

Adventist Review

December 11, 2014

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David Latta, a pressman at the Review and Herald, prepares the press for a print run. (Credit: Kim Peckham)

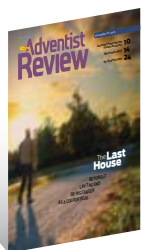
NEXT WEEK

Teenagers, Service, and Transformation

Short-term mission trips are often only the beginning.

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The Last House

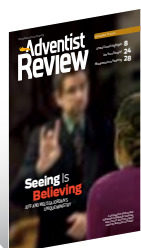
» Wow, what an article! I am referring to Benjamin J. Baker's cover story "The Last House" (Nov. 27, 2014).

It was great to read about God's power working in the life of a colporteur. This story brought tears to my eyes.

Thank you for this article.

SANDRA A. REEVES

College Place, Washington



Seeing Is Believing

» Lisa Poirier's article about Jeff and Melissa Jordan's ministry ("Seeing Is Believing," Nov. 13, 2014) was very encouraging to me. We had a deaf son (he died at age 52 in 2013), and when he was school-age I tried to establish a school for the deaf children of Adventists. Without support and help it was not possible.

I praise the North American Division for supporting

the establishment of an official deaf work in the Southern Deaf Fellowship. May God bless this work and help it spread.

NAME WITHHELD

Five Steps for Resolving Disunity on Women's Ordination

» I'm responding to Andrew McChesney's article entitled "Five Steps for Resolving Disunity on Women's Ordination" (Nov. 13, 2014). The Bible does not say Acts 15 is a story about how a conflict in the church was averted by everyone agreeing to do whatever the Jerusalem Council decided. Rather, it is a story about how church leaders at the Jerusalem Council, after much prayer and discussion, averted a crisis by making a wise decision. Instead of deciding in favor of either Paul or the Judaizers and requiring that the losing side comply with other people's convictions, they decided to respect the convictions of people on both sides of the issue, endorsing different practices for different people.

We are not told what would have happened if the council had decided in favor of the Judaizers. Perhaps Paul would have obediently joined the Judaizers in telling the Gentile believers that the grace of Christ is insufficient and that they could not

be saved without following all Jewish laws, but that does not seem likely.

GERRY CHUDLEIGH

Newbury Park, California

» I appreciate Mark Finley's approach in remembering the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15. That history reminds us that unity for the mission doesn't imply unity in the details of procedures. Christian Jews were free to go on observing circumcision while Christian Gentiles were free of observing it.

URIAS ECHTERHOFF

TAKATOHI

São Paulo, Brazil

The Devil on Earth

» Regarding the news story "Wilson Says Devil Trying to Destroy Adventist Church" (Nov. 13, 2014): My heart ached as I read about the misfortune that has befallen Ted Wilson's family. So much suffering in one family must be truly devastating.

But to attribute those incidents to Satan's attacks seems like a stretch. True, we live in a world in which we're constantly reminded of sin and its effects. But thanks to medical science, we know that disease and death aren't directly related to our stance in the struggle between good and evil.

Let's face it: Those who are evil suffer just as much as those who are good. And we've progressed (I hope) from the days when sickness was attributed to "evil spirits" and sufferers were urged to pray rather than consult

medical professionals.

While I sympathize with Wilson and his family, I suggest that we not read too much into the maladies that affect all of us who live on a sin-contaminated planet.

ROBIN METAXAS

Chicago, Illinois



14 Soldiers in God's Army

» Thank you for Victor Hulbert's article "14 Soldiers in God's Army" (Oct. 23, 2014). When I was a student at Pacific Union College (1969-1973), I remember rather clearly a chapel in which an elderly gentleman told a story of being imprisoned for his faith when he was in the Army, and how he and his colleagues were placed in solitary confinement. He reported how he felt he was going crazy until a Bible (or portion of it, I don't recall) was smuggled to him. He said that after that he had no more feelings of going crazy.

The man said that prison officials told him everyone else had given in and that he was foolish to resist. He said he was in his cell one day when he started to whistle the first line of a hymn, "The Lord Is My Light" (still in today's hymnal). Then he stopped because he knew the guards would be upset. But he said he then heard someone else in the prison whistle

the second line of that hymn. Then, he said, he knew that at least one of his companions had remained faithful. We sang that hymn at the close of chapel.

That is the story I remember. It sounds like I may have heard one of the 14.

TOM SHEPHERD

Berrien Springs, Michigan

» Some of this story was related to me by my mother (youngest sister of Alfred F. Bird, one of the 14 sent to France). I am proud but also humbled to have such a person in my family tree. What courage and faith these boys had to stand fast for the truth. I pray that my faith in Jesus will be strong enough to hold in these end-times, when we will meet opposition and trials.

ANGELA BLISSETT

LARSEN (NEÉ MARTIN)

Lillehammer, Norway

Pressing Forward

» Those so-called unfinished buildings that Hyveth Williams refers to in her article “Pressing Forward” (Oct. 23, 2014) are actually people’s homes. Unlike in North America, getting/borrowing money from a bank/mortgage company to build a

home is not an option available to most Jamaicans. The only choice for most people is to save the cash to build. They will start with the frame and perhaps two rooms, and, as money becomes available, they add other rooms. This can take years, or it might never happen. In the meantime the people don’t quit, they don’t give up, nor bury their talents. They show industriousness by working with what little they have to provide shelter for their families. Yes, it does mar the beauty of the landscape for the visitors, but for the people without, that is the least of their worries.

LELETHA LAWRENCE

A Jamaican living in Canada



The Second Coming, Already?

» Myron Madden’s article “The Second Coming: It’s Not Fair” (Oct. 16, 2014) had me thinking of an experience.

The first Sabbath after Y2K I heard a pastor speak about how so many Christians eagerly awaited Jesus’ coming, he then went on to say that as for him he was happy that Jesus had not returned then, because he had many friends and family members who had yet to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. After hearing him say that, I too was worried for my loved ones. But I now realize that this is always going to be a sad truth for many.

As for the young woman mentioned in the article, I hope she realizes that God has many wonderful things in store for all those who love and trust Him.

MILLIE CASTILLO

via e-mail

» In regard to Myron Madden’s article: Waiting for God to return should be the most amazing thing we could ever desire in our lives. This is a beautiful story and great lesson. Thanks for publishing it.

