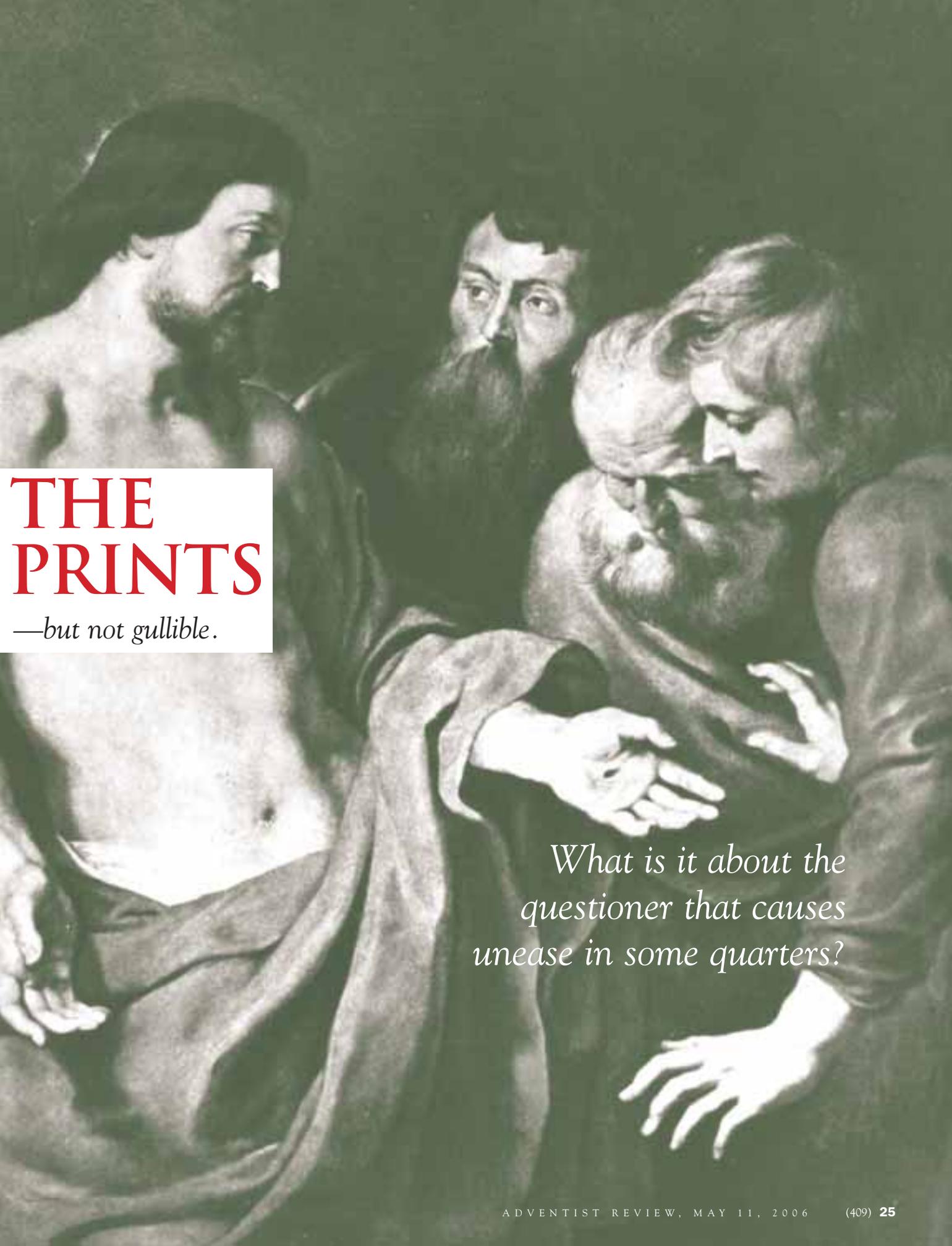
### It’s Good to Raise Questions

What is it about the questioner that causes unease in some quarters? That makes us equate questioning with doubting? Doesn’t questioning point the way to truth? Where would we be as far as human rights and dignity are concerned if someone hadn’t asked the questions that freed things up, that brought liberation to open doors? Are dark-skinned people destined to be slaves? Should children be working in factories? Do women have brains and the emotional stability to vote and hold office and preach a sermon? What if courageous men and women had not questioned being refused service in a restaurant or having to sit in the back of the bus? What if Martin Luther had never questioned the evil of selling indulgences?

