

# Adventist Review

January 10, 2013

Ordination Study Committee Named	<b>8</b>
Willing to Be Led	<b>15</b>
God's Peddler	<b>27</b>



## What Is a Mystic?

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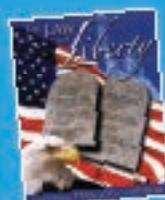
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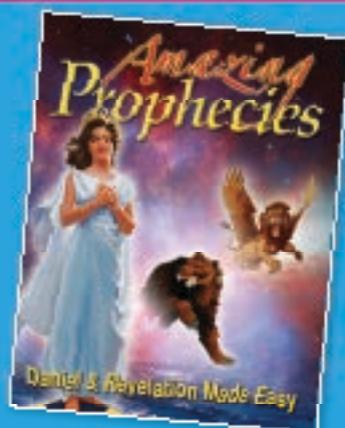
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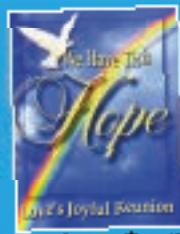
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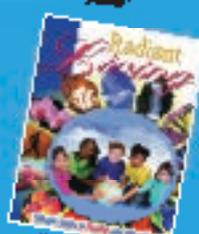
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# Adventist Review

**“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.



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## ON THE COVER

Over the past 20 centuries Christians have had one primary aspiration: to know Christ more completely.

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### Religious Freedom in the United States

The freedom to practice one's religion (or not) is a basic human right. How is it faring in today's United States?

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**Subscriptions:** Thirty-six issues of the weekly *Adventist Review*, US\$36.95 plus US\$28.50 postage outside North America. Single copy US\$3.00. 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:** [shanson@rhpa.org](mailto:shanson@rhpa.org). OR call 1-800-456-3991, or 301-393-3257.



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### Characters That Mean It

» “Characters That Mean It” by Marcos Paseggi (Nov. 22, 2012) is a most interesting look at widely recognized persons in the Bible. Human nature hasn’t changed; neither has God’s love toward His people. We have the assurance that the God of Peter, Noah, Samson, David, and others is also our God. He knows what makes humans tick. That same love, patience, and long-suffering is present today.

**NATALIE DODD**  
Centerville, Ohio

### Objectivity and Neutrality

» Lael Caesar’s editorial “Objective or Neutral” (Nov. 22, 2012) makes a clear distinction between two very different realities.

The reality of human rationalization often causes many kinds of public leaders to straddle the fence on moral issues of Christian belief and practice. Unfortunately, we

often expect this from our political leaders. Even neutrality on the part of religious leaders is often excused in the name of not offending “good people on the other side of an issue.”

The essential question really is: Is there anything like objective truth? It’s interesting to note that our earliest Adventist pioneers believed in “present truth; so much so that the phrase was the actual name of our first journal. Apparently, publishers James and Ellen White believed that they should share their objective biblical ideas with unabashed clarity.

With one essential proviso: it was objective truth for the “present.” They left the door open for future clarification of objective truth in what they knew as an “ongoing present.”

Objective reasoning will, in this broken world, continue to refine the truth, and every disciple should be willing to go there. In this growing process, and in Christian humility, we must admit that we are all on a journey

toward the totally objective, truthful mind of God.

**WARREN ZORK**  
Berrien Springs, Michigan

### Dateline Moscow

» I always read and appreciate Andrew McChesney’s contributions, however, “The Best Way to Die” (Nov. 22, 2012), was especially applicable. Thank you for reminding us that the real battle in our lives and souls is to die daily and let Jesus lead us through the day. It is the only way, plane crash or not.

**KEN SCOFIELD**  
Redlands, California

» In regard to the monthly column “Dateline Moscow,” please continue to have Andrew McChesney write about his interesting life. I look forward to his articles with anticipation. I have been to Moscow a few times and follow his life with interest. I appreciate his openness about his life.

**ELIZABETH ENGBLOM**  
Yucaipa, California

### Wild Goose Chase

» I appreciated Gerald A. Klingbeil’s editorial “Wild Goose Chase” (Nov. 15, 2012). Thank you.

**JACK BLANCO**  
Collegedale, Tennessee

### Wise Thing?

» In the November 22, 2012, *Adventist Review*, on page 27, there was an advertisement for carbonated grape juice. I couldn’t help but think back to our church history in Bat-

tle Creek. I wonder if this was a wise thing to do.

I am 75 years of age; that might influence my thinking. Has anyone else felt the same?

**GEORGE BLUMENSCHNEIN**  
Wilson, Michigan



### Then Sings My Soul

» “Then Sings My Soul” (Nov. 8, 2012) is a perfectly lovely excerpt from Ellen White’s writings. Bill Knott’s sidebar (“Rediscovery”) was a reminder that Ellen White’s writings are frequently passed by in the quest for newer content. Yes, as Knott writes, we need to “dust off the volumes on your shelves, browse the wealth of truth available.” It would be a rich blessing to us all if each issue of *Adventist Review* devoted space to one article from the inspired pen of God’s servant, the “lesser light” that points “to the greater light” of God’s Word (*Evangelism*, p. 257), safeguarding God’s people against deceptions and delusions (see *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 48).

**CLIFF DRIEBERG**  
Osoyoos, British Columbia, Canada

### Church Unity?

» Heather Knight, in the guest editorial “Writing Our

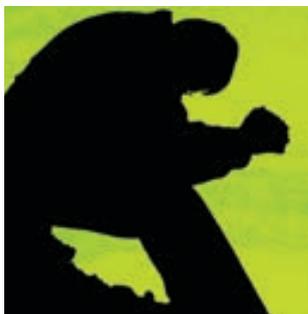
“The real battle in our lives and souls is to die daily and let Jesus lead us through the day.” —KEN SCOFIELD, Redlands, California

History Together” (Sept. 13, 2012), writes, “I have had real reservations about participating in any action that could be perceived as undermining our church’s unity.” But she does not say how she voted. How Knight voted is implied in her statement



that her “loyalty to God and the Seventh-day Adventist Church will allow us to achieve real balance.” This is an after-the-vote statement. This and the statement in the last paragraph asking for voices that are “consensus builders,” helping us “find common ground in the face of difficult issues” has the tone of a political statement rather than a statement from a biblical point of view. Did the results of the vote build consensus and find common ground? Did it build church unity?

**D. FOLEY**  
*United States*



### Biblical Spirituality

» My thanks to Mark A. Finley for the clear understanding I now have about the issues he made so simple to comprehend by using the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy in “Biblical Spir-

“Objective reasoning will, in this broken world, continue to refine the truth, and every disciple should be willing to go there.”

—WARREN ZORK, *Berrien Springs, Michigan*

ity, Parts 1 and 2” (Aug. 16 and 23, 2012).

May the Lord keep blessing the *Review*.

**IRIS MIRANDA**  
*via e-mail*

### Reading Back Issues

» My sister gives me her *Reviews* from time to time. . .

In the June 21, 2012, issue is a story titled “A Power Play in Everyday Life,” by Amanda Newton, telling of God’s answer to a woman’s prayers that she could afford a TV channel that included a network that showed hockey games. She could then watch her favorite team, the Chicago Blackhawks, play—and win.

In contrast, the December 2012 *Reader’s Digest* published an article by sportswriter Patrick Hruby, who says he can no longer watch football because of the serious head injuries suffered by players. He says, “Seeing people ruin themselves for entertainment’s sake isn’t just sordid. It’s ghoulish.” While hockey players may suffer fewer injuries than those playing football, injuries do occur. It troubles me that a story seeming to suggest that God approves of dangerous competitive sports is considered appropriate for *Review* readers. Of course, I could quote Ellen White’s disapproval of competitive sports as well.

“Letters to a Bride” in the March 15, 2012, *Review* showed two pictures of the bride in a strapless wedding dress. Some Adventist schools still have dress standards that require girls to wear modest dresses. This article and the pictures would certainly create some confusion in the minds of young people attending a school requiring modest apparel if they saw the pictures. They would see a double standard with church leaders apparently approving of what some would consider immodest dress. Parents trying to dress their daughters modestly would not appreciate these pictures in an Adventist magazine.

**MARILYN MORGAN**  
*via e-mail*



### From Cover to Cover

» I so much appreciate the *Review*! I read it from cover to cover. I am alone now, having lost my dear husband back in March, so I am reading and studying my Bible more.

**ROBERTA ROSS**  
*Parma, Michigan*

» We received the precious magazine *Adventist Review* in our library with heartfelt thanks. We would love to get more copies. Thank you for your good service.

**SUNNY STEPHEN**  
*Karakonam, Kerala, India*

### Online: Ordination Study Committee Named

» I read with interest the names of the members of the committee in the article “Theology of Ordination Study Committee Membership Complete, Names Released” (posted online at: <http://www.adventistreview.org/article/5878/archives/issue-2012-1533/33-cn-theology-of-ordination-committee-names-released>). I am sure the individuals are qualified for the role, but it seems that the majority of the members are from North America (except for the divisional representatives). Am I right in that observation? If so, why not have a broad worldview of this theological issue?

**CHRIS CHAN**  
*Parksville, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada*

**We welcome** your letters, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. 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 Blood-dimmed Tide”<sup>1</sup>



Bill

**Knott**

### NEWTOWN IS ACTUALLY A VERY OLD PLACE, MADE OLDER NOW BY THE

persistent sounds of weeping. A tercentennial milestone just celebrated, the small community seems closer to 2,000 years old as the sights and sounds of Nativity are mingled with the horror of brutish, violent death inflicted on children.

“A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more” (Matt. 2:18, NKJV).

On the eleventh day before Christmas, and just two weeks before the December 28 Christian liturgical commemoration of the first-century Massacre of the Innocents in Bethlehem, a disturbed 20-year-old christened with the name of the first human being took his mother’s sporting guns, killed her, then took the lives of 26 others, 20 of them 6- and 7-year-olds.

We are appalled. We cannot understand.

Weeks later, our culture is still reeling, rattled to its core by the unspeakable horror visited upon the youngest members of our community. The starkness of the imagery is unforgettable: solemn hearses passing beneath festive Christmas decorations; churches filled at Christmas to hear not of birth, but death—meaningless, senseless destruction. The red of every poinsettia plant and Santa suit was suddenly too vivid, too scarlet. The Christmas colors this year were mauve and olive—muted somehow, like the singing, like the parties.

We have found a way, somehow, to normalize the shooting just two years ago in Tucson that critically wounded a U.S. congresswoman and killed six others. We let ourselves be lulled into forgetfulness by the inspiring images of Gabrielle Giffords returning even temporarily to her seat on the Hill. Six months ago, the scene of carnage was an Aurora, Colorado, theater at midnight: 12 died, and 58 were wounded when the mentally unstable assailant was first assumed to be just an actor harmlessly imitating the bloody violence a packed movie house was eagerly drinking in on-screen. The calls for limiting the visual violence of our society were few and momentary. Those making them were, after all, only “moralists” and fundamentalists, for it is a central thesis of our rudderless culture that there is no connection between violence consumed and violence enacted.

But Herod’s soldiers were trained to kill—for certainly it takes training to rip a child from his mother’s arms and dash him against a wall—just as Adam Lanza was trained to kill. But Lanza’s lessons were, if anything, more sadistically successful. Ten thousand enemies killed on-screen undoubtedly made lifting his mother’s rifle against 20 small heads less traumatizing, less horrible.