JAY BOLAÑOS

Mexico City, Mexico

The New Friendly Face of the Papacy

» I am writing in regard to Gerhard Padderatz’s article “The New Friendly Face of the Papacy” (July 24, 2014). Subtlety and stealth—that is the modus operandi of the papal organization.

The dragon gave power and authority to the beast. You cannot expect anything positive to come out of that. When we express such subtle sympathy for the Papacy, we may be treading on dangerous ground. The mandate of



PHOTO BY EDGAR JIMÉNEZ

the remnant church is clear: to speak with a loud voice that Babylon is fallen, because she has made the world drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and then to call every nation and kindred and tribe and people to worship Him who made the heavens and the earth. This is not about showing that the Adventist Church is right; it is about affirming the unrelenting truth of God’s Word.

We must stay on the narrow path. Time’s running out.

CHIGOZI ETI

Ogbogu, Rivers State, Nigeria

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.

“History reminds us that unity for the mission doesn’t imply unity in the details of procedures.”

—URIAS ECHTERHOFF TAKATOHI, *São Paulo, Brazil*



Bill

Knott

Companions at the Gates

IT'S OFTEN DANGEROUS TO GO WALKING WITH AN EDITOR, ESPECIALLY when an editorial is due.

My wife and sons learned long ago the hazards of that periodic authorly intensity that tries to turn the stuff of everyday life into deathless prose. My boys even developed a childish alarm system, lest their offhanded sayings and doings end up embarrassing them before thousands of strangers: *“Be careful—Daddy has an editorial due!”*

Friends, however, know less about this intensity, and thus wander innocently through the fields of an editor’s imagination, unaware their words and images may suit his darker purposes.

(Here let me apologize to Jack and Debbie, dear friends for more than 30 years, who shared a recent hike with my wife and me in the sheep meadows of England’s Lake District. Yes, they are the ones pictured in the photo beside these words. But note—in their defense—that they have chosen the narrow gate and the upward path!)

There are many revelations you experience on the winding trail between the well-watered pastures of Ambleside and the quaint comforts of William Wordsworth’s Grasmere. First is the richness of the October sky, all shadowed and blue-spotted, as if the clouds were undecided about our need for further sunshine or more rain. Green—greener—grass, close-cropped by free-range sheep, rolls across fells more manicured than many fairways I have played. Lakes and streams brim with last night’s overflow of rain, all urgent on a burbling descent toward the Irish Sea.

But then a gate appears—actually, two—dividing life and travel into “before” and “after.” Gates and fences serve to restrict movement—sheep or human—and cause you at least a moment’s pause. You must, they silently insist, take note that where you now intend to go is at least subtly different from where you’ve been.

Never, however, in more than 50 years of wandering, have I seen the kind or arrangement of pasture gates that barred our path while meandering from Ambleside to Grasmere. I’ve always taken it as a matter of faith (or at least conjecture) that the narrow gate and the broad way leading downward were separated by some great distance—that one had to be deliberately looking for the one or choosing the other in order to find them. That John Bunyan’s “little wicket-gate” and the wide, smooth way leading to destruction could actually diverge from a single point had never gotten notice in the spiritual geography of my 57 years.

But there it was—as plain, as my grandmother might have said, as the nose on my face. The narrow gate, and the climbing path that leads away from it, is set immediately beside the wider gate and the smoother

trail that promises more ease. You lift the latch on one mostly unaware of the momentous choice you have just made.

A certain casualness in the moment, a particularly intense burst of conversation, and your feet are headed toward a destination never fully chosen but nonetheless decisive. It makes at least a world of difference with whom you are walking when choices such as these appear. How crucial to have chosen well the ones—the One—with whom you walk, to trust that even when you aren’t fully aware, you are protected by the godliness, the prayerfulness, of those who travel with you.

We sanctify the importance of individuating choice: I choose the narrow gate; I shun the broader one. At least as urgent, however, is our choice of those who walk this pathway with us. These are they to whom God gifts the seeing when our eyes are dimmed, the hearing when our ears are disobediently dull, the believing when our faith is faint.

Choose well and wisely those with whom you share the path. Their faith, their obedience, and their vision may be just what you need. ■



Sharpen Your Focus

IN APRIL I TOOK MY FIRST SELFIE (DON'T WORRY—YOU WON'T FIND IT on my Facebook page). For those of you who may not know, a selfie is a photograph one takes of oneself alone or with friends. It's usually taken with a cell phone.

For the past several years selfies have become extremely popular, especially among youth and young adults. Many people take them and e-mail them to their friends or post them to their Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter pages. Some people take a selfie nearly every day.

Recently I read of some celebrities who take selfies when they wake up in the morning. Then they'll tweet (send) it to all of their fans to let the public know that they are ordinary people, doing the same things as everyone else.

I suppose that selfies have become popular because by simply pushing a button you can produce documented affirmation of your existence. When you post the image to the Internet, you're telling the world, "This is who, or where, I am today."

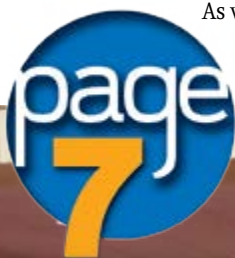
It's only natural to desire affirmation, and it's good to have healthy self-esteem. Each one of us has an inborn interest in ourselves, our jobs, our families, our future. Over the past few years I've discovered that the best way to start up relationships with others is simply to ask them about themselves—their pursuits, their goals, their desires. Most people gladly talk about themselves.

Perhaps that's why the Bible needs to encourage Christians not to focus on themselves, but to focus on others. The apostle Paul tells us to value others above ourselves (Phil. 2:3), and to speak only things that build others up (Eph. 4:29). Peter explains that we should use our gifts to serve others (1 Peter 4:10).

As we show an interest in others, we gain their favor and meet their needs; their hearts will more likely be open to accept God's truth. ■



Carlos
Medley



READY AND WAITING

The Student Association presidents of the Adventist North American colleges and universities attended the North American Division year-end meetings in November. They took a moment to pose with the bronze sculpture of people at the Second Coming displayed in the lobby of the General Conference.



When the Roll Is Called. 1. Avery Huggins, Washington Adventist University; 2. Tahjai Conkerite, Oakwood University; 3. Jason Siu, La Sierra University; 4. Debbie Pinto, Union College; 5. Nisha Johny, Canadian Union College; 6. Timothy Barbosa, Associated Students of Walla Walla University; 7. Josue Hernandez, Pacific Union College; 8. Scott McNeil, Adventist Intercollegiate Association; 9. Olivia Knott, Andrews University; 10. Austen Powell, Southwestern Adventist University; 11. Andrew Ashley, Southern Adventist University.