Thomas’ loyalty and devotion to Jesus were established early on when Jesus said, “Let us go to Judea again” (John 11:7). Jesus said this in spite of the fact that the last time He was there, they’d tried to stone Him. Realizing that Jesus might be walking into a death trap, the disciples were cautious—except for Thomas: “Let us also go,” he said, “that we may die with Him” (verse 16).

Hardly the words of a timid doubter.

If Thomas is truly a doubter, why did John give him so much space? The theme of John’s Gospel is faith and spiritu-



# THE PRINTS

*—but not gullible.*

*What is it about the  
questioner that causes  
unease in some quarters?*

# A Perspective From the Writings of Ellen G. White

BY ROY ADAMS

We believe Rosalie Mellor makes a good point in the main article, and thus we allowed it to stand as you see it. Her concern is that too often, however well-meaning, we stifle genuine questions, discourage appropriate debate, and cast aspersion on those who don't quite see it—on those who doubt.

However, the issue is complex, and we thought it appropriate to share the perspectives of Ellen G. White, which themselves are far from uniform and uncomplicated. We invite readers to consider the implications of her comments against the background of the article. Notice that there are pitfalls on both sides.

“Jesus, in His treatment of Thomas, gave His followers a lesson regarding the manner in which they should treat those who have doubts upon religious truth, and who make those doubts prominent. *He did not overwhelm Thomas with words of reproach, nor did He enter into a controversy with him;* but, with marked condescension and tenderness, He revealed Himself unto the doubting one. *Thomas had taken a most unreasonable position, in dictating the only conditions of his faith;* but Jesus, by His generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers he had raised. Persistent controversy will seldom weaken unbelief, but rather put it upon self-defense, where it will find new support and excuse. *Jesus, revealed in His love and mercy as the crucified Savior, will bring from many once unwilling lips the acknowledgment of Thomas, ‘My Lord, and my God.’”*<sup>1</sup>

Though she described Thomas as “always troubled by doubts,”<sup>2</sup> it's interesting to notice that in one synopsis of the disciples' habits and dispositions, the quality of doubt was attached to Philip, and not to Thomas: “Thomas, truehearted, yet timid and fearful, Philip, slow of heart, and inclined to doubt.”<sup>3</sup>

Speaking on one occasion about those who “pride themselves on not receiving everything just as soon as it comes,” White said: “Like Thomas, they boast of their unbelief.” But Jesus did not commend the unbelieving disciple. “While granting him the evidence he had declared that he would have before believing, Jesus said unto him: ‘blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.’”<sup>4</sup>

And here is a telling point: “If all should require the same evidence [as did Thomas], none would now receive Jesus and believe in His resurrection. But it was the will of God that the report of the disciples should be received by those who could not themselves see and hear the risen Savior. God was not pleased with the unbelief of Thomas.”<sup>5</sup>

“The faith of Thomas would have been more pleasing to Christ if he had been willing to believe upon the testimony of his brethren. Should the world now follow the example of Thomas, no one would believe unto salvation; for all who receive Christ must do so through the testimony of others.”<sup>6</sup>

Then she added the following: “Many who, like Thomas, wait for all cause of doubt to be removed will never realize their desire. They gradually become confirmed in unbelief. . . . At a time when faith and confidence are most essential, many will thus find themselves powerless to hope and believe.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, vol. 5, p. 1151. (Italics supplied.)

<sup>2</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 663.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296.

<sup>4</sup> *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 492.

<sup>5</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 188.

<sup>6</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 807.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 808.

ality, rather than (like that of the Synoptics) history and miracle. In Thomas' questioning, there's an honest effort to arrive at truth, at faith, at a greater spirituality.

In our own spiritual search, are we asking the pertinent questions or simply parroting what someone else said? What is our protection against every zealot with some groundless speculation on health, on politics, on salvation? Do we put it through the truth test? *Who said it? What was their source? What is my own point of view?*

Naïveté and blind acceptance are hardly the basis of faith.