Now, in a final homage to the unending argument about whether “life imitates art,” we discover that the most prominent citizen of Sandy Hook, the hamlet within Newtown where the December 14 massacre took place, is none other than Suzanne Collins, author of the multimillion-selling *Hunger Games* trilogy and screenplay writer of one of 2012’s most successful—and vicious—movie thrillers. Collins, you will remember, has filled the minds of tens of millions of adolescents and young adults with a futuristic story in which teens hunt each other to death for the sport and amusement of their totalitarian rulers and the bewitched masses. In the fictional nation of Panem (Latin for “bread”) they hunt each other with a ruthlessness once seen in Bethlehem, “the house of bread.”

Count me among the moralists on this one: as Ellen White reminded this people some dozens of times, “By beholding we become changed”<sup>3</sup> (see 2 Cor. 3:18). Every branch of science definitively announces the unimpeachable relationship between the sights and sounds our senses take in and our own proclivities to re-enact. In short: training works—as the military, business, commonsense, and piano lessons all prove. Why should we then give entertainment a “pass”—a “bye”—on its superiority as a training mechanism, especially when that pass is too frequently to the hallways of our schools and the “bye” is the last half of a tearful farewell we sob for the needlessly fallen? ■

<sup>1</sup>The phrase belongs to Irish poet William Butler Yeats, whose 1919 poem, “The Second Coming,” warned that “the centre cannot hold.”

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952), p. 330.



DAVID GOLDMAN © AP/2012

# Thank You, Roscoe Bartlett!

## IN MESSAGES TO YOUNG PEOPLE, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1930, ELLEN

White offers these words to young Seventh-day Adventists: "Have you thoughts . . . that you may sit in deliberative and legislative councils, and help to enact laws for the nation? There is nothing wrong in these aspirations" (p. 36).

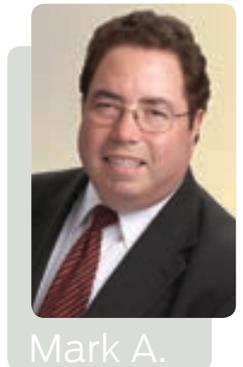
I don't know if now-retired Representative Roscoe G. Bartlett, (R-Md.), born four years before that book was published, ever read those words. But he certainly has *lived* them.

A true child of the Great Depression, Representative Bartlett entered what is now Washington Adventist University at the age of 17. Instead of ministerial study, he ended up earning master's and doctoral degrees in human physiology, becoming a professor at Loma Linda University and Howard University before moving into research full-time. He then developed "rebreathing" systems used by astronauts, pilots, and fire and rescue personnel. Still later Representative Bartlett became a successful businessman in and around Frederick, Maryland.

In 1992 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served for 10 successive terms. Among his legislative accomplishments, a bill, signed by President George W. Bush, to protect the rights of Americans to display the flag on their property.

Representative Bartlett didn't solve the budget crisis, cure a fatal disease, or negotiate peace between antagonistic nations. But he served his country faithfully and dutifully, demonstrating rare and much-valued sincerity in the discharge of his political duties at a time of profoundly partisan national politics. Courteous to all, respected in many quarters, Roscoe Bartlett has set a great example for Seventh-day Adventists—and anyone else—interested in public service. For

that example, and for his achievements, I say, "Thank you, Representative Bartlett," and pray God's continued blessing on him and his family. ■



Mark A.  
**Kellner**



## Who Are We?

### We are Adventists.

We are looking for the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and we love to think about it. We know in whom we have believed, and are not afraid to commit the keeping of our souls unto Him against that day. We are not at all humiliated by confessing ourselves to be Adventists. . . .

We believe the Sabbath of the fourth commandment because it is written plainly and is the foundation of our religious faith. Let none of us be ashamed of this. . . . We accept not the authority of men's councils, but we go further back, even to the councils of heaven. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalm 119:89). We take a "Thus saith the Lord." Here we stand. A doctrine that has not a "Thus saith the Lord" may be accepted by the whole world, but that does not make it truth. . . . If we want to know the way to heaven we must study the Bible, not man-made theories or man's suppositions. . . . We are not at all ashamed of our faith, Seventh-day Adventism, for it is the very best specification we can have. We are waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Men may scoff and ridicule our faith, but this should not provoke or surprise us. All these demonstrations do not make the truth error, neither do they make error truth. We take our stand firmly and unmovably upon the platform of the Word of God.

*That I May Know Him, p. 357*



## WORLD CHURCH

# Theology of Ordination Study Committee Names Released

Goal is to complete research in summer of 2014; women's ordination among study subjects.

By **MARK A. KELLNER**, news editor

**FOLLOWING THE** assignment of representatives from the 13 global divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the names of the 100-member Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC) were announced November 29, 2012, by

committee chairman Artur A. Stele, a general vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The 100 individuals (see table for the complete list) span a range of viewpoints and roles within the movement.

Membership includes Tara VinCross, an Adventist pastor in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; former U.S. Ambassador to Malta Kathryn L. Proffitt; Gerard Damsteegt, a professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary; Doug Batchelor, senior pastor of Sacramento Central Church in California and president of Amazing Facts; and Lisa M. Beardsley-Hardy, education director for the General Conference. *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* editor and executive publisher Bill Knott is also a member of the committee.

### THEOLOGY OF ORDINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stele, Artur A., chair  
Mbwana, Geoffrey G., vice chair  
Porter, Karen J., secretary  
Boward, Tamara K., recording secretary  
Arrais, Jonas  
Arrais, Raquel C.  
Batchelor, Doug  
Bauer, Steve  
Beardsley-Hardy, Lisa M.  
Bischoff, Fred  
Bohr, Stephen  
Brown, Gina S.  
Brunt, John  
Ceballos, Mario E.  
Chang, Shirley  
Clark, Chester V. III  
Costa, Robert  
Damsteegt, Gerard  
Damsteegt, Laurel  
Davidson, Jo Ann M.  
Davidson, Richard M.  
De Sousa, Elias B.  
Diop, A. Ganoune  
Donkor, Kwabena  
Doss, Cheryl  
Fagal, William A.  
Finley, Mark A.  
Fortin, Denis  
Gothard, Doris M.  
Haloviak-Valentine, Kendra

Hasel, Michael  
Holmes, C. Raymond  
Howard, James  
Hucks, Willie  
Jankiewicz, Darius  
Kent, Anthony R.  
King, Gregory A.  
Knott, Esther  
Knott, William M.  
Koh, Linda Mei Lin  
Kuntaraf, Kathleen K. H.  
McLennan, Patty  
Mackintosh, Don  
Miller, Nick  
Mills, Phil  
Moon, Jerry  
Morris, Derek J.  
Mueller, Ekkehardt F. R.  
Nelson, Dwight K.  
Nix, James R.  
Oberge, Chris  
Page, Janet  
Page, Jerry N.  
Paulson, Kevin  
Peters, John  
Pfundl, Gerhard  
Poirier, Timothy L.  
Proffitt, Kathryn L.  
Prewitt, Eugene  
Rafferty, James  
Read, David C.  
Reeve, Teresa  
Reid, George  
Roberts, Randall L.

Rodriguez, Angel M.  
Scarone, Daniel  
Silva, Sandra  
Slikkers, Dolores E.  
Small, Heather-Dawn K.  
Sorke, Ingo  
Timm, Alberto R.  
Trim, David  
Tutsch, Cindy  
Velo, Mario  
VinCross, Tara  
Wahlen, Clinton L.  
Warden, Ivan Leigh  
Zarska, Carol

**TWO REPRESENTATIVES ASSIGNED FROM EACH DIVISION**  
**East-Central Africa Division**

**Ero-Africa Division**  
Hasel, Frank  
Magyarosi, Barna

**Euro-Asia Division**  
Biaggi, Guillermo E  
Zaitsev, Yevgeny

**Inter-American Division**

Henry, Elie  
Perez, Carmen

**North American Division**

Bietz, Gordon  
Pollard, Leslie N

**Northern Asia-Pacific Division**

Doh, Hyun Suk  
Higashide, Katsumi

**South American Division**

Shimied Padilla, Lilian  
Siqueira, Reinaldo

**Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division**

Musvosvi, Joel  
Ratsara, Paul S.

**Southern Asia Division**

Christo, Gordon E.  
Tlau, Chawngdinpuui

**Southern Asia-Pacific Division**  
Gayoba, Francisco  
Sabuin, Richard

**South Pacific Division**

Oliver, Barry D.  
Roennfeldt, Ray

**Trans-European Division**

Barna, Jan  
Wiklander, Bertil A.

**West-Central Africa Division**

Bediako, Daniel K.  
Nwaomah, Sampson

**EX OFFICIO**

Wilson, Ted N. C.  
Ng, G. T.  
Lemon, Robert E.

**THEOLOGY OF ORDINATION STEERING COMMITTEE**

Stele, Artur A., chair  
Mbwana, Geoffrey G., vice chair  
Porter, Karen J., secretary  
Damsteegt, Gerard  
Davidson, Richard  
Fagal, William A.  
Rodriguez, Angel M.

The top three officers of the General Conference are ex-officio members of the committee: Ted N. C. Wilson, president; G. T. Ng, secretary; and Robert E. Lemon, treasurer.

“The main reason for releasing the names is to kindly invite every member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to pray for these names,” Stele said in a statement. “We are in need of God’s guidance and leading in this study process.”

The statement also summarized the main tasks confronting the panel:

1. Review the history of the study of ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. Develop a Seventh-day Adventist theology of ordination.
3. Study the subject of ordination of women to the gospel ministry.
4. In areas of disagreement, focus on potential solutions that support the message, mission, and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

According to Stele, “The Theology of

Ordination Study Committee will prayerfully study the issues presented above, trying to reach a consensus on each assignment. In the areas where consensus will not be reached, the TOSC will present several reports and will also work on potential solutions. These steps will ensure that the process will be open, fair, and transparent.”

Stele said the steering committee has already met twice, and “we are suggesting that the first meeting of the TOSC in January 2013 will be totally dedicated to the study of the first step. A group of scholars has been given the assignment to work on the first draft of the Theology of Ordination document.”

He added, “We are planning to present the first draft of the TOSC in January, discuss it, and, based on the contributions of the whole committee, prepare a second draft and send it out to all Division [Biblical Research Committees, or BRC]. We will ask each Division BRC to send in their suggestions, contributions,

agreements, and disagreements. Based on the discussions involving all BRCs, a third draft will be prepared, and we hope to come to a final draft that could be ‘hopefully’ accepted by the TOSC the first day of our meetings in July 2013.”

Stele said, “After concluding the study on theology of ordination, we will start working on the issue of women’s ordination.”

He concluded, “The TOSC starts its work in total reliance on God’s guidance. Please, pray for the right spirit and openness for God’s leadership.”

Although women have functioned in various ministry roles from the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, ordination has come up as an issue before church leaders several times in the recent past. At present, the church does not ordain women to ministry, following votes at General Conference sessions in 1990 and 1995 on the question, where the issue was a major focus of the international deliberations. ■

## ■ NORTH AMERICA

# Adventist-owned Food Company Relaunches Famed “CHIP” Lifestyle Program

*Australia’s Sanitarium Health focuses on program expansion.*

By **NATHAN BROWN**, reporting from Crandall, Georgia

A NEW global, integrated health resource for local Seventh-day Adventist congregations was launched at the CHIP Summit, held November 15 to 19, 2012, at Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, Georgia. The all-new Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) builds on the foundation of the former Coronary Health Improvement Project, including the continuing core principles of health intervention and lifestyle medicine, while adding a contemporary presentation, and updated medical and

scientific research.