PHOTO: DAN WEBER/NAD

WHY PEOPLE LEAVE: G. Alexander Bryant, executive secretary of the North American Division, presenting his annual report in Silver Spring, Maryland, on October 31, 2014.

NORTH AMERICA

NAD Sees Challenge as Number of New Members Dips

The North American Division adds fewer new members for the fourth year in a row.

By **JULIO C. MUÑOZ**, North American Division

THE NORTH American Division added fewer new church members in 2013 compared with the previous year, continuing a gradual decline for the fourth year in a row, division executive secretary G. Alex Bryant said in an annual report.

The report, presented at the division's recent year-end meetings, painted a picture of real challenges that have kept the growth of the church relatively stagnant in the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and Micronesia.

The division had 1,184,395 members as of the end of 2013, a net increase of 17,541 people from 2012, according to figures provided by the General Conference's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

But the growth rate for new members slipped to 3.19 percent, down from 3.41 percent in 2012, 3.51 percent in 2011, and 3.63 percent in 2010. The growth rate in 2009 was 4.19 percent.

The net growth rate also dropped to 1.50 percent in 2013 from 1.77 percent in 2012.

Bryant, in presenting the figures, said the North American Division was not immune from a worldwide Adventist Church trend that has seen nearly 32 million people baptized in the past 30 years but more than 11 million people leave the church. Those figures were announced earlier at the Adventist world church's Annual Council meetings in mid-October.

Bryant devoted a portion of his presentation to two global surveys of why members leave the church that was conducted by the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research and released at the Annual Council. The surveys polled a mix of members who had left the church and members who had left and later returned.

The surveys found that the largest portion, 28 percent, of respondents said

they had "no big issue; I just drifted away" from the church. Another 25 percent of respondents cited a lack of compassion, while 19 percent said a personal moral failure was the reason for leaving. Eighteen percent said they did not feel as if they fit in, and 14 percent said the church had "too much focus on minor issues."

"Former members were more concerned with hypocrisy in the church than they were about worship style and theology," Bryant said. "When was the last time we argued about that?"

Just 5 percent said they left because they disagreed with Adventist doctrine, and a mere 3 percent complained that "the worship was not very spiritual."

The surveys, one of 925 respondents, the second of 785, had a margin of error of 3 percentage points each, according to the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. ■

■ NORTH AMERICA

NAD Takes First Steps to Relocate Headquarters

The division gives preference to a move within the Washington, D.C., area, rather than to Dallas, Denver, or Atlanta.

By **JULIO C. MUÑOZ**, North American Division

LEADERS OF the North American Division have taken initial steps to relocate from the headquarters of the General Conference building in Silver Spring, Maryland, to another site in the nearby metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.

The executive committee of the division's year-end meeting approved two motions regarding the potential relocation of the headquarters: to accept a recommendation by the president's North American Division Council and NAD and Union Officers, or NADOUP, that the headquarters be moved somewhere within the Washington area; and that the division proceed with the relocation process.

A report presented by division treasurer Tom Evans compared moving expenses and cost recovery if the head-

quarters moved to Dallas, Denver, Atlanta, or remained in the Washington area. The report, prepared by JLL, a consulting firm that specializes in corporate real estate, including corporate relocations, led NADOUP to determine that remaining in the Washington area would be the most prudent move.

In addition to the financial data, division president Daniel R. Jackson listed 10 nonfinancial considerations for NADOUP's decision. These included the access to qualified individuals, airports, and churches, as well as schools for employees and their families. The first nonfinancial reason given was self-determination.

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has a need to have its own unique message and strategies that

are relevant and work in our territory," Jackson told the church leaders from across the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Micronesia. "While the Seventh-day Adventist movement began in North America, we are among the youngest divisions in the church, and it's time that we grow up and leave our parent's house."

Earlier at the Annual Council in October, members of the General Conference's Executive Committee approved a recommendation from the General Conference treasury to support a request from the North American Division to explore the idea of moving its headquarters out of the General Conference building. If the division chose to move, the General Conference would provide \$3 million to assist with the transition.

"This should never be treated as an initiative to get them out of the building. Quite the opposite," Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Adventist world church, told Annual Council delegates after the vote.

General Conference treasurer Robert E. Lemon said the division was welcome to stay in the building but the General Conference also fully supported its initiative to relocate

and further define its own identity.

"This move does not represent any distancing of mission or purpose from that of the General Conference," Lemon said. "The North American Division has always been and continues to be the backbone of support, both financially and missionally, for the worldwide work of the church."

No time line has been set for the possible move. ■



PHOTO: DAN WEBER/NAD

UNITED IN PRAYER: Attendees praying at NAD meetings on Monday, November 3, 2014.

■ UNITED STATES

Adventist Church Applauds U.S. Ruling on “Parsonage Allowance”

A federal court derails atheist group’s attempt to cancel the tax benefit for pastors.

By **ANSEL OLIVER**, ANN

A U.S. federal court has confirmed that clergy can continue to claim the tax benefit for housing allowance, upholding a Seventh-day Adventist Church-backed appeal against a lower court ruling that would have ended the so-called parsonage allowance.

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, located in Chicago, handed down its decision, saying the plaintiffs—the Freedom From Religion Foundation—lacked standing to challenge the exemption, meaning that the group had not suffered damage personally.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had joined an amicus brief—or “friend of the court” brief—for the case in April,

along with more than 30 other denominations and religious organizations.

The ruling stops what could have been hundreds of millions of dollars of tax increases on clergy and other individuals with tax-exempt status for housing.

Adventist Church associate general counsel Todd McFarland said he was pleased with the November 13 decision.

“The Adventist Church has a long history of a commitment to separation of church and state; however, granting pastors this long-standing tax benefit does not violate the establishment clause,” McFarland said. “The government grants tax breaks for all kinds of people and businesses.” ■



RAY HARTWELL

A KEEPSAKE PHOTO: Adventist student leaders posing with *The King Is Coming* sculpture (of 10 life-size figures facing a giant image of Jesus and a host of angels) in the lobby of the General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, on November 3, 2014.

■ NORTH AMERICA

NAD’s Youngest Delegates Reenact Second Coming Sculpture

Student leaders take a memorable group photo to remind themselves of why they are Adventists.