“Ever insurgent let me be,  
Make me more daring than devout.  
From sleek contentment set me free,

And fill me with a buoyant doubt.”  
—Louis Untermeyer.

“A buoyant doubt,” a doubt that sent Thomas searching, asking questions, being misunderstood, but still asking. A doubt that drives me to ask the uncomfortable questions, look for other questioners, engage in lively dis-

cussion, in which truth is laid bare.

And even when truth is only glimpsed afar off, even that glimpse can shine as a beacon in the night.

\*Texts in this article are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Rosalie Mellor writes from northern Minnesota.



# God's Vision, His Mission

*Dealing with disabilities happened to be Lance Carr's path to a spiritual awakening.*

BY ROBERT J. FISHER

**I** TRULY BELIEVE MY lot in life is to leave this world better off for my having existed," says Lance Carr. "I will change the world for the better."

Lance Aubrey Carr, of Fort Morgan, Colorado, believes that a life-altering transformation he experienced at the age of 34 is a testament to the power of God's love, benevolence, and guidance. When his life was at its lowest ebb, he received from God the insight he needed to turn his life from one of hardship, frustration, and bitterness to hope, faith, and purpose.



## Challenged From Birth

From the outset, Lance was born into a life of pain, anguish, and despair. Diagnosed at birth with Werdnig-Hoffman disease, a form of muscular dystrophy, early prognoses predicted that he would die within two years. As he beat the doctors' predictions and grew into childhood, his body was racked with pain as his muscles slowly deteriorated. He was confined to a wheelchair, with no use of any limbs; the only part of his body he could move, with difficulty, was his head.

At the age of 12, because of a severe case of scoliosis, Lance was once again given less than two years to live

unless he had an operation that doctors said he had only a 10 percent chance of surviving. Over three months Lance underwent a series of operations, in which metal rods were inserted into his back, bolts were screwed to his hips, and numerous bone grafts were performed in an attempt to straighten his spine. The surgeries caused complications that threatened Lance's life even more; doctors doubted his survival.



### Other Hurdles

The pain and anguish Lance felt weren't just physical. Lance's disability effectively prevented him from having any social life. He was totally dependent on others, notably his immediate family, to move and function. He could not—and still cannot—bathe, dress, or feed himself without assistance.

In spite of his physical disabilities, Lance points out that God blessed him with a good mind (an IQ in excess of 175), which he used to obtain a college degree in mathematics, magna cum laude, with a minor in secondary education. His mother attended school with him, because Lance could not transport himself to classes, take notes, or write exams.

Lance reached a point where he felt his life was beginning to take a positive turn when he began a career as a mathematics instructor. He taught for several years at the high school level, then another three at a community college, while also serving as a tutorial center coordinator. Then life took a negative turn when he was laid off

from his position as a result of budget cutbacks.

Up to this point in his life, Lance considered himself an atheist. The only "gods" he recognized were reason and logic. Certainly, he rationalized, his ongoing struggle with pain and misery did not track with the existence of a loving, caring divine being. The final straw came when a female companion who had shown interest in him fraudulently used some of his finances.

Then, midway through his 30s, Lance had his epiphany.

### A Ray of Hope

"At that time I was at a low point in my life because of years of pain and suffering, my recent loss of employment, having a woman I trusted steal from me, as well as a general sense of overall despair.

"I was sitting at my computer experiencing the 'same old, same old': physical pain, emotional trauma, feelings of hopelessness, boredom, and frustration. In a moment of revelation, the proverbial clouds parted, the sun shone through, and everything became quite clear to me. I deduced that if everything in my life was so horribly bad—



why hadn't I quit, given up, looked for the exit? I felt as though something evil was working against me and decided that if there was indeed some agent working against me in my life, there must be a corollary in the form of a loving and benevolent Being who was the source of my ongoing motivation—despite all obstacles—to endure and strive for more. This, I felt, was God."

Until that time, Lance said that all his life he had taken a naturalistic view of life's evolution and humanity's self-determination. Now it became clear to him that God functions in a manner that provides humans with consciousness and awareness, as well as free will and the ability to make any choice. At the moment of his epiphany, Lance called to God for assistance with the absolute and irrefutable knowledge that He was real.