Hans Diehl founded the CHIP ministry 25 years ago, but acknowledges that the previous materials needed updating and that the self-supporting ministry did not have the necessary resources for this task. “We needed to find a strong partner with commensurate resources but that also embraced our basic Adventist wholistic values with strong spiritual underpinnings,” Diehl explained.



PHOTOS: NATHAN BROWN

**CHIP-PER PRESENTERS:** Darren Morton, left, a physiologist and a senior health and exercise science lecturer in the School of Education at Avondale College, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia, was a presenter at the CHIP Summit along with Hans Diehl, CHIP program founder.

Working particularly with the church-owned Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing in Australia, the South Pacific Division purchased CHIP with a plan for it to be renewed and relaunched under the leadership and management of Sanitarium.



**NEW KITS:** Summit participants unpack the all-new CHIP resource kits at the launch of the new program on November 15, 2012.

“CHIP has been a great program that was setting the church up to be a center of influence in the community, that was bringing great results and bringing the church’s health message to life,” said Cathy McDonald, general manager of Sanitarium’s Health and Wellbeing Services. “We also saw the potential to update it and enlarge its impact.”

“After 25 years of making CHIP my life and my mission, it was not easy to let CHIP go, but my team and I recognized the need for an enriched environment in which CHIP could develop to full maturity,” added Diehl. “We are truly grateful for how God has led. We are overjoyed to place this project in the hands of the church for which it was created.”

While need for a new CHIP was understood, medical researchers lauded the measurable clinical outcomes of the existing program. Early this year the American College of Lifestyle Medicine described research on CHIP participants published in the *American Journal of Cardiology* as “some of the most impressive recorded clinical changes ever in the literature.”

Some 270 CHIP facilitators, health professionals, and health leaders applauded the launch of the new CHIP resources that included an integrated textbook, participants’ journal, recipe book, and DVD series at the CHIP summit. “I think the new CHIP resource is phenomenal,” said Dr. Brian Will, a

medical doctor and CHIP leader in the Meadowglade Seventh-day Adventist Church in Battle Ground, Washington, 13 miles northeast of Vancouver. “The advances in scientific knowledge have added greater credibility to the core principles of CHIP. The team has created a product that is dynamic, engaging, and more effective than even the great results we have already seen. It will be simpler to run, but will be more professional and will come across well in the community.”

According to McDonald, the combined American and Australian team is planning for the new CHIP “to become the biggest lifestyle medicine and disease reversal program globally and to resource the global church with a quality health program at a local church level.

“We believe this will significantly add to the medical missionary work of the church,” she added. “We want to be able to support local churches to be centers of health, hope, and healing.”

New CHIP programs will begin from January 1, 2013. For more information, to become a CHIP facilitator, or find an active CHIP group near you, visit [www.chiphealth.com](http://www.chiphealth.com) or [www.sdachip.org](http://www.sdachip.org). ■

## ■ MONGOLIA

# Adventists in Mongolia Poised for Growth

*Land purchases make expansion possible.*

By **SARAH DEBLOIS**, *Mongolia Mission Field*

**THE SEVENTH-DAY** Adventist Church’s Mongolia Mission Field acquired five new properties in 2012, positioning the still-nascent regional church to expand its community services and church infrastructure.

Only established in Mongolia’s modern era since the early 1990s, the denomination in Mongolia has 24 congregations and nearly 2,000 members. Thanks to international support, recent

capital investments in land, church buildings, and plans for community centers, the church is poised for more significant outreach and, church officials hope, membership growth.

And not a moment too soon, they say. The cost of living is beginning to rise as the nation enjoys a mining boom of its untapped natural resources.

“Mongolia has a bright future, but we believe that if we don’t take this oppor-

tunity now to establish our school and health centers, later on could be too late,” said Elbert Kuhn, director of the mission field, based in the country’s capital, Ulan Bator.

Kuhn said the mission field is planning to build as many as 15 community centers in the country over the next four years. “The church must be relevant for its members, but for the community as well,” Kuhn said. “We want to make a difference where we are established.”

Evangelism outreach is slowly yielding results. A dedication ceremony of an Adventist church in the Övörkhangaï province in October was the first time an Adventist congregation was officially organized in the country in eight years. In January the Amazing Grace Adventist Church in Ulan Bator will be completed and dedicated.

In 2012 the mission field acquired a 600-square-meter plot of land in the Khentii province, east of the capital, and a 500-square-meter lot in the Arkhangai province, west of the capital. The mission field also purchased a lot and a building in Erdenet City, the second-largest city by population with the largest per capita purchasing power. The city is home to several major factories and is a hub for copper mining.

Adventist work among Mongol people began in 1926 by Russian missionaries operating from Manchuria, China, according to the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*. A few years later an American missionary worked to establish a mission headquarters and a clinic. He returned to the United States in the late 1930s, and World War II prevented further work in the region.

Adventist work wasn’t reestablished in Mongolia until the early 1990s after the end of socialist rule, which opened the country to religious expression. Volunteers from the supporting ministry Adventist Frontier Missions came to Mongolia in 1992, and the Adventist Church’s Mongolia Mission Field was formally organized in 1997 under the Northern Asia-Pacific Division.

Christianity is relatively new in Mongolia. About half of Mongolians are Buddhist, and more than a quarter are atheist. Shamanism beliefs are also widespread. Society today, though, is largely secular, Kuhn said. Under earlier Soviet influence, the government conducted campaigns to dissuade young people in the region from participating in religious activities. That influence remains, he said.

Kuhn, 43, worked for the church in

Church was built largely on the foundation of five years of work by volunteers from the Western Australian Conference. Beginning in 2006, they sent groups who built playgrounds, organized sports for youth, and delivered lectures on health and Bible study.

Weekly church attendance at the Munkhinn Geree Church is about 60, and the sanctuary can hold about 120.

Kuhn said an Australian developer is volunteering to help build the future com-



ANN PHOTO

**ROOM TO GROW:** Mongolia Mission Field staff with a recently acquired building. New church properties are positioning the denomination in Mongolia for more outreach opportunities.

Mongolia from 2003 to 2009 before returning to his native Brazil. In January, while working as an associate ministerial association secretary for the South American Division, he received a call to return and serve as director of the church in Mongolia.

Much of the recent capital development, Kuhn said, is the result of a partnership between the mission field and the denomination’s Australia Union Conference. The new Munkhinn Geree

community centers, with additional funding from donors. A future step in the development of the field would be to hand over leadership to native Mongolians, said the Brazilian, Kuhn. His predecessor was an Australian.

“We want to try our best to ground our church by preparing local leaders who can take care of the church themselves as soon as possible,” he said. ■

—with additional reporting by Ansel Oliver, *Adventist News Network*

■ UNITED KINGDOM

## 12,000 ADRA-UK Shoeboxes Head to Burkina Faso

*Nationwide effort brings relief to needy students.*

By **VICTOR HULBERT**, *British Union Conference News*

**MAC COULDN'T** be happier. “Most days I’m loading my truck to make rich people richer. Today I’m transporting happiness,” he said, beaming, while carefully swinging a 40-foot container up from the ADRA compound on Stanborough Park, Watford, onto the back of his truck.

A skilled operative, he was one of the drivers commissioned to transport two ADRA containers to the Port of Felixstowe. That will start their six-week journey by ship to the West African nation of Burkina Faso (formerly known as the Republic of Upper Volta), where 12,000 shoeboxes, WakaWaka solar-powered lights, and 250 relief boxes from Aquabox arrived, ready for distribution on Boxing Day, the day after Christmas. It was a joyful surprise for thousands of children.

ADRA-UK CEO Bert Smit was visibly excited as he watched the containers being loaded on Wednesday, November 21, 2012. “So many people, and especially schoolchildren, have made this happen,” he stated, noting that there were 4,000 more shoeboxes than in the 2011 appeal. “People are so generous, even when feeling the pinch themselves.”

That generosity has been seen across the country. In Middlesbrough 167 boxes were collected at the Adventist church, while a further 202 were donated by children at a local primary school. Judy Hamilton-Johansson states, “This is the sixth year (2012) the school has taken part in our annual shoebox appeal. The kids are so keen to help others, and get really excited about making the boxes, after watching the ADRA DVD and real-

izing how little the children of Africa have, many used their own pocket money to buy gifts.”

Hamilton-Johansson noted that getting an article published in her local newspaper really helped. She says, “I had people knocking at my door with boxes.”

Leamington Spa Mission found members of all ages bringing their creative skills to the fore on Sabbath afternoon, November 10, 2012, sorting, wrapping, and packing, as well as providing transportation donations. Nigel Clark notes that it was a fun community activity, with the energy levels “maintained with the provision of hot mince pies and mulled juice.”

In central London Claudia Passer rejoiced, “Praise God, we managed to make 104 complete boxes. However, they got so excited and want to go for 200 next year.”

They are representative of hundreds of churches and volunteers who have



PHOTOS COURTESY BUC

**CONTAINERS FOR CHILDREN:** Mac lifting the first of two containers headed out to cheer children in Burkina Faso

made this year’s appeal the most successful to date. A child from Manchester stated, “We saw your video, and we wanted to do shoeboxes to make more little kids happy.” Not put off by the frost the previous Sunday morning, another volunteer stated, “When I saw the number of shoeboxes being delivered, it was only then I realized how big the shoebox appeal has become.”

“The response from our members and friends has been phenomenal,” states appeal coordinator Godwin Benjamin. His thanks go not just to the donors, “but also the volunteers who packed boxes at the collection points and those who helped to unload the trucks and pack the two containers. All your efforts were greatly appreciated.”

Volunteers also played a part in the distribution in Burkina Faso. Five volunteers were selected from the applications received in response to an announcement on the ADRA-UK Web site. The volunteers traveled at their own expense, but were hosted while helping with the distribution. Mac’s smile was multiplied a hundredfold as these volunteers saw the joy a simple shoebox can bring. ■



**CONTAINER SEALED:** ADRA program officer Kennedy Habasimbi seals the container. Next time the door opens will be with ADRA representatives in Burkina Faso.



## WE NEED YOU!

We are looking for brief submissions in these categories:

**Sound Bites** (quotes, profound or spontaneous)

**Adventist Life** (short anecdotes, especially from the world of adults)

**Jots and Tittles** (church-related tips)

**Camp Meeting Memories** (short, humorous, and/or profound anecdotes)

Please send your submissions to Give & Take, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; fax: 301-680-6638; e-mail: marank@gc.adventist.org. Please include phone number, and city and state from which you are writing.

## THINK ABOUT IT

According to the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* (statistics gathered from [www.statisticbrain.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/](http://www.statisticbrain.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/)) the top three New Year's resolutions for 2012 were to:

- lose weight
- get organized
- spend less, save more.

Many of us probably had these resolutions in mind for 2012—and surely there are Adventists who have them on our list for 2013. But if we really want to succeed with these and any other resolutions, we need to first resolve to keep God first—and devote time each day to prayer and Bible study.

## SOUND BITE

“The glory of God is the image of His character. By reflecting His character we are worshipping Him.”

—PASTOR JOSE ST. PHARD, AT THE BOLINGBROOK SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN ILLINOIS



## ADVENTIST LIFE

One summer my 16-year-old daughter wanted to earn some extra money. She got a temporary job caring for rats in the home economics department at a local college. After several days working in the lab, she excitedly called home saying, “The mother rat had 10 baby mice!”