By **ANDREW MCCHESENEY**, news editor, *Adventist Review*

IF THE 11 student leaders had a memory that they wanted to take from their first visit to a major Seventh-day Adventist

Church business meeting, it was the reason they had come: to prepare people for Jesus’ second coming.

So the student presidents from across North America spontaneously stopped at a bronze sculpture in the lobby of the shared headquarters of the church’s North American Division and General Conference to reenact its depiction of people greeting Jesus at His second coming.

As cameras clicked, some students raised their hands in joy, and others pointed to Jesus sitting on a cloud of angels. Nisha Johny, student body president at Canadian University College, knelt on the floor, folding her hands in prayer.

“We were really inspired by the whole arrangement of statues when we first came to the building,” said Johny, 20, a junior English major. “We thought it would be nice to make a memory for all of us.”

The student leaders, representing nine colleges and universities in the U.S., one in Canada, and the Adventist Intercollegiate Association, were among 175 delegates who attended the North American Division’s six-day year-end business meeting. This was the first year that students received the

speaking and voting rights of any delegate.

The sculpture that caught their attention is titled *The King Is Coming* and includes 10 life-size figures on the floor facing a giant image of Jesus and a host of angels. The artwork by Victor Issa was commissioned by the General Conference and installed in 2000. (See the photo on page 7.)

Johnny, a native of India who was born in Dubai and became a Canadian citizen in October, said she was filled with a renewed energy to serve Jesus after sensing His presence at the division meeting.

“We carried everything with love, a Christlike love, even when opinions were different,” she said.

Olivia Knott, student body president at Andrews University, said she had seen a group of people committed to Jesus. “I saw that in the way people respected one another when disagreeing and in the way we so often stopped to pray,” said Knott, 20, a senior double major in communication and religion.

Andrew Ashley, student body president at Southern Adventist University, said he had grown up in the Adventist

Church but only caught a first glimpse of the church’s inner workings at the meeting. He said he was humbled by what he saw.

“I learned that the church is led by men and women of God,” he said.

Ashley, 20, a senior theology major, said the group photo at the bronze sculpture would long remind him of every Adventist’s calling to proclaim the soon return of Jesus.

“We can get caught up in politics and other things,” he said. “We took the photo to remind us of why we are here.” ■



PHOTOS: CENTER FOR ADVENTIST RESEARCH IMAGE DATABASE

IN THE WINGS OF POWER: Andrews University president Richard L. Hammill, center, greeting J. Edward Hutchinson, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Michigan, as Lee Boothby looks on at the university on July 31, 1972.

■ OBITUARY

Lee Boothby, Bulldog Lawyer Who Defended Sabbath, Dies at 81

Boothby was the first and, for many years, the only church-state litigator in the Adventist Church.

By **ANDREW MCCHESENEY**, news editor, Adventist Review

LEE BOOTHBY, one of the first Adventist lawyers and a trailblazer in defending the Sabbath in court, has died at the age of 81.

Boothby died November 4 in an assisted living facility near his family

home in Berrien Springs, Michigan, family and friends said.

He moved to Michigan after suffering a massive stroke on September 1, 2013, in Washington, D.C., where he had worked most of his career and main-

tained a law office until his illness.

Boothby championed the workplace rights of Adventists and other believers in the 1960s and 1970s, fleshing out the legal definition of religious accommodation in the workplace. The issue took the forefront after the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a landmark legislation that outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

“On the national level, if there was anyone who developed the concept of religious accommodation in the workplace, it was Lee Boothby,” said a close friend, Robert Nixon, who began working with Boothby as a young lawyer in 1974 and argued with him before the U.S. Supreme Court.

“He was relentless on just what employers must do,” said Nixon, who retired as the General Conference’s general counsel in 2005.

Boothby began taking on cases of religious accommodation in the workplace before the General Conference, the administrative body of the Adventist world church, appointed an associate general counsel to assist in religious liberty issues. Boothby briefly held that position at the General Conference.

“Lee’s contribution to the church and to litigation was early, at a time the Adventist Church did not have a lot of lawyers in house and was still putting

together its religious liberty team,” said Todd McFarland, who oversees religious liberty cases as associate general counsel at the General Conference. “He was a leader.”

He added: “The church and people of all faiths owe a debt to Lee Boothby for his contribution to religious liberty over the decades.”

Boothby was as a major proponent of the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment, which establishes a wall of separation between church and state. No believer was off-limits, and in addition to many Adventists his clients included Christian Scientists, Scientologists, and Hare Krishnas.

In the 1990s Boothby took his fight to the former Soviet bloc, visiting many countries of Eastern Europe to promote the concept of religious liberty under their new constitutions.

A Bulldog Litigator

Orva Lee Boothby was born on March 17, 1933, in Bakersfield, California. He was named after a beloved pastor, Orva Lee Ice, but he chose to drop “Orva” when he enrolled in law school at Wayne State University in Detroit.

For a time he lived in the shadow of his father, Robert Loren Boothby, a renowned Adventist evangelist who baptized hundreds of people.

“When I was a younger person, it seemed as if every person I met had been baptized by my grandfather,” said Boothby’s elder daughter, Robin Rene Allen.

But Boothby, who also attended Andrews University, had a drive and a determination that caught people’s attention soon after he finished law school in 1957, friends said. Before the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, he had already made a name for himself as a leading litigator in cases involving individual rights of conscience and religious opposition to membership in labor unions.

“Lee was the first and for a long time the only and the most influential

church-state litigator the Adventist Church has ever produced,” said longtime friend Mitchell Tyner, who retired as associate general counsel of the General Conference in 2006.

“He was a bulldog at it,” Tyner said. “For many of us who came along decades later, he was the image by which we measured our contributions.”

Boothby led or worked as general counsel for several organizations, including Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the International Commission on Freedom of Conscience, and the International Academy for Freedom of Religion and



ALMA MATER: Lee Boothby, right, shaking hands with evangelist Fordyce W. Detamore in 1967 at his alma mater Andrews University, where he served as a member of the board of trustees.

Belief.

He worried that U.S. politicians were pulling bricks out of the church-state wall to create a new religion of compromise that offended no one.

“What you are tending to see is a new secular state religion,” Boothby told *Time Magazine* in a 2001 cover story on church-state relations. “It’s not really religion.”

Boothby wasn’t about to let that happen, and he pursued cases in many top courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court; the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Third, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Federal Cir-

cuits; and the U.S. Tax Court, among others.