"I yelled inside of my head, 'I love You, and I appreciate everything

You've done for me. Please forgive my arrogance and my transgressions. Please fill me with as much knowledge as You know I can take, knowledge about the hows and whys of human existence. Please give me purpose and guidance. If You do, I promise to be a shining beacon of Your Word."

### A Life of Purpose

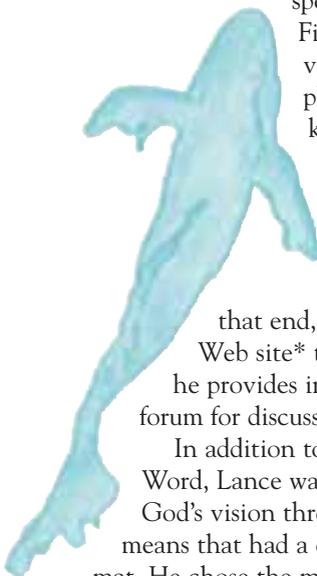
Suddenly it seemed as though Lance heard a "pop" in his mind as many things become clear to him. He felt as though God was blessing him with knowledge and information that ran the gamut from philosophy to science and theology to sociology. He decided to dedicate the rest of his life to serving the world by using the gifts God had given him.

Given his physical condition and limitations, Lance tackled the challenge of how to accomplish those goals. Lance says God gave him two specific tasks.

First: to share his views, philosophy, and the knowledge that God had imparted to him through the Written Word. To

that end, he created a Web site\* through which he provides information, a forum for discussion.

In addition to the Written Word, Lance wanted to share God's vision through a visual means that had a creative format. He chose the medium of painting and created four paintings that depict the cycle of life from birth to death, paintings that reflected his understanding of religious themes.



*"I'm using God's vision as a beacon to guide my way into the future."*

In his paintings, as in the rest of his life, Lance faced a major obstacle: he had no use of his hands with which to paint, and a very limited ability to move his head. Confined to a wheelchair, his only means of communication was through his computer. Through voice-activated software, Lance could only send e-mail messages.

But with a great deal of thought and research, Lance developed a system to create paintings on the computer by pulling together and adapting various forms of software and hardware.

Lance accomplished this by installing a camera, mounted on top of his computer monitor, that sends an infrared beam to a reflective dot he wears on his glasses.

The dot controls the cursor on his computer. Using the movement of his head, he created "brushstrokes." He had to hold his breath when making fine strokes. Each painting took an average of 60 hours to create. The process was made all the more painstaking, as even a breath at the wrong time could ruin a painting.

Lance created four paintings to represent the journey on which God was now his companion. He titled the paintings: *In the Beginning* (origin), *The One* (divine intervention), *Being, Living, Hoping* (nature of existence), and *Gentle Goodbye* (death).

### Dedicated to Sharing

Lance currently lives with his parents in Fort Morgan, Colorado, a small, rural town northeast of Denver. He sells copies of his paintings to help pay his health-care costs and to lighten the burden placed upon his aging parents by his special needs.

"For the world to be a better place and society to realize its potential, people need to take responsibility for making their lives better and those of the

people around them," says Lance. "If life is unfair, change it; don't get used to it."

Reflecting on his own hardships, Lance says, "God doesn't leave us defenseless; He gives us gifts so that we can overcome. Our responsibility is to discover and hone those gifts; this is the way we serve His will and purpose. I have overcome the darkness of my past, and I'm using God's vision as a beacon to guide my way into the future."

\*www.lancecarr.com

Robert J. Fisher is president of Fisher and Associates, based in Los Angeles, California.



## Questions for Reflection

1. Whom do you look to as a role model of someone who has overcome adversity? What characteristic of that person's life is worthy of emulation?
2. How does God use trials and obstacles to develop character? Name three Bible characters who overcame adversity, and describe how they emerged stronger for the experience.
3. What is the greatest physical, emotional, or spiritual challenge facing you? How would you like God to help you overcome it?
4. What is our duty to those who struggle under burdens of various kinds?