—NELLIE MORGAN, REDMOND, OREGON

My granddaughters, 7-year-old Payton and 5-year-old Josee, were visiting from Portland, Oregon, during their spring break. In our home we have a meal and Bible study every Friday evening to open the Sabbath. We call it “vespers.” Josee was helping me set the table and said, “Grandma, I am so happy God made people who like to be vespersed.”

—KAREN MEDEIROS, FAIR OAKS, CALIFORNIA



## GLOW Stories

Giving light to our world—GLOW—is an outreach initiative in multiple North American Division conferences based on the concept of church members carrying Adventist literature with them wherever they go and handing it out—free of charge—at every opportunity. Here are two short stories of lives touched by GLOW:



# Giving Light to Our World

**Story 1** A young woman sent an e-mail to the GLOW office describing how she placed GLOW tracts on the topic of relativism in her college philosophy classroom just before class began one day. The teacher came in, found the tracts, and instructed his students to each get one and read the first two pages. Apparently, the teacher had already found the same tract elsewhere on campus and read it. When he discovered the identical tracts in the classroom, he decided to use them in his teaching because they discussed that day’s prescheduled topic: relativism!



RICARDO CAMACHO

**Story 2** A young man was traveling home on a plane and began a conversation on spiritual matters with a woman sitting next to him. Soon they had covered many topics, including Bible prophecy. As the conversation drew to a close, the young man felt sorry that he didn’t have any literature to give to the woman. All of a sudden, however, a hand reached back from the row in front of him holding a stack of GLOW tracts. Another Adventist passenger had overheard the conversation and decided to be helpful. The grateful young man later discovered that the Adventist who “just happened” to be on the same flight, to sit one row up, and overhear their conversation had “just happened” to get the tracts only a few days before from his pastor. That man himself was new to the GLOW program.

STORIES COMPILED BY CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE GLOW DIRECTOR NELSON ERNST. TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT GLOW, GO TO SDAGLOW.ORG.

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# Willing to Be Led

## “HERE AM I...”

As I lie on the floor in a blue blanket, my whole body hurts. *This is no way to sleep.* I close my eyes, but I cannot stop crying. *Dear God, please keep them safe and warm.*

\*\*\*

Uninvited, I simply showed up.

Ten miles from my hotel somewhere in Rwanda there is rumored to be a private orphanage. There on a teaching assignment, I have an open day. *I have to visit this orphanage. I don't know why.* The director, Liliana, spots me coming up the walk. The orphanage was built by a missionary couple who had no children. For generations the family has maintained the orphanage. *I am sure there will always be need.*

After introductions Liliana is gracious to give me the tour. Only 50 children reside here. Bunk beds with plastic mattresses and pillows line the walls. *I see no blankets.* As she walks me through the rooms, Liliana explains that adoptions are frequent. Children are healthy, and they attend class every day.

In the echo of polished concrete floors and wooden roofs I suddenly hear children laughing. It's recess. Liliana invites me to join her and play with the children. In the playground I meet Miko and Buma, two 5-year-old twin brothers. They invite me to play kickball. *What a privilege.* After recess, Miko and Buma return to their classroom decorated with long wooden tables, small chairs, and a chalkboard. They give me a hug, and I feel in my heart both a sense of sorrow and joy.

As Liliana prepares a glass of boiled water and powdered juice mix for us, she tells me she was adopted by a Christian family at age 4. “My family introduced me to Jesus,” she says. “These children could grow up, never knowing about Jesus. I may be the director, but my *real* job is to teach them about Jesus. I pray that after they are adopted they will remember.” I ask how she knew this was the place for her. She smiles and says the story is too unbelievable. *I am familiar with those types of beautiful stories. They demonstrate divine guidance in our lives.*

I look at my tin cup with orange-flavored water and silently pray: *God, what can I do here?* My gaze falls on the outdoor area behind the kitchen. *Blankets!* Liliana explains how these must be washed daily to avoid bed bugs and keep them clean. She points to a line of blue blankets and says *those* are the best: thermal and with the ideal fabric for the environment. The orphanage needs only 20 more for all the children to have their own. *Blankets.*

\*\*\*

Two hours, the help of a translator, and one taxi ride back later, Liliana helps me unload 26 blue blankets; all I found in town. In the evening around the dinner table I witness a child's faith as Miko's small voice prays: “Thank You, Jesus, for granting us blankets, more than we need, to keep us warm outside like You keep us warm inside.”

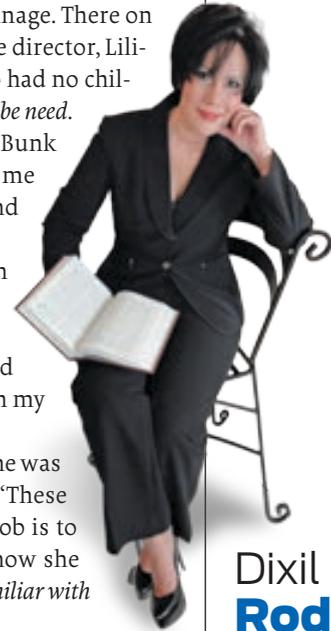
\*\*\*

It's time to head back to my hotel. The children are asleep. As we quietly walk past the rooms I notice Miko and Buma, wrapped in their blankets, sleeping on the floor. *Why?* Tomorrow morning two more children will arrive at the orphanage. Buma has convinced Miko that the new arrivals may be used to sleeping in beds, so they have given up their beds just in case. I look around and see other empty beds and realize what is abundant in the room: selflessness.

I hug Liliana goodbye. With tears in her eyes she says: “Isaiah 6:8. When I graduated, I got on my knees, put the diploma on the floor, and recited Isaiah 6:8. That is how I ended up here.”

\*\*\*

Back in the hotel I notice that the blankets in the room are just like the ones in the orphanage. *How difficult would it be to sleep on the floor? to give up my bed for another?* I take the blanket off the bed, wrap it around me, lie on the polished concrete floor, and pray: “Here am I...” ■



Dixil  
Rodríguez

# What Is a Mystic?

SEEKING  
COMPANIONSHIP  
WITH CHRIST



## BY ERIC ANDERSON

**T**he word ‘mystic’ is as dangerous as the word ‘poet,’” says Kathleen Norris, who is both a poet and a writer on Christian spirituality. “When we describe someone as a ‘poet’ or ‘mystic,’ we generally mean it as a warning—here is someone whose head is in the clouds and who can’t get places on time.”<sup>1</sup>

Evelyn Underhill, another poet and student of spirituality, complained that the words “mystic” and “mysticism” were so misused that they were in danger of losing their meaning. She noted how many things are carelessly labeled mystical: “any vague sense of spiritual things, any sort of symbolism, any hazily allegorical painting, any poetry which deals with the soul—worse than that, all sorts of superstitions and magical practices.”<sup>2</sup>

Some people today claim that what they call “mysticism” is the common denominator of all spirituality, the core of truth surrounded by an irrelevant rind of dogma, creeds, and organization. But this idea is as foolish as assuming that sea voyages are all the same. As C. S. Lewis has reminded us: “All who leave the land and put to sea will ‘find the same things’—the land sinking below the horizon, the gulls dropping behind, the salty breeze. Tourists, merchants, sailors, pirates, missionaries—it’s all one.” But, he adds, this “identical experience” tells us nothing about “the utility or lawfulness or final event of their voyages.”<sup>3</sup>

If this much-abused word is used correctly, however, I may be a “Christian mystic.” Let me quickly explain myself—before readers write me off as superstitious or silly. In doing so, I want to draw attention to an experience that is at the heart of Christian life, and to testify how Christian mysticism, rightly understood, has changed my life.

A mystic may be defined simply as someone who claims to have had a direct experience (or intuition) of God. The word is correctly used to describe a person whose “religion and life are centered, not merely on an accepted belief

or practice, but on that which he regards as firsthand experience.”<sup>4</sup> Mystics believe that they are somehow in communication with transcendent reality; thus, a Hebrew prophet having a vision and a Christian believer communicating with God in prayer are both mystics in this general sense.

A “Christian mystic,” however, experiences God in ways consistent with the Christian revelation in Scripture. Such “mystics” live within a biblical framework and have no desire to encounter powers or realities that are unholy or hostile to Jesus, the Logos, who is the light of the world. They build their lives around Jesus’ promise: “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them” (John 14:23).

To be as clear as possible, a Christian mystic practices “companionship with Christ”<sup>5</sup>—to use Ellen White’s luminous phrase.<sup>6</sup> This isn’t meant to be mysterious. In a faltering way, I have now and then encountered God; I now long for deeper and more transforming encounters, and I am encouraged in this longing by “all the saints” of Christian history.

### Union With Christ

The essence of Christianity, let us remember, is not a set of unique ethical prescriptions or secret information about current events. It is, instead, in the language of the New Testament, “union with Christ” (Col. 2:10, NLT),<sup>7</sup> “[putting] on Christ” (Gal. 3:27, KJV), having the “mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16), and “[participating] in the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4).<sup>8</sup> These startling expressions, as C. S. Lewis put it, mean “that a real Person, Christ, here and now, in that very room where you are saying your prayers, is doing things to you. It is not a question of a good man who died two thousand years ago.”<sup>9</sup>

Christ has promised to heal us now, to change us, to alter our nature. What shall we call that promise if not mystical; that is, a direct experience of God?

Such teaching certainly is not peripheral, nor aimed at a few spiritual athletes. By its very nature it is central. To use a kitchen metaphor, it's much more like leaven than frosting.

Some "liberal" Adventists wish to make the social gospel the heart of Christianity, encouraging their fellow believers to downplay Daniel and Revelation in favor of social reform or service. Some "conservative" Adventists want to make evangelism the sole essence of our faith, taking for granted such historic goals as right worship and Christian nurture.

For me, a biblical balance was articulated by two women: one unfamiliar; the other well known to Adventists. The English writer Evelyn Underhill first studied mysticism as a scholar and artist, but then was converted to Christian faith and drawn into Christian spirituality as a participant. As a believer she wrote *Concerning the Inner Life*, a small book based on a series of talks that she gave to a group of English ministers in 1926.

The work of a pastor, according to Underhill, is to be a "contagious Christian," a person from whom others "catch the love of God." The first duty of a pastor, or any other Christian, she said, is to receive God's loving gifts. "Only when our souls are filled to the brim can we presume to offer spiritual gifts to other [people]."

Service or evangelism could not be first in the Christian leader's life, she explained. We were created to adore God, to experience awe in His presence, and to serve Him—but in that order. If we try to start with service, we will wear ourselves out, and eventually have nothing to say. We may even succumb to the fatal temptation, as she put it, "to leave God for His service."<sup>10</sup>

She told her audience of clergy that the cure for spiritual exhaustion and restlessness was a certain kind of prayer—the prayer of adoration. "This prayer of adoration exceeds all other types in educative and purifying power. It alone is able to consolidate our sense of the supernatural, to conquer our persistent self-occupation, to expand our spirits, to feed and quicken our awareness of the wonder and delightfulness of God."<sup>11</sup> By the right kind of beholding, in other words, we are changed.