“Impossible to Retire”

Tyner described Boothby as “a Lone Ranger type and good at it.”

“It was impossible for him to retire,” he said. “He kept going until he almost fell apart on the job.”

His daughter Robin Allen said her father preferred to vacation in warm places like Hawaii or Jamaica, where they snorkeled together and munched on fresh pineapple, allowing the sticky juice to drip down their faces. But his work always took priority.

“My dad was an extreme workaholic, and sometimes our vacation would get cut short,” Allen said. “I remember him looking around everywhere for a phone to make a call.”

Even after the stroke, Boothby remained concerned about his clients. They visited him in the hospital in Washington, D.C., where he stayed for several months before moving to Michigan.

“He wasn’t just their attorney; he was also their friend,” Allen said.

She said her father had a personal relationship with God and never pushed his beliefs on others.

“I believe this was because of his strong conviction that religion is a personal decision and that each individual should be allowed to choose to worship as they wish,” she said.

Boothby is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carole, and two married daughters, Robin Rene Allen and Denise Dian Sorrono. He also has three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Boothby spent his last months surrounded by family and reflecting on his life. Allen said they counted 36 countries that he had visited. He also longed to write a memoir about his work with religious liberty.

“Until the very end he was thinking about that,” Allen said. “I wish he had had the time to write it. I guess that is one of the things we are going to hear about in heaven.” ■



SOUND BITE

“Jesus knows we all have a tendency to do things for selfish reasons. We crave recognition from people because it’s immediate. But it is never enough. Only God’s recognition gives us what we need.”

—**JOHN NIXON II**, DURING THE OCTOBER 18, 2014, SABBATH SERMON AT THE SOCIETY OF ADVENTIST COMMUNICATORS’ CONVENTION, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

NEAR AND FAR

It is in harmony with God’s plan for the extension of His work in the regions beyond that many are called to leave their native shores for distant lands, to act as leaders and teachers in soul-winning service. It is also in harmony with His plan that those who remain in their home fields shall unite in well-organized efforts to save the perishing multitudes living close by, within easy reach. Every true follower of Christ is a missionary.

—**ELLEN G. WHITE**, “*FIELDS NEAR AT HAND*,” REVIEW AND HERALD, OCT. 22, 1914



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ADVENTIST LIFE

This is church and state made simple.

After an explanation of church and state was presented to her, one of my children who enjoys cooking exclaimed, “Oh, I get it! Mix church and state in a bowl, and a beast pops out!”

—**BILL KRICK**, CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA

A few Sabbaths ago Ben, our 5-year-old grandson, and I were traveling to church. Our route took us through a long, hilly avenue where many runners exercise. In order to keep his attention, I asked him to count all the runners. To my surprise, we didn’t see even one.

I asked what he thought about not finding any runners. Ben’s answer was quick and full of childlike faith. “Well, Grandpa,” he said, “today is Sabbath, and they are all getting ready to go to church.”

I never would have thought of that. But right there I silently thanked God and asked for the innocent faith of a little child.

—**DAVE SWINYAR**, OCALA, FLORIDA

LET’S PRAY

Have a prayer need? Have a few free minutes? Each Wednesday morning at 8:15 ET the *Adventist Review* staff meets to pray for people—children, parents, friends, coworkers. Send your prayer requests and, if possible, pray with us on Wednesday mornings. Send requests to: Let’s Pray, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; fax: 301-680-6638; e-mail: prayer@adventistreview.org.



Devotional Books



Something Better

ADULT

Calvin Rock

Calvin Rock lifts our view from the stresses and trials of life to the never-failing promises of God. His devotional readings make each new day an open door to something better. Hardcover. **US\$17.99**

Maranatha

EVENING

Ellen White

This favorite devotional brings together Ellen White's writings about the closing events of earth's history and the triumphant return of our Lord. You will rejoice that Jesus is coming soon. Hardcover. **US\$17.99**

Gift-boxed set. Includes *Something Better* and *Maranatha*. Hardcover. **US\$31.99 set**

PARENTING



NEW

Help! I'm a Parent

Drs. Claudio and Pamela Consuegra, editors

This all-new devotional helps moms and dads face the challenges of modern parenting with wisdom, hope and courage. Hardcover. **US\$17.99**

WOMEN



Altogether Lovely

Ardis Stenbakken and Carolyn Sutton, editors

In this intimate devotional many daughters of God share their praises, their prayers, their victories, and even their heartaches. Hardcover. **US\$17.99**

YOUNG ADULT



Just Jesus

Mark Witas

Pastor Mark Witas shows us that the better we get to know Jesus, the better we understand God, and the better we know our own purpose on earth. **US\$15.99**

TEEN



iChoose Life

Céleste Perrino-Walker

Help teens discover the awesome power of choice from the songs they download to the friends they hang out with at school. **US\$16.99**

JUNIOR/EARLITEEN



He's Got Your Back

Nancy Canwell

When events or friends turn against you, Jesus has your back. Juniors can begin each morning growing closer to the One who will never change or let them down. Hardcover. **US\$17.99**

PRIMARY



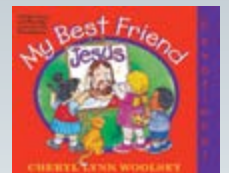
Hiking With Jesus

Jim Feldbush

Primary-age children can take a "nature hike" through the Bible and discover all the wild and wonderful things that God made for their amazement. Hardcover. **US\$15.99**

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Sally Pierson Dillon
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Review & Herald®
Spread the Word

Lifeline

I STAND AT THE NURSES' STATION. MY FRIEND, BARBARA, HAS ALREADY SET

aside a simple hazmat packet for me: *I am more of a danger to the patient than the patient is to me.*

"He asked specifically for you, said he knew you, and will not talk to anyone else."

Taking the packet, I walk toward the chapel. *I have to stop there first.* Barbara follows, whispering details about the patient: late 20s, enlarged heart, organs failing. I say nothing.