## They Still Go

*During the latter part of 2005 the following individuals left their home countries to live and work overseas. Please remember them in your prayers.*

**Ralph Timothy McDonald**, returning to serve as vice chancellor, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, Kenya, and Beverly McDonald left September 10, 2005.

**Richard Eugene McEdward**, returning to serve as departmental director, Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sri Lanka, Marcia Diann McEdward, and two children left San Francisco, California, October 5, 2005.

**Lee Hastings Meadows**, returning to serve as physician/family practice, Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Glenda Meadows, and one child left August 21, 2005.

**Julian Melgosa**, returning to serve as president, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines, Annette Alyce Melgosa, and one child left Washington, D.C., August 14, 2005.

**Darrel Martin Muehlhauser**, returning to serve as departmental director, South Sudan Section, Uganda, Kristina Muehlhauser, and one child left Boston, Massachusetts, November 4, 2005.

**James Kenji Nozaki**, returning to serve as physician/family practice, Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Ai Nozaki, and one child left September 22, 2005.

**Donald Mark Pettibone**, returning to serve as assistant director, auditing, East-Central Africa Division, Kenya, and Marion Susan Pettibone left Atlanta, Georgia, June 27, 2005.

**William Lamar Phillips III**, returning to serve as coordinator, Global Mission, Middle East Union Mission, Cyprus, Gabriela Phillips, and one child left September 10, 2005.

**Paul Pichot**, returning to serve as rector, Adventist University, Zurcher Campus, Madagascar, and Rupelin Gorospe Pichot left August 12, 2005.

**Cesar Augusto Puesan, Jr.**, returning to serve as physician/ophthalmologist/professor, Montemorelos University, Mexico, Maria Puesan, and one child left June 30, 2005.

**Teofilo Pichardo**, to serve as associate theology professor, Dominican Adventist University, Dominican Republic, Luzlina Pichardo, and one child left Boston, Massachusetts, December 5, 2005.

**Kenneth David and Crystal Ann Pierson**, to serve as dentists, Saipan Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Saipan, left Los Angeles, California, August 30, 2005.

**Hector Enrique Ramal**, returning to serve as theology professor, Montemorelos University, Mexico, and Edelweiss Ramal left Hidalgo, Texas, July 28, 2005.

**Luis Ricardo Ramirez**, returning to serve as professor, Visual Arts Department, Montemorelos University, Mexico, Brunhilda Ramirez, and two children left August 9, 2005.

**Todd Ryan Reese**, to serve as country director, ADRA/Togo, Laura Reese, and one child left San Francisco, California, August 17, 2005.

**Robert Franklin Roberts**, returning to serve as chief pilot/mechanic, East Indonesia Union Conference, Indonesia, Janice Erlene Roberts, and one child left Portland, Oregon, August 27, 2005.

**Dwight Arthur Rose**, returning to serve as principal, Nile Union Academy, Egypt, and Donna Jeanette Rose left August 25, 2005.

**Luc Sabot**, to serve as president, Senegal/Mauritania Mission, Sahel, Senegal, Anita Sabot, and two children of Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, left July 19, 2005.

**Susan Carol Scharffenberg**, returning to serve as professor, Biology Department chair, Mission College, Thailand, left Portland, Oregon, August 5, 2005.

**Gregory Scott Shank**, to serve as physician/surgeon, Koza Adventist Hospital, Cameroon, Audrey Shank, and one child left Washington, D.C., July 17, 2005.

**Timothy Craig Scott**, education director, Cambodia Attached District, and Fay Maria Scott left San Francisco, California, August 14, 2005.

**Elisha Godfrey Semakula**, returning to serve as vice chancellor, Bugema University, Uganda, Emily Semakula, and one child left October 31, 2005.

**Mack Barney Tennyson**, to serve as vice president of finance, Mission College, Thailand, Sharon Tennyson, and two children left Charleston, South Carolina, August 29, 2005.

**James Rowland Trott**, returning to serve as dentist, St. Vincent Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, and Mala Rebekah Trott left Miami, Florida, August 31, 2005.

**Wenceslao Torres, Jr.**, returning to serve as physician/surgeon, Antillean Adventist Hospital, Curacao, and Edna Torres left August 19, 2005.