### What Does Ellen White Say?

In turning to a very familiar author, I discovered that Ellen White, who preceded Underhill by two decades, wrote much about the richness of a personal relationship with Jesus. In her 1903 book *Education* she notes God's call "to come apart and commune with Him," leaving behind the "maddening rush" and the terrible intensity of contemporary life. By refusing to wait and listen in "the circle of Christ's loving pres-

ence," many believers, "even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God." She adds, "Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need."<sup>12</sup>

In her earlier description (1892) of the believer's coming to Christ, White's language is as richly mystical as the words of the New Testament Epistles. According to her, "when Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten." Without "this deep love," religious claims are "mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery."<sup>13</sup>

"Union with Christ" is the basis of "our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness." She calls for "communion with Him, daily, hourly," asserting that through the work of the Holy Spirit, the apostles (and God's children today) could experience a union with Jesus "closer than when He was personally with them."<sup>14</sup>

Her famous chapter on prayer resounds with the themes of what may accurately be called Christian mysticism. She makes interaction with God the core of religious life, speaking of meditating upon "His works, His mercies, His blessings," opening "the heart to God," and experiencing "the companionship of His presence." Though she strongly rejects



monastic withdrawal from the world, she endorses the goal of unceasing prayer. She writes: “Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.”<sup>15</sup>

## Learning From Other Christians

Let us not miss echoes of other saints. Suspicious, sometimes, of instruction from other Christians, we should candidly acknowledge our multid denominational heritage, and admit that God’s true children include Methodists and Anglicans and even Catholics. Jesus’ solemn words bear remembering: “I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice” (John 10:16, NRSV).<sup>16</sup>

But we knew that all along, at least if we were paying attention to our church hymnals. These books exemplified a deep and theologically sound understanding of what Adventists share with other Christians. The lyricists are an amazingly broad representation of Christians. In addition to familiar Protestant names, ranging from Martin Luther to Charles Wesley and Fanny Crosby, we find hymns composed by, shall we say, pre-Reformation Christians such as Ambrose, Francis of Assisi, Thomas à Kempis, and Bernard of Clairvaux.

More important, of course, than the

variety of writers in the hymnal is what these writers say. The hymnal is filled with rich, beautiful, theologically accurate Christian mysticism. “Jesus, the very thought of Thee, with sweetness fills my breast,” wrote Bernard of Clairvaux. He added in the language of mystical communion, “But sweeter far Thy face to see, and in Thy presence rest.”<sup>17</sup> He was not referring to the distant future or the New Jerusalem.

“Breathe on me, breath of God,” says another hymn, “till I am wholly Thine, until this earthly part of me glows with Thy fire divine.”<sup>18</sup> Other, more familiar songs invite us to walk in the garden alone with our Master, to be drawn nearer in His embrace, to become wholly His. The hymnal is filled with songs of adoration and praise, recognition of God’s abiding presence, and deep appreciation of silence, meditation, and prayer.

The fact that the potent words of our hymns come from both ancient Christians and modern ones, from Protestants as well as Catholics, is highly significant. If non-Adventist hymn writers can accurately articulate the promise of union with Christ, perhaps we can safely imitate at least a few of the practices they have used to prepare their hearts for transformation.

Over the past three decades American Christianity has been revolutionized by a renewed emphasis on holy living and

spiritual disciplines. Across many denominations people are talking about the central practices of a personal relationship with Jesus—spiritual growth, prayer, fasting, solitude, service, and sanctification. Unless we are determined to plug our ears and close our eyes, Adventists could share much with honest men and women drawn by the Spirit to know the Savior.

## My Personal Journey

I did not start out with a desire to be a mystic. Far from it. About 25 years ago I helped design a capstone seminar for honor students at Pacific Union College, and somehow we chose “the Christian tradition” as our theme. Each year we read great examples of this tradition, ranging from Augustine’s *Confessions* and Dante’s *Divine Comedy* to *Pilgrim’s Progress*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, and the modern Japanese classic *Silence*.

Time and again these Christian classics spoke to us in mystical language. “Late have I loved you, beauty so old and so new: late have I loved you,” declared Augustine in a famous passage. After he described how the created world had its reality in God, he suddenly shifted to intensely personal and concrete words: “You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in

my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours.”<sup>19</sup> It was only natural to ask my students, “Have you ever experienced anything like this?”—and hard to evade the question for myself.

About the same time I was teaching the junior honors seminar, I bought a copy of the Book of Common Prayer and began using it as a personal devotional book. I started reading Psalms each morning, a practice followed persistently through periods of great consolation as well as dryness. I found that by immersing myself in these Hebrew hymns, they spoke more and more for me and through me.

For many years I had been a leader in a religious discussion group that met Sabbath mornings in a music classroom. Though the choir room Sabbath school was marked by witty, wide-ranging, even scintillating discussion, it became less and less satisfying to me. Our strength was analysis, not action—and I was tired of merely identifying abuses of faith, rejecting historical errors, and creating clever questions. More and more I wanted to experience what was described in the writings of men and women who loved God intensely.

What I needed, though I did not know it, was more mysticism in my Christianity. But that is still analytical *observer* language. It might be better to say that for a long time God had been calling me. He used beauty to hint at holiness, drew me with mystery into awe, and showed me that love and fear were not opposites. He encouraged me to listen, and I found that sometimes I was not talking to myself.

I joined a weekly prayer group comprising both Adventists and non-Adventists, and together we read devotional writings, some old and some new, from different faith backgrounds. We praised God and prayed for each other, asking for comfort and healing and a closer walk with Him.

This commitment led us deeper into Christian devotion. We then planned a weekend retreat in the redwoods at a chapel overlooking a bay—the first of

several. In each of these retreats I had a sense of God’s initiative, not mine. Often I arrived exhausted but left calm, refreshed, even elated two or more days later. We would spend time in prayer and silence, but God was not silent. I learned to surrender ambitions, confess hatreds, and offer praise. In the words of the Book of Common Prayer, God taught me to desire what He had promised.

By appreciating the mystical heart of Christianity and adoring God in the company of other Christians, I became more firmly rooted in Seventh-day Adventism and its distinctive teachings. From my silent retreats and other devotional experiences I emerged with a stronger understanding, for example, of the value of the Sabbath. Indeed, I have found that the best way to strengthen my commitment to Seventh-day Adventism is to remember that we Adventists are marching with the triumphant church invisible, spread out over the centuries, “terrible as an army with banners” (S. of Sol. 6:4, KJV). One important remedy for an ahistorical religion, for Christians without a vivid sense of Providence, for Adventists hesitant to converse with the larger Christian world, and for believers who have never experienced “the fear of the Lord,” is, in fact, Christian mysticism. In my pilgrimage I have learned that all of us require the powerful and repeated therapy of deeply reverent worship, the prayer of adoration, and listening for God’s voice.

If we seek companionship with Christ, He will lead us to richly satisfying springs of living water. And if I say, “I have learned this by firsthand experience,” I suppose that makes me a Christian mystic.

<sup>1</sup> Kathleen Norris, *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998), p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *The Mystics of the Church* (Cambridge: James Clarke and Co., 1925), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 1964), p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Underhill, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 261.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen White’s use of the term “mystic” (in its several forms, including “mysticism” and “mystic”) well illustrates the varieties of ways in which it can be used. “Mystic” as an adjective is often positive, and usually intended by her to mean “not easily understood,” as in Jacob’s “mystic ladder.” “Mystical” and “mysticism”

almost always connote a nonbiblical and theoretical speculation that is opposed to the Word of God. Her insistence that each believer needs a personal spiritual encounter and relationship with God makes the term as I have defined it appropriate to describe her. She insists that all Christian experience be evaluated within the careful controls of biblical revelation.

<sup>7</sup> Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

<sup>8</sup> See Rom. 6:8; Gal. 2:20; 3:27; 1 Cor. 2:16; 2 Peter 1:4.

<sup>9</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1952), p. 149.

<sup>10</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Concerning the Inner Life* (Oxford: Newworld Publications, 1999), pp. 18, 22, 48-50.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 46, 47, 50.

<sup>12</sup> E. G. White, *Education*, pp. 260, 261.

<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), pp. 44, 45.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 75.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>16</sup> Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

<sup>17</sup> *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1985), no. 241.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 265.

<sup>19</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 201.



**ERIC ANDERSON** IS PRESIDENT OF SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IN KEENE, TEXAS.

**“We must individually hear him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God”** (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905], p. 58).

Beyond the sacred page  
I seek Thee, Lord  
My spirit pants for Thee,  
O Living Word.

—“Break Thou the Bread of Life,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 271

# The Place of a Servant

**I HAD JUST SAID SOMETHING REALLY STUPID. YOU KNOW, THE KIND OF THING** that you don't really mean, and regret the moment it comes out of your mouth. Let's just say—on this night, anyway—I wouldn't be walking away with any husband-of-the-month awards.

After Natalie left the room, I sank into a seat, frustrated and upset—a little at her, but mostly at myself. Almost immediately simultaneous voices began fighting for territory in my mind.

*Come on, man, you can't let her get away with that! Now go in there and put her in her place.*

*Jimmy, take a deep breath and get your head on straight. The only way to do that is to spend time with Me.*

I decided to open my Bible, landing in John 13. I began reading about Jesus' interactions with His disciples during the Last Supper. The all-powerful King of the universe was about to be nailed to a cross. But Jesus wasn't focused on the future; He still had present truth to share with His friends.

With a bowl of water in hand and a towel draped over His arm, Jesus bent down and began to wash the feet of each of His 12 disciples. Silky dress socks and polished loafers didn't cover these feet. After a long day of walking, each foot was caked with layers of grime and dust. Washing feet was grunge work, a job reserved for the lowest of servants.

Which is exactly why Jesus did it.

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:14, 15).

In that moment the Word came alive and compelled me to follow Jesus' example.

I popped up and walked into the living room. Proverbially cold, Natalie was right where I expected her, next to our gas-powered fireplace. I knew she'd been having pain in her upper back, so I sat next to her and began rubbing her neck and shoulders.

I was washing her feet.

## All About Others

When it comes to the foot-washing portion of the Communion service, it's easy to go through the motions. You wait in line with your family to go into the fellowship hall or an empty Sabbath school room. A deacon scoops water into a perfectly sized basin and hands you a white towel. You find an empty chair and insist you'd like to wash your companion's feet first. After all, it's Communion Sabbath, the day you put others first.

When Jesus said to follow His example and wash one another's feet, His point was much broader than any Sabbath Communion service. I'm not saying going through Communion isn't a good thing; it is, but only if it becomes more than a ritual.

A stranger cuts you off in the parking lot, stealing the spot you've been waiting for. When you see him inside the grocery store, you're tempted to repay the favor. But something tells you to do the opposite. *Wash his feet.*

Your coworker has a habit of insulting your intelligence. Today she seems stressed out and is falling behind. A still small voice whispers: *Wash her feet.*

Your kids are driving you nuts; your husband isn't helping around the house. You're ready to let your anger loose and take a mental health day at the spa. Then you remember the words of Jesus. *Wash their feet.*

When it came to serving, Jesus didn't play favorites. He washed John's feet, the one whom He loved. He washed Peter's feet, the one who would deny Him. He washed Judas' feet, the one who would betray Him.

Today we will face a choice, perhaps more than one. The easy thing to do is to let our pride take over. The harder choice is to take the position of a servant and wash the dirt and grime off our neighbors' feet.