I know him. He was a cruel student. He lied and complained about me. Anything he could do or invent to ruin my reputation, he did. He challenged the grade he earned, using racial epithets in front of my supervisors. Yet he was smart: Always letting his behavior get close, but never past, the line of academic withdrawal. I remember returning home from work, falling on my knees, and asking God to touch his heart. Now here he is. *I tried so hard to get out of this visit.*

In the chapel I sit and pray. A week ago I sat on a comfortable couch with my parents, talking about a biblical passage, John 14:26. The definition of the Holy Spirit: *Advocate* (NIV), *Helper* (ESV),¹ *Comforter* (KJV), and *Counselor* (HCSB).² I recognized these definitions as the Holy Spirit had guided my work with patients. Now, sitting on a hard pew, I wonder: *Where is the Counselor, the Helper? Are You close?*

I have an hour before the ambulance arrives to transfer the patient to the cardiac unit at another hospital. Barbara helps me gown up while humming: "'Come, Holy Spirit, I need You. Come, sweet Spirit, I pray . . .'" *Why did she choose that song?*

* * *

I enter the room and immediately hear labored breathing. The curtains are drawn, hiding the patient. I quickly glance at the monitor and see his vitals; *they are not good.* I step forward, announce my entrance, push the curtains aside, and see him, a shell of a young man, jaundiced, wearing an oxygen mask, matted hair, and bloodshot eyes. *He's lost so much weight; he looks so different.* He slowly removes the oxygen mask and says, "You're here."

I hear of his life. He has two children, never got married. He struggled with drugs, never finished college. He worked three jobs to live and pay child support. While stacking crates in the middle of the night he had a heart attack. Now they tell him he's dying. But things had changed in the past few months. He had felt a desire to read the Bible and found comfort. He wonders if God will forgive his sins. He extends a trembling hand toward me: "How do I ask for forgiveness?"

And there I am, one small person with a huge task. This is not about me; this is about his salvation. We talk for a while about forgiveness and mercy that is given to all. I pray for him and recognize the peace in the room. His *Advocate* is among us; his *Comforter* stands by his bedside, I am sure.

* * *

As paramedics load him into the ambulance, I give my former student two options: I can drive behind the ambulance, or ride in the ambulance with him to the hospital. He takes the second choice.

As the journey begins, so does the physical decline. *His heart is failing.* I hold his hand, smile, pray with him. He removes the oxygen mask. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death . . ." He can barely breathe. *Once so lost, he has found his way home.* Paramedics join me to complete the verse: "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." He smiles, closes his eyes, and codes.

As the paramedics work on him, I look at my watch to document the time of death. One of the paramedics looks at me and asks, "Did you know him?"

I shake my head. "I did not know *this* person, but a long time ago I prayed that he would seek God. He did."

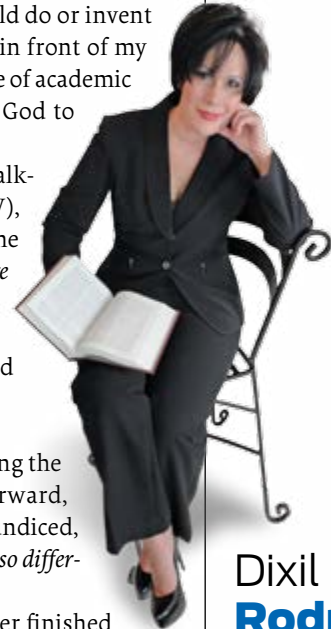
The paramedic writes on his chart and says, "God moves in mysterious ways, Chaplain."

I lean into the warmth of knowing my Comforter and Counselor will follow me home. ■


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²Texts credited to HCSB are taken from the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

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Dixil
Rodríguez



PRINTING RESPONDS
TO CHANGING
DEMOGRAPHICS.

Whither Publishing?

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ

One of the signs of the end surely has to be the closing of the Review and Herald Publishing House plant in Hagerstown, Maryland. Very few people saw that coming.

But if you have any interest in reading—whether books, magazines, or newspapers—you’ve been aware of a seismic shift in the way people receive their information. And this change is one of the factors that likely contributed to the end of printing activities at the Review and Herald.¹

And the Review and Herald isn’t the only casualty of the changing face of publishing. In early October the Nazarene Communication Network announced the closing of the Nazarene Publishing House in Kansas City, Missouri, after 102 years of operation. Other publishers, both religious and secular, are feeling the pinch.

Rest assured that the shuttering of the Review and Herald plant in Hagerstown does not mean the demise of *Adventist Review*. The *Review* and its sister publication, *Adventist World*, along with

many other Adventist periodicals, will continue to be printed at Pacific Press in Nampa, Idaho. But these two periodicals, and many throughout the industry—both religious and secular—face huge, almost insurmountable challenges as they look toward the future.

That Was Then

When those who were founding what became known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church imagined communicating a global message to as many as possible as quickly as possible, the only



PIONEER PRINTERS: The first press as it stood in the *Review* office in Battle Creek, Michigan, with the same men who, when young, worked in the office at Rochester, New York. From left: George W. Amadon, Lewis O. Stowell, J. Warren Bacheller, Uriah Smith. The photo was taken in the 1890s.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

logical technology was printing. In one of her earliest visions Ellen White wrote: “At a meeting held in Dorchester, Massachusetts, November, 1848, I had been given a view of the proclamation of the sealing message, and of the duty of the brethren to publish the light that was shining upon our pathway.

“After coming out of vision, I said to my husband: ‘I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to

print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world.’”²

Ellen’s husband, James, was a visionary who saw the potential of the printed word. One of the movement’s first capital investments was in a printing press. Fourteen years before the incorporation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, James White’s *Present Truth* was reaching hearts and homes sympathetic to the Advent message.

Within a few years of its incorpora-

tion the *Review and Herald* was doing business worth hundreds of thousands of (nineteenth century) dollars. Imagine: In an age of oil lamps and limited entertainment, reading material—any reading material—was extremely valuable. The printing press had been around for centuries, and in spite of a relatively low literacy rate among the general population, it was still the most effective way of reaching the masses.

At nearly the same time the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* was beginning publication, Adventists began publish-

ing the *Youth's Instructor*, a tacit admission that reader interest varied with age and subject matter. Soon Adventists were publishing periodicals designed for nonbelievers. And many of us can remember when our homes were filled with Adventist periodicals for every age demographic.

We can also remember when a host of other magazines vied for our attention at newsstands: *Life*, *Look*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Popular Mechanics*, *National Geographic*, *Reader's Digest*, etc. Chances are, we subscribed to one or more of these magazines. The 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s were probably the heyday of magazine and newspaper publishing. That's because radio and television were not as available as they are today, and they weren't portable. If you wanted to watch TV or listen to the radio, you sat in the room where that appliance was located; anywhere else in the house or yard, you read.