**Donald Walter Upson**, to serve as treasurer, Northern Asia-Pacific Division, Korea, and Janet Christine Upson left San Francisco, California, September 20, 2005.

**Roger Clay Van Arsdell**, returning to serve as physician/professor, Christian Medical College, India, and Marcia Van Arsdell left Asheville, North Carolina, October 10, 2005.

**Darrell Lynn Vaughn**, returning to serve as physician, OB/GYN/associate professor, chairman/business, Adventist Medical Center, Okinawa, and Yukiko Vaughn left San Francisco, California, August 6, 2005.

**Ronald Elmar Vyhmeister**, returning to serve as departmental director, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines, Shawna Lynn Vyhmeister, and one child left Los Angeles, California, August 22, 2005.

**Ronald D. Watts**, returning to serve as president, Southern Asia Division, India, and Dorothy May Watts left Washington, D.C., September 9, 2005.

**Donald Lee Weidemann**, returning to serve as president, Adventist Health System/Asia, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, Philippines, Marion Ellen Weidemann, and three children left December 9, 2005.

**John Frederick Werner**, returning to serve as ophthalmologist, Maluti Adventist Hospital, Mapoteng, Lesotho, and Celia Werner left August 12, 2005.

**Leonard A. Westermeyer**, returning to serve as treasurer, Chile Adventist University, and Linda Westermeyer left August 30, 2005.

**Melissa Marie Wherley**, to serve as physician's assistant, Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, left Denver, Colorado, December 5, 2005.

# Growing Up Together

**C**hurch. It's a word that stirs many emotions. Some of those emotions are warm and fuzzy. Others are frigid and painfully sharp. We all have different ideas of what church is, what

it was, and what it should be. But we all share most of the same memories. We sang the same songs. We studied the same stained-glass window of Christ. We listened to the same children's choir wander through the notes of "Jesus Loves Me." We read the same Bible, loved the same God, and felt the same tingle of joy during the last verse of "Amazing Grace." We grew up at church.

I grew up in the Dunlap Adventist Church. I remember getting into trouble when I was 3 or 4 years old. After repeated warnings from my dad, and more redheaded defiance from me, he would pick me up and walk down the long aisle. My family sat near the front, so this solemn march was always witnessed by the entire assembly of holy saints. One Sabbath, just as I was almost out the door, I called out, "Please, pray for me!" After my spanking, during the long walk back to the front, through tear-fogged eyes, I saw smiles and felt warm acceptance. I grew up a little. I learned that people at church loved me—red-faced, rebellious, repentant me.

I remember the stormy night when Shannon, our family dog, was hit by a car. The pastor dropped whatever sanctified chore he was doing and helped my dad wrap our whimpering, bloody friend in an old blanket. I remember when Mom and Dad let Brittany, my little sister, and me see Shannon. The wet-dog smell, the broken leg, and the deep, hurting eyes tore into my 7-year-old heart. This was my first brush with the horror of this world. And there sat the pastor, holding my soggy, dirty dog, stroking her hair and gently telling her that it would be all right. I grew up a little that night. I learned that the best sermons are not preached but lived.

I remember JP and Marie Lewis. These old patriarchs of

the church adopted our little family into their great big love. Every Sabbath they sat five rows up from the back on the right side. Between Sabbath school and church I made it my habit to always stop by and shake JP's rough hand and hug Marie's petite shoulders. They loved me, hard and true.

Something in their eyes, in their worn-out chuckles, told me that no matter what I did, or how big I messed up, they would be sitting in the fifth row up from the back on the right side, loving me.

One Sabbath, for one reason or another, I didn't go and shake JP's hand. Maybe I was too busy, or maybe I forgot. I don't remember why I didn't say hello to JP that day. But I do remember that his usual spot was empty the next Sabbath. Death had stolen my old friend, and I had missed my last chance to say goodbye. I grew up a little. I learned to never be too busy to shake a hand, share a smile, and just love.

I grew up in that old church. It was there that I preached my first sermon, played my first guitar solo, and was baptized. I have seen babies dedicated, lovers joined, and funerals held; many lessons were learned under those wooden rafters.