Whose example will we follow? ■



Jimmy  
Phillips

**JIMMY PHILLIPS** (JIMMYPHILLIPS15@GMAIL.COM) WRITES FROM BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA, WHERE HE IS ELECTRONIC MEDIA COORDINATOR FOR SAN JOAQUIN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL. VISIT HIS WEB SITE: INTRODUCINGTHEWHY.COM.

# Profile of a Master Wood-carver

## THE LIFE AND WORK OF CHARLES WEBER



PHOTOS ARE COURTESY OF THE WEBER FAMILY.

**WOOD-CARVER EXTRAORDINAIRE:**  
Charles Henry Weber

### BY GERRY D. KARST

It's been said that gifted artists come into this world already possessing great talent. Such an artist was born October 30, 1922, at Sibley Memorial Hospital, Washington, D.C., in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol building. His name was Charles Henry Weber.

From an early age young Charles had a deep and sincere interest in religion, spirituality, and the Bible. As a child he attended the Lutheran Church with his father. He was an avid reader, and while still a young teen he came in contact with Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. He became convinced of the truths that Adventists taught, and was particularly impressed by prophecy. Charles soon developed what became a lifelong habit

of studying the Sabbath school lesson every night. It brought him much joy and comfort, and contributed to his spiritual growth.

Charles's passion and artistic talent lay in wood carving and wood sculpting. While many gifted artists use stone, plaster, bronze, and other mediums in their creative work, fewer work with wood.

From 1945 to 1952 Charles was employed by the Review and Herald Publishing Association as a photoengraver in the company's art and engraving departments. He then worked as a photolithographer, photoengraver, and a dot etcher for Colorgraphics in Maryland and the Lanman Company in Virginia. Dot etchers review pictures prior to their publication. Using a special magnifying glass, they examine pictures for faults and blemishes as well as for quality of color and brightness. By painstakingly removing blemishes and distracting objects and correcting the color, Charles would make changes that helped produce outstanding photos. He worked on photographs that were published in such prominent magazines as *National Geographic*, *Time*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Good Housekeeping*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*, as well as in the *Time-Life* book series. The attention to detail involved in his work helped to prepare Charles for the meticulous care that wood carving demands.

After retirement in 1988 Charles had more time to devote to his passion of working with wood. During these years, until his death in July 2012, he faithfully strove to perfect his craft. The following

interview with Charles's wife of 47 years, Dolly Weber, provides a deeper insight into the artistic aspects of Charles's life.

**Gerry Karst: When did you first discover that Charles had this wonderful artistic talent?**

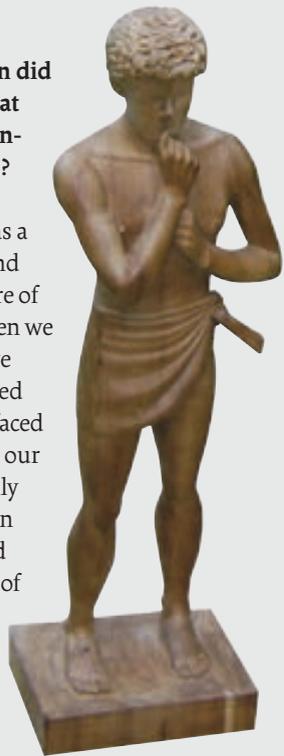
**Dolly Weber:**

Because of his work as a photolithographer and dot etcher, I was aware of his artistic ability when we began dating. After we married and purchased our first home, he refaced the metal cabinets; in our second home he totally remodeled the kitchen using birch wood and doubled the number of cabinets.

**In addition to his carpentry work, when did Charles take up wood carving in a serious way?**

The first piece of furniture he carved was a tea cart. He carved everything by hand. The spokes, the handles—everything. He also made a hope chest for daughters Shelley and Heidi.

**How did he learn the art of wood**



**ABRAHAM AND ISAAC:** This carving depicts the thankful father and son following the sacrifice of the ram.

### carving?

Mostly on his own.

### Did he take any classes?

No, but he did take a short course in sculpturing at Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

### Did he read books and magazines on wood carving?

Oh, yes! He subscribed to the magazine *Fine Woodworking* for many years, and would also buy art books.

### What was the first piece he carved?

At the age of 15 he carved the head of Sigmund Freud in wood. About the same time he also sculpted a child's hands in plaster. He loved the look and idea of hands in prayer; it was one of his favorite subjects. He later carved a Philadelphia lowboy with a matching wall mirror frame.

### What do you consider to be his crowning work?

A Victorian lattice table. He saw a picture of the Victorian lattice table that's in a museum in Chicago—a magnificent piece of craftsmanship—and told me half-jokingly that he was going to carve one himself someday. Well, he did; and it is a masterpiece! He worked on the table off and on for seven years until he felt it was "just right." It's my favorite piece.

Charles loved to work with biblical themes. What



### Bible characters did he carve?

He did Samson toppling the temple pillars with a prison guard holding him by a chain. He also carved Abraham and Isaac after the sacrifice of the ram.

### What was he working on when the stroke ended his career?

Madame Recamier, a French beauty. He was sitting in his rocking chair in the woodshop when he asked me to bring him his favorite art book. As we were thumbing through it, I spotted a photo of Madame Recamier, whom I'd never heard of before, but she had such a sweet, peaceful look on her face that I asked Charles if he would carve her for me. He said yes without hesitation.

### Waiting for the Resurrection

On March 12, 2011, a stroke left Charles's left side paralyzed, and he was unable to complete his carving of Madame Recamier. He had also started a clay model of Job, which too remains incomplete. On July 9, 2012, Charles closed his eyes and his life work, and now sleeps in Jesus. He had an active, inquiring mind and loved to study the Bible and probe the meanings of theology.

David in the book of Psalms praises God in many different ways. In Psalm 150:3-6 he declares, "Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord" (NKJV).\*

I would add in the case of Charles Weber, "Praise Him with works of art. Praise Him with fine wood carvings. Let all that is in Charles praise the Lord."

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**GERRY KARST**, NOW RETIRED, SERVED AS A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.



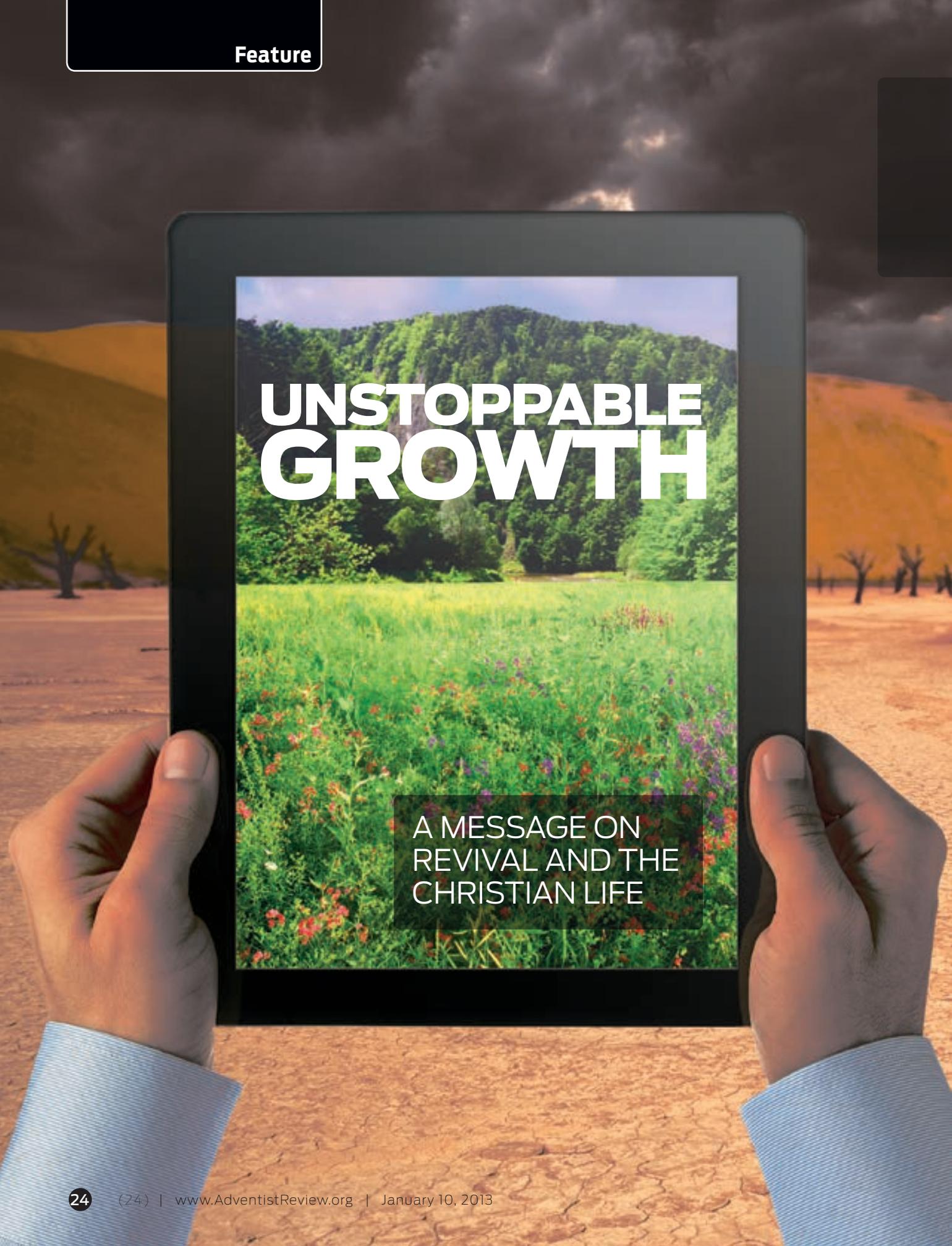
**SAMSON:** The biblical Samson topples the pillars while a guard holds him by a chain.



**DAVID:** Weber sculpted the head of David in clay.



**VICTORIAN LATTICE TABLE:** Charles Weber's crowning work



# UNSTOPPABLE GROWTH

A MESSAGE ON  
REVIVAL AND THE  
CHRISTIAN LIFE

## BY RONNY NALIN

In the late years of my childhood and early years of adolescence I used to be haunted by a recurrent dream. Eyes closed but my brain alert, I would order my body to move or turn. Nothing would happen. Neurons in my head would frantically seek a solution to this sense of physical constriction, but to no avail. Attempting escape, I would try in desperate sequence to open my eyelids, roll around, raise an arm, or improvise a leg kick.

Ultimately, I fooled my brain by telling my mind to relax and not focus on the movement problem, to think of something totally unrelated. As my body relaxed, I would then suddenly try to move. When the strategy worked, the unanticipated movement found my body unprepared to resist, and I could get myself to move. Christians today run the risk of being in a similar condition, a spiritual deadlock between sleep and wakefulness.

### The Perils of Sleep

Those who are in the vanguard of missionary service and leadership may well dispute the claim; however, our activity is no guarantee that all is well with us and the church. For do we not still sense some disconnect between our calling and our current standing as individuals and as a community of believers? The desire and resolve for growth and transformation are there, but we are stuck. We want to move, but we cannot.

Jesus frequently used this metaphor of sleep and watchfulness to describe the conflict in the Christian's life. What is it about sleep that makes it a good analogy for our spiritual condition? Is it that when we sleep we are more vulnerable? Maybe the fact that when we sleep we are less productive? The essential aspect captured by the image of sleep is the lack of awareness, our loss of contact with reality. When we sleep, we do not realize the significance of what happens around us. There is no cognition of the passage of time, no perception of the succession of events, no meaningful interaction with the world. As we live in our dreams, our existence flows motionless, vulnerable, and

unproductive.