This Is Now

Then came personal computers and the Internet. American business magazine, investor, and philanthropist Warren Buffett wrote, "Simply put, if cable or satellite broadcasting, as well as the Internet, had come along first, newspapers as we know them probably would never have existed."³

Indeed, it's hard to imagine life without information at our fingertips. Everything is so accessible, so convenient, so portable. Sure, books and magazines are portable, but today's portable devices can hold thousands of pages of books and magazine articles, plus access the Internet and stream music and video.

Nothing has so revolutionized communication as its becoming digitized, leaving purveyors of traditional forms of communication—radio, television, and the printed page—scrambling to keep up. For many, that means establishing a "Web presence." Posting content on the Internet is a relatively simple, inexpensive way to communicate with the public. The challenge is turning a profit.

With so much free content available, consumers are often reluctant to pay for

a subscription or service. Why should they? There are so many writers vying for their attention, and so little time to absorb it all.

Juan Prestol, undertreasurer of the General Conference, observed: "Take the Bible commentaries, the entire printing of Ellen White, the whole shebang. Who's buying Ellen White books when you can actually have it all on one CD; when you can have the Bible commentary, together with 30 or 40 versions of the Bible with Bible concordance and Bible dictionary, as a standard resource for any electronic library?"⁴

All this is changing the way book and magazine publishers are doing business. With subscriber circulation falling almost 2 percent last year (single-copy sales almost 12 percent), some magazine publishers are throwing in the towel and producing content that is "online only." Digital content is growing, but is still less than 4 percent of total circulation. Some publishers charge for the content they provide; others rely on ad revenue. Very few have discovered how to monetize content to the level of previous generations' print-only publications.

Book publishing is just as dynamic and just as unpredictable. Evan Ratliff, a cofounder of Atavist, a digital publishing software company, predicted, "Things are moving so quickly in the area in which our outfit operates—the intersection of technology and publishing—that it's generally a fool's errand to make trend predictions. Either they are so obvious as to already be happening, or revolutionary enough that almost no one will see them coming."⁵

Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division and chair of the Pacific Press Publishing Association, remembers when he was growing up that he and his family bought books during the summertime, when they went to camp meeting. "The other day someone told me that Dwight Nelson is reading such and such a book, and it's a great book," he said. "So I went on my iPad and bought it in a minute. It was in front of me in a minute."⁶

"I just had a book offered to me last week," said Prestol. "The paper version

of it is almost \$20. The electronic version is \$5 or \$7. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out where people are going to go."

To meet the need for more digital content, Pacific Press has developed Adventist-eBooks.com, a site with more than 1,300 titles by Adventist authors, and more being added.

Looking Ahead

We Adventists may be guilty of operating under some faulty assumptions when it comes to publishing. The first is that we have a captive audience—that Adventists will line up to buy Adventist books and periodicals because they are Adventist books and periodicals. "Unfortunately," says Jackson, "those we thought were a captive audience were not as captive as we thought." Adventists are just as likely to buy books by such Christian authors as Max Lucado, Rick Warren, Philip Yancey, and Lee Strobel.

Another faulty assumption is that we believe we have a message that is life-changing—indeed, essential—for the salvation of the world. That much is true. But some have taken that to mean that a ministry has a sacred duty to operate on a shoestring budget, or even at a loss, to produce as much literature as possible, as cheaply as possible, to reach as many homes as possible.

The problem is that the profit margin in today's print publishing industry is already razor-thin. Most publishing firms make a profit by running three shifts a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. And many of those are located in countries in which labor costs are a fraction of what they are in North America.

But, some would say, it's a ministry, not a business. True enough. But a ministry that can't support itself financially is a charity, not a ministry. Books, magazines, and periodicals come at a price: paper, ink, salaries, utilities, and costs for postage and transportation are part of the cost of doing ministry. When you can't cover your expenses, you stop having an effective ministry.

"We've poured money into businesses that should have been allowed to die," says Jackson. "We should have celebrated

them, let them go to their rest, and redesigned the future.”

Then there’s changing reading habits: Gone are the days of general-interest magazines and periodicals. Magazines are becoming more specialized and reaching narrower audiences. Where a generation ago *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* vied for subscribers by offering detailed news and analysis of national and international news, medicine, religion, the arts, science, sports, and entertainment, today’s reading population is becoming more segmented. Of those three magazines, only *Newsweek* and *Time* continue to offer print editions.

If you really care about sports, you don’t read *Time*, you read *Sports Illustrated* or *ESPN the Magazine*. If you care about entertainers and entertainment, you read *People* or *Rolling Stone*. Even publishing titans such as Time, Inc., which publishes *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, *InStyle*, and *Health*, among dozens of other titles, are seeing a general, gradual decline in print circulation.

What of the Future?

While the circulation of print publications faces an inexorable decline, books, newspapers, and magazines are increasingly moving to a digital format. It’s not just a matter of survival; it’s where today’s readers are. News junkies can read the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *USA Today* without even leaving their kitchen.

A Google search can lead to a dozen articles (on the first page) from several news and information sources about practically any topic. Digital is clearly the platform of the future.

Another trend is cross-platform communication. Rarely do we hear radio or TV news reports without hearing the words: “For more information [photos, resources, etc.], visit our Web site: www.madeyoulook.com.” And almost every knowledgeable media source has a Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, or Pinterest account connected to it.

The purpose is not just to collect “friends,” “likes,” or “followers”; those who are truly effective in data mining—

think Amazon, Netflix, or Facebook—are out to find out as much as possible about those who visit their sites. Where do they live? What do they search for? What do they buy? How much are they willing to spend?

While the Christian church has been in the communication business for nearly 2,000 years, it doesn’t begin to match the sophistication with which publishing in general goes after its customers. We can’t be satisfied with just “putting something on the Internet.” A Google search of “Seventh-day Adventist Church” yields 6.5 million entries (in less than a second). But not all the entries are supported by the church. A recent Google search of “Seventh-day Adventist Church” turned up a link to Catholic.com on the first page.

The future of Adventist publishing has less to do with platform than it does with content. Ray Tetz, communication consultant with Mind Over Media, suggests that along with other publishers and producers, Adventist media in the past were typically governed by those who owned them. Since the church sponsored publishing and media ministries,

THE FUTURE OF ADVENTIST PUBLISHING HAS LESS TO DO WITH PLATFORM THAN IT DOES WITH CONTENT.



editors and ministry leaders, along with people on their governing boards, decided what the content was going to be. In many cases those decisions were basically educated guesses, sometimes supported by focus groups and audience research, but often not.⁷ The question was not What are people looking for? It was What do we want them to read?