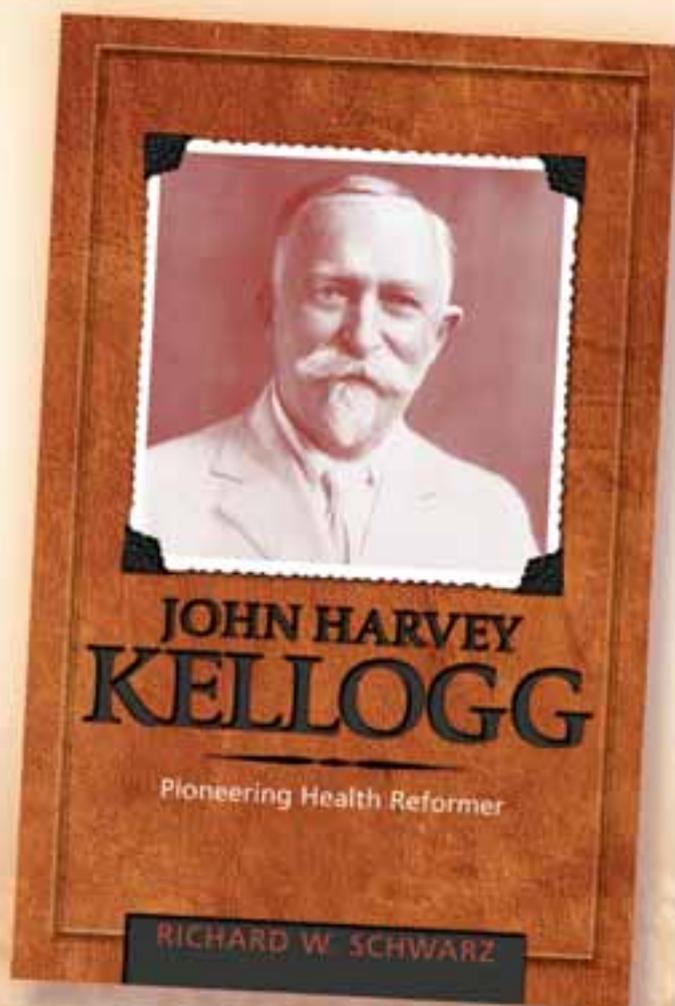
I guess that's what church is all about. It's not a place to walk in perfect, talk perfect, and leave even more perfect. It's a place to be real, to kneel before the Almighty. In this holy sanctuary, in which we pick up Cheerios before they are crunched under tiny feet and listen to an 8-year-old stammer through a verse in Romans, we encounter the Creator of children, the Lord of love, and the Savior of sinners. We come to church to worship, to grow, to learn. I have. And I thank God for my church family. We have grown up a little . . . together.

*The pastor  
dropped whatever  
sanctified chore he  
was doing and  
helped my dad  
wrap our  
whimpering,  
bloody dog  
in an old blanket.*

*After graduating with his English Education degree at Southern Adventist University in 2006, Grant Graves will launch his teaching career in Saipan, teaching fifth and sixth grades, enjoying God's beautiful creation, and wearing lots of sunscreen.*



Stubborn  
Visionary  
Power-hungry  
Charitable  
Conniving  
Health Pioneer  
Who was he really?



Learn the true story, from his determined childhood to the heights of his remarkable career as a health reformer. From his kindness to the poor and disadvantaged to his impact on and split from the Seventh-day Adventist Church—discover this complicated, controversial, and fascinating man. 0-8280-1939-8. Hardcover, 240 pages with photos throughout. US\$17.99.

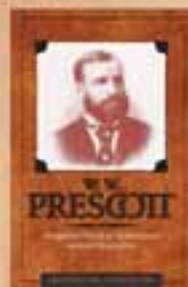
More fascinating pioneer biographies



ISBN 0-8280-1719-0



ISBN 0-8280-1815-4



ISBN 0-8280-1892-8

#### 3 WAYS TO SHOP

- [www.AdventistBookCenter.com](http://www.AdventistBookCenter.com)
- 1-800-765-6955
- Visit your local ABC

**FR** REVIEW AND HERALD<sup>®</sup>  
PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

Prices and availability subject to change. Canadian prices higher.