For this very reason, Jesus warns us not to be asleep: "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:34-36, NKJV).\*

Jesus is worried that we may become distracted, unaware, asleep. Yet the text does not say "take heed lest you sleep," but rather "lest your hearts be weighed down." In using this phrase Jesus reveals that what is at stake is the very essence of our mission. We all have felt the call to do something special for the Lord. We all have been given a vision, and guided to fulfill that specific plan tailored exactly for us. And we have intensely prayed that God's

## INTOXICATION IS MUCH MORE THAN A BOTTLE OF WINE.

will be manifested in our lives. So often we have felt that our happiness could be found only in being exactly where God wanted us to be, doing what He has in mind for us. That secret vision, that very personal calling is our heart. It is our treasure, what we value most, the essence of the meaning of our lives. Because where our treasure is, there is our heart also. Today Jesus warns us that our hearts, our identities, our calling, is at risk.

Satan wants to suppress this calling, to weigh us down. He fears that God's servants may reach the fullness of their vision. His action is a strategy of suffo-

cation, a compression of the spirit, a constriction of movement. Thus we find ourselves in a struggle between sleep and watch, at the center of two forces moving in opposite directions: one toward awakening, the other toward drowsiness; one urging us to rise, the other trying to weigh us down.

Satan carries out his side of operations with a smart and flexible method. However, his products are basically just variations of three major approaches. Jesus reveals them for our benefit and gives us an opportunity to examine ourselves, to think of the dangers that threaten our Christian life.

### Carousing

The first of these is carousing: "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing" (verse 34). The Greek word used by Jesus (*kraipale*) appears only once in the Bible. It is a composite of two Greek words for "head" and "to toss about." It therefore means the swaying of the head, the headache that comes with a hangover, gluttony, or dissolution. *Kraipale* represents a lifestyle based on excess and exaggeration, and lacking self-restraint. It may start as the inability to follow the rules that lead to our well-being, but it develops into a conscious and intentional search for excitement and transgression. This desire may rise from a legitimate

search for knowledge, and an impulse of vitality, but it can also hide a loss of purpose

and, ultimately, a contempt for the garden God has left us to care.

*Kraipale* need not be connected to major, spectacular events. It also finds its way in the small choices of everyday life. *Kraipale* can be your need for approval, your quest for success, the thrill at being applauded. Your leadership, your very work for the Lord, can be a form of *kraipale* if based on being at the center of attention in powerful positions, instead of being based on humble service. *Kraipale* is the need to be constantly entertained, the craving for new mail, my preoccupation with social media profiles,

the sports arena, glamour and the fashion industry, movie productions. It is the search for new excitement and strong emotions that save me from boredom and being alone. But it comes at a cost. A strong headache after the party is over, and a need to begin all over again. In other words, *kraipale* is a form of addiction and dependency.

## Drunkness

Drunkness is the second product in Satan's cart. Beware of drunkness, Jesus warns. The Greek word He uses is *methe*. This word was used for strong alcoholic beverages. In using it, Jesus is placing emphasis on its intoxicating and inebriating effect.

*Methe*, therefore, represents any experience that lowers the level of our ability to think, feel, and experience. Our vision is no longer crisp, but blurred. Our perceptions are no longer sharp, but confused. Our system of beliefs is no longer defined, but relativized. Why would Satan like to see our minds in this state? Why would he long to see our church in that state?

God's gifts of reason, emotion, and sense are so remarkable, elegant, and profound that Satan knows it deeply grieves God's heart when His children disregard these treasures and voluntarily choose to anesthetize these abilities. There is something majestic and divine in a mind working at its fullest potential, because our intellect is the place of a special encounter, where we find communion with God. Our minds are the space where we can think His thoughts and He can dwell in us through the Holy Spirit.

But we trade this experience for a soup of lentils. Because lentils are warm, tasty, easy. Eating soup requires no effort. It's time to relax.

Think of all the things we do to switch off our brains. Television is the first that comes to mind. How many Adventists thought this passage didn't apply to us, because we don't drink? But intoxication is much more than a bottle of wine.

Why are we so allured by this desire and need to switch off? Maybe because we live unbalanced lives; lives full of stress, endless schedules, board meet-

ings, deadlines, and innumerable reminders. An artificial life with no natural rhythm, no breaks, no recreation, no light of sun and sound of wind, no steps in the forest nor walk along the shore. So please, give me my remote, my couch, my Internet connection, and my playlist. Let me switch the world off.

## Cares of This Life

"Cares of this life" is the third and last danger Jesus mentions. The Greek word is *merimna*, which can be translated as worries, cares, anxieties. The emphasis is not on the cares themselves, but on the fear, uncertainty and preoccupation they generate in us. Jesus is not denying that this world is full of difficulties. He is, instead, reminding us that our vision, our hearts, can be burdened and impeded if we adopt a self-reliant lifestyle and have difficulties in recognizing God's leadership when facing cares.

First Peter 5:7 calls us to cast all our *merimna* upon Him. Our real problem lies not in the existence of preoccupations but in our response to them. We have consciously or unconsciously decided to take them upon ourselves. We start to behave as if we were alone and in charge of our destiny, while on the outside we profess to be servants of God. By doing that, we miss the most beautiful and exciting experience: feeling the presence of the Omnipotent coming down on us. We trade it for our analytical calculations, scared projections, worried surveys.

## Imperiled People

The spiritual dangers we face as individuals translate into the very same challenges we face as a people. As a collective institution, our church faces the risk of a community attracted by the sensational, disturbed by rules, impulsive and in search for approval, but without a solid and deep vision of her calling; a church that follows the ups and downs of the market, in the field of ideas and initiatives, ever seeking its energy in some new bombastic slogan; an intoxicated church conscious of mission and identity, but moving mechanically with no clear sense of her horizon; a church worried by the challenges of the modern

world, economic uncertainty, secularization, and thought trends, struggling to find solutions, because it has lost its connection with the divine; a church that does not remember how to seek heaven's guidance, and no longer experiences the feeling of being a simple instrument in God's omnipotent hand.

Thus we find ourselves, half-sleeping, fleeing, in fear, to the Lord, to ask for revival and reformation. But what kind of revival and reformation do we seek? An adrenaline-rush revival? An intoxicating revival? A reformation motivated by fear and anxiety? The road that leads from sleep to watch is the road of awareness—awareness of who we are, what our heart is, what our mission is. Revival and reformation are but the very seed of which Jesus speaks in Matthew 13:19-23.

He speaks there of three categories of spiritual sleep. The hard soil by the wayside is like the intoxicated, who do not feel anything. The rocky soil is the dopaminic experience, all excitement and no deep roots. The third soil represents us who, choked by the *merimna* of the world, live in between watch and sleep.

But while Satan wants to weigh our hearts down, suffocate our calling, the seed of God's Word breaks the boundaries and keeps expanding. Revival and growth are not a sudden twist like my attempts to get out of sleep, but a force in action that cannot be contained. So strong that it can gradually crack any concrete slab trying to keep it down. So steady that it will inexorably grow until it will bear fruit. Bible-inspired revival and reformation breed unstoppable growth, thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold, according to God's own vision for His cause and His people. ■

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**RONNY NALIN** IS A RESEARCH SCIENTIST AT THE GEOSCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, AND ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY AT LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY. HE IS MARRIED

TO ELISA AND IS THE PROUD DAD OF 1-YEAR-OLD GIOIA.



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CHANGING LIVES  
BY SELLING BOOKS  
DOOR TO DOOR

# God's Peddler

BY JAN MALAN AS TOLD TO WILHELMINA DUNBAR

**A** plumber by trade, I lived with my wife and family in the town of Otjiwarongo in South-West Africa, now known as Namibia. A few Seventh-day Adventists lived in Otjiwarongo at the time, but I didn't know them; in fact, I'd never heard of a church with this strange name.

I was a staunch member of the state church. Most Sundays found me and my family in church. We were a well-respected Christian family. I was a conscientious employee of the South-West African administration, and my work covered a wide territory. I was always

glad to get back home to my family.

One day after returning home I had hardly settled down to relax when my wife remarked, "Jan, did you know that Sunday is not the seventh day of the week?"

"All Christians worship on Sunday, the seventh day."

"But Jan, look here. A man selling books called today and showed me on this calendar that Sunday is the first day of the week. Saturday is the seventh day."

For the first time in my life I took a good look at the calendar. "Why have I never noticed this before?" I said. "I will

ask our *dominee* [pastor] to explain this to me."

## Stirring the Pot

A Seventh-day Adventist pastor happened to be holding a series of evangelistic meetings in the home of one of the Adventists. Once a week Jan Bekker, from Windhoek, visited the Otjiwarongo district, and our neighbors had been attending the meetings. Twice their 12-year-old daughter had invited me to go along with them, but each time I thought up some excuse not to go. But I received a third invitation from the literature evangelist who had come to

deliver a set of *The Bible Story* ordered by our neighbors.

"I don't have transportation," I told the man. "I only have a bicycle, and my family won't be able to come."

"That's not a problem!" said the man. "I'll come and fetch you by car."

That evening's lecture covered the second coming of Jesus. Impressed by the Holy Spirit, we attended each lecture, while still going to our own church each Sunday.

When the seventh-day Sabbath was explained by Pastor Bekker, I knew it was time to confront my minister on the issue.

When I arrived at his house I found him and two colleagues in a meeting. "I'm sorry to disturb you," I apologized, "but I have a question. Why do we worship on a Sunday, when the fourth commandment tells us to worship on the seventh day, Saturday?"

One of the visiting ministers, Dominee du Toit, jumped up and shouted: "With which sect are you involved?" Looking at his companions, he added, "He's a snake in the grass!"

Many rude and insulting remarks were made about Seventh-day Adventists; anger dominated the discussion, and I finally left, feeling more confused than ever. Something was wrong, and I made up my mind to find out the truth. Six months after attending my first lecture I was baptized by Pastor Bekker.

## People of the Word

Now that I was a Sabbathkeeper, I found I could no longer work for the South-West African administration. I opened my own plumbing business, which I operated successfully for four years. Then I sold my business, and we moved to the Strand, a seaside town about 36 miles east of Cape Town. I was offered a job with the proviso that I would have to use my own tools. Before leaving Otjiwarongo, I carefully packed all my equipment for transport to South Africa. But when the box arrived three weeks later, it was completely empty; everything had been stolen. I couldn't work if I didn't have my own tools. I was stranded with no income,

and no way to provide for my family.

I called Pastor Bekker to tell him of my predicament. I told him I was thinking of becoming a literature evangelist. "Jan, come!" he said delightedly. "This is the best news ever!"

Soon I found myself in Noordoewer, a town on the border between South Africa and South-West Africa. It didn't take long for the local state church minister to find out that I was selling books to his parishioners. Two days after my arrival I learned that he had already warned his members not to buy any books from me. Undeterred, I

I reached down and took out of my bag the small Bible I carried. I began reading texts from Genesis through Revelation. I held out my Bible to the minister and said, "Now, sir, the texts I just read are in *all* Bibles. This is not a Seventh-day Adventist Bible. It is not my Sabbath or my baptism that is being proclaimed; it is the Lord's Word that Seventh-day Adventists obey. Here, take it and show me why you worship on Sunday instead of Saturday.

"Dominee," I said, "if you can show me from the Bible that the Sabbath has been changed from Saturday to Sunday,

**"ARE YOU MR. MALAN?  
OUR DOMINEE HAS WARNED  
US NOT TO HAVE ANYTHING  
TO DO WITH YOU."**

approached a house and opened the gate. As I approached, a woman in the house came out onto the porch and told me I had to leave.

I told her I only wanted to show her my treasures. I was not allowed into the house, but she reluctantly allowed me to show her the books I was selling.

As I left that house a young girl across the street invited me in and went to call her father. The family was friendly, but just as I began my canvass the front door opened and the Sunday church minister walked in, accompanied by a young man from his church. His arrival told me that my presence had been reported by the woman across the street. Before I could start my canvass, the minister began making angry, disparaging remarks about Seventh-day Adventists.

I asked him what he had against Adventists. "It's your fanaticism about your Sabbath and your baptism," he replied. "I don't want you corrupting my church members."

I will stop this work, and I promise that I will be sitting in your church this very Sunday."

I reached into my bag, took out a copy of *The Bible Speaks*, and handed it to the minister. "I don't want your book!" he told me angrily.

"I'm not selling it to you," I said. "Just take it home and study it. It's my gift to you. Contact me if you find any error in it." He eventually took the book and left the house, followed by his young companion.

I had remained courteous throughout the confrontation. However, I felt bad that his visit had ended that way, and I apologized to the owner of the house.

The man said, "Before you arrived today, my dominee told me that he would confront you and run you out of town. I told him, 'Dominee, don't do it. These people know their Bibles, and you're going to be embarrassed.'"

"Years ago my brother and I attended a series of meetings in South Africa. We

decided to become Seventh-day Adventists. However, after the Adventist pastor and his helpers left, we were alone. There were no other Seventh-day Adventists, and no church, and no one visited us. My brother became a Seventh-day Adventist, but I decided to remain with my Sundaykeeping church. Now I'm the head elder."

One day I met a woman who, when she opened her door, said: "Are you Mr. Malan? I knew you'd be coming around. Our dominee has warned us not to have anything to do with you. We mustn't buy any of your books. So if he says we



mustn't, I suppose we mustn't."

"Well, you don't have to buy my books," I told her, "but I'd like you to have a look at them. In fact, your dominee has one of my books."

"He has?" she replied. "Well, if he has, then I must have one too! Let's have a look." So I was invited inside. I began to display my books, and she asked, "Which one does my dominee have?"

I pointed to *The Bible Speaks*. She responded, "Then I must have the same book."

Two years later I happened to visit a road camp in the same district. At one of the homes the woman told me that a young man had asked to be informed when I was there. While I was busy with my canvass a young man arrived and asked, "Sir, are you the man who sold books in Noordoewer? I'm sorry that you didn't come to our house as well."

He explained that he lived where the woman had stood on the porch and told me to go away. "She was my mother," he said. He then asked to see the books I

was selling, and he immediately bought three books.

"My father also asked that you please call at our house when you are in that area again. My parents are now interested in your books."

*What had brought about the change of heart?* I wondered. It could only be the working of the Holy Spirit.

## The Harvest at Last

One of my territories was the town of Ai-Ais (pronounced "ice ice"), a beautiful and popular tourist attraction in Namibia. One summer I was given permission from the owner of a well-patronized store in town to give Bible studies outside the store. Each evening when it was dark I projected slides onto the white wall of the store to illustrate and explain the studies. Many of the town's residents, as well as tourists, attended these studies.

One evening I noticed a man in the audience dressed in a heavy black coat with his hat pulled over his eyes. At the end of the lecture while I packed up my equipment the man came over.

"Sir," he said, "is it possible to talk with you about this evening's program, about the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday?"

"Can we have other people present?"

"Yes, let's meet Wednesday at 3:00 in the community hall," said the stranger. "I'm Dominee Dippenaar, the local minister. I'll make the necessary arrangements." Then I understood why he had been wearing an uncomfortably warm coat and hat.

The following day I contacted Pastor Bekker in Windhoek and told him about the meeting. Two days later Bekker arrived by train, and we went to the dominee's home, which was next door to the community hall. When we arrived, the minister told us that he had to cancel their public appointment because his church board had refused his request to hold the meeting.

He asked if we could meet privately, and we agreed. Inside the hall Bekker began to present the study "Why I Am a Seventh-day Adventist." He explained the Sabbath, baptism, and what hap-

pens at death. After three hours we knelt and prayed. Tears streamed down Dominee Dippenaar's face, forming little puddles on the floor. He thanked the Lord for allowing him to experience this moment in his life, being touched by the message of truth.

The number of Seventh-day Adventists in Windhoek kept growing, but they had no church in which to worship. An Adventist woman had died, leaving in her will a parcel of land in central Windhoek for the building of a church. But when the Adventists applied for a building permit, their request was denied.

One of the municipal members who opposed the application was Dominee du Toit, the same minister who in Otjiwarongo had referred to Seventh-day Adventists as a sect and called me a "snake in the grass." He went on to become moderator of the state church in Namibia and opposed Seventh-day Adventists for the rest of his life.

However, today there are five Adventist churches in Windhoek. And Seventh-day Adventists own the building where Dominee du Toit had once been the minister. It is one of the largest Adventist churches in the area. ■



**JAN MALAN** IS RETIRED AND LIVES IN GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA. **WILHELMINA DUNBAR** (LEFT) IS RETIRED AFTER TEACHING MUSIC AT HELDERBERG COLLEGE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

## ? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Are there people in your community who feel threatened by your presence? In what ways do they show it?
2. Is there a danger of being too highly regarded? How might that be perilous?
3. In general, when are people most open to searching for truth? How do you capitalize on that?
4. What has been your congregation's most effective way of reaching your community with the gospel? What about as an individual?



*Action-oriented information about the Adventist Church and the world in which it works*

**S**eventh-day Adventists are using the Internet just like everyone else in our world today. The majority of active members in North America (54 percent) use electronic mail (e-mail) on a daily basis. Another 17 percent use it occasionally, which means that seven out of 10 Adventists in the United States, Canada, and Bermuda can now be reached by e-mail if church organizations have the e-mail addresses of church members.

E-mail has great advantages over sending paper through the post office. It's not necessary to purchase stamps or destroy trees to make paper, and the response can be much quicker. For younger generations, electronic communication has become the standard way to relate and do business. In fact, 28 percent of North American Adventists use

text messaging on their mobile phone daily. Another 16 percent use it less often. That's nearly half the church membership and the reason more and more pastors and local church ministries leaders use text messaging to get out the word to prayer circles, announce the key text for this week's sermon or Bible study, etc.

"I regularly send electronic reminders on the morning of a committee meeting or Bible study group," one young pastor told me recently.

The Internet has also opened up new possibilities for publishing. One in eight Adventists in North America post material they have written on a blog or social networking Web site each day.

Another 18 percent do so less often. That means nearly a third of the membership is publishing something via electronic media on a regular basis.

Do these new media bring people closer to their local church? That may be a weak area. Only 3 percent of Adventists report that they check their church

Web site on a daily basis, although another 27 percent do so less often. This may be because relatively few churches publish new material each day. Experts claim that Web sites that are not updated daily tend to be ignored.

### What Do These Data Mean?

Computers have become an important part of Adventist life. Significant numbers of Adventists are sharing their faith and engaging in church life via electronic connections. Increasingly, church leadership demands skills in using the Web, text messaging, and e-mail. As the volume of material published electronically grows, an understanding of how to use these media creatively becomes more and more vital to the mission and ministry of the Adventist Church and to church life in its most local settings.

Are local churches and conferences providing adequate training for the people who lead Sabbath school, conduct community services, and implement outreach programs? Are we utilizing the skilled people in the Adventist movement who know how to use these new media to communicate and attract an audience most effectively? Are denominational leaders developing adequate plans for the impact of new media on our traditional publishing ministries?

The data I've shared here are from a survey conducted in 2009-2010 with a random sample of 1,152 respondents who attend church. It was conducted for the North American Division by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University under the direction of Roger Dudley. ■



**MONTE SAHLIN** IS DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND SPECIAL PROJECTS FOR THE OHIO CONFERENCE AND A SENIOR CONSULTANT AT THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE MINISTRY.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS CAN BE SENT TO HIM AT [MSAHLIN@CREATIVEMINISTRY.ORG](mailto:MSAHLIN@CREATIVEMINISTRY.ORG).



# In Tune With Christ

## THE STORY IS TOLD OF A RADIO STATION THAT RECEIVED A CURIOUS LETTER.

It was from a shepherd who lived alone in the hills of Idaho. The radio station had never before received such a request. The letter read, “Will you please strike A on the piano in your studio? The only comfort I have here is my fiddle, and it is so out of tune. Will you strike A so I can be in tune again?”

The request was granted, and the radio announcers paused in the midst of a broadcast to strike A to give the shepherd his pitch.

This is a picture of all of us when our lives get out of tune with our Savior. The strings of moral conviction, once so finely tuned to God’s Word, become loose and careless through compromise or neglect. Secret sins rarely distort the tone of outward respectability, but sooner or later an off-key word or deed betrays that something is wrong inside. “God, will You strike ‘A’ so I can be ‘in tune’ again?”

Some might think believers don’t have problems such as this. The reality, however, is that separation from God happens to all of us at one time or another. The Bible tells us why: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23)!

I have a dear friend who is truly a man of God. One time, by an unchristian act, someone deeply offended this dear man. It was so damaging that my friend has since had difficulty believing in the loving fellowship of believers. It’s a very sad situation. Such behavior is hurtful enough from those who make no profession of faith, but when it comes from “one of our own in Christ,” acute damage often occurs.

When the heart is in tune with Christ, the discords of life become harmonious. This often can happen following heartfelt confession and repentance. A person can then look into the eyes of any human being and see a brother or sister in Christ. Love is a spiritual solution that always seeks peace and understanding. Love heals. The solid bedrock of love never fails.

As we begin a new year, we must daily ensure that we are in harmony with God. That is the reason I personally make time with my Savior every morning. It is my first priority. I have to see His face and know His heart before doing anything else. I’m coming to know Him better each day. The Holy Spirit is continually tuning my conscience and adjusting the strings of my heart.

The Spirit, through the Word of God, gives us the sure note to which we can tune our lives. When we are “off-key,” confession retunes; when there is something to do to make a situation right, obedience keeps us in tune; and when we feel discouraged and alone, praise lifts our spirits and keeps us in tune.

When our hearts beat as Jesus’ heart beats, we will love everyone in the same way that He loves us. Our hands will reach out with compassion to the broken people around us. We will take the initiative to heal the breaches among us, and God will restore relationships.

We can bring glory to God in no better way. ■



**DICK RENTFRO**, WHO FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS OCTOBER 21, 2011, WAS A FORMER EVANGELIST AND PASTOR LIVING IN THORP, WASHINGTON.



# Wake Up to Wonder

Discover the wonders of the world around you



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**God's Wonders**  
 Discover the wonders of the world around you. This book is a beautiful collection of stories and illustrations that will inspire you to see the world through God's eyes. It's a perfect gift for children and adults alike.

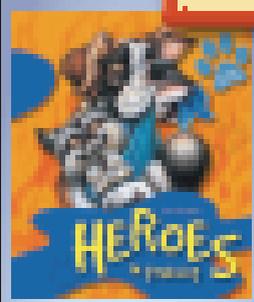


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*My heart is full of love and joy*