The paradigm for the twenty-first century revolves around consumers: what kind of content attracts their attention? For this model, it doesn’t matter what the platform is—people will gravitate toward material that speaks to them. It might be a book, a magazine article, a Web page, a blog, a Facebook page, or a tweet. A Google search might turn up a Web page dedicated to Sabbathkeeping, but it might or might not be sponsored by an Adventist ministry.

An Amazon search for a book about prophecy may or may not yield an Adventist book on the subject; the same with health, families, Bible studies. In that case, it’s useless to have a warehouse full of books about prophecy when nobody’s asking for them, or if they want them digitally rather than in ink on paper.

“In the next three to five years we are going to go through a redefinition of our publishing work,” says Prestol. “It’s going to be a time of trial and error. We’re going to be seeing a lot of introspection and a lot of conversations. If we’re going to revive [Adventist publishing], it’s going to take good thinking, logical minds coming to assist.

“But if we think we can continue to produce materials that just appeal to ourselves, I don’t think we’re going to make it.”

According to Dale Galusha, president of Pacific Press Publishing Association, Adventist publishing “serves to unite the church, make it stronger, and equip it to be the witness to the world that God has called it to be.

“Times change, cultures evolve, and technology grows. . . . [Adventist] publishing will advance the mission of the church by making the message available in many forms and formats,” he said.⁸

“I believe we have a five-year window,”

says Jackson. “I have to be honest: We have to engage our young minds in doing this, because they are the ones who will engage the future.”

Members as Publishers

What makes publishing Adventist? Does it have to come from an Adventist publishing house? Does a blog about the blessing of the Sabbath by an Adventist pastor or lay member qualify? Seventh-day Adventists have received a fair amount of positive, unsolicited publicity in the form of books and magazine articles (*The Blue Zones*, *National Geographic*) and documentary films (*The Adventists*, *The Adventists 2*, *The Blueprint: The Story of Adventist Education*). Is anybody blogging about them? What is being shared on Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube?

What are we doing to share our passion about healthy families, the Sabbath, financial and emotional security? We should be part of the larger conversation. And today’s media platforms make that more possible than ever before. Every believer who tells of being loved

and saved by God’s amazing grace is a content provider.

We don’t have to wait for the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* to write an article about Seventh-day Adventists. We can use an article that appears in the *Post* as a launching pad to write an essay about health, morality, equality, even grace and forgiveness, for the *Huffington Post* or *Adventist Review Online*. The more we write (well), the more we will be noticed. Social media platforms make formal publishing less important, since each of us can share our faith with friends and friends of friends on any number of digital media platforms.

Will we stand out among the millions of books, Web pages, blogs, posts, and tweets? Maybe not; but at least we’ll be part of the conversation. And when we write something credible that is forwarded or retweeted, we force readers to reexamine their perceptions, and some prejudices, about Seventh-day Adventists.

Reading is not going away. Indeed,

there is more to read now, from many more voices, than ever before. When, in 1848, Ellen White urged her husband, James, to “print a little paper and send it out to the people,” printing was practically the only mass-media game in town. What would she say today? ■

¹Because the Review and Herald Publishing Association predates the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Review and Herald name will live on as a General Conference institution, and will be involved in the publication of magazines and periodicals already in production. Pacific Press Publishing Association will do most of the actual printing.

²Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 125.

³John Morton, “Buffeted: Newspapers Are Paying the Price for Shortsighted Thinking,” *American Journalism Review*, October–November 2007.

⁴Interview, Oct. 20, 2014.

⁵www.bookbusinessmag.com/article/2014-book-publishing-trends/1. Accessed Aug. 4, 2014.

⁶Interview, Oct. 22, 2014.

⁷E-mail interview, Aug. 11, 2014.

⁸E-mail interview, Oct. 19, 2014.



STEPHEN CHAVEZ IS COORDINATING EDITOR OF *ADVENTIST REVIEW*. ANNA BARTLETT, *ADVENTIST REVIEW* INTERN, DID SOME OF THE RESEARCH FOR THIS ARTICLE.

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 10-year-old girl in California was baptized about two weeks following the baptism of her mother. Soon after, the church was planning a series of health seminars. A few days before the meetings began, the young girl approached the local GLOW coordinator and asked if she could have some seminar flyers and GLOW tracts to take to her public school. The coordinator handed her a stack. The 10-year-old took them home, laid them out, and thought about each person she would be giving them to. She then taped what she thought was the appropriate GLOW tract for each person to the flyers. The next day she passed them out at school. When it was time for silent reading, all the kids took out their GLOW tracts and asked where they could get more! One student even said, “You should be selling this stuff, not giving it away!”



Story 2 A man named Victor and his 6-year-old son were out walking when they noticed an older couple sitting at a table. They looked a little sad, so Victor urged his son to give them a GLOW tract. The little boy handed one to the man and said, “Here—this is for you.” The man took it without comment, but soon ran after Victor and his son as they walked away. “Thank you so much for this tract,” he told them. “It’s exactly what I need.” Victor prayed with him before leaving.

STORIES COMPILED BY PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE GLOW DIRECTOR NELSON ERNST. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GLOW, GO TO SDAGLOW.ORG. TO WATCH VIDEO GLOW TESTIMONIES, GO TO VIMEO.COM/USER13970741.

Between Suicide and Salvation

I DON'T REMEMBER HOW OLD I WAS, PROBABLY ABOUT 10. I DO KNOW THAT I'LL

never forget the morning my dad shared the startling news. “George¹ committed suicide yesterday.”

George had recently started coming to our little church. Middle-aged, with a sleeve of tattoos and a child from a previous marriage, George was obviously the product of a rough life. My dad hit it off with him, and he'd been to our house fairly frequently. Although I didn't know George that well, the news still hit me like a bolt of lightning. For the next couple days it was the last thought I had before falling asleep, and the first thought I had as I woke up.

What could possibly drive someone to commit suicide? Especially someone who'd just started coming to church and seemed to be turning his life around? I'm not the first person to ask that question.

Nearly two decades later I sat in a funeral with family and friends who had gathered to mourn the loss of a young father who'd ended his own life. It was gut-wrenching. It was the kind of day—despite the pastor's best attempt at providing a glimmer of hope—that made you feel like darkness would never relinquish its grasp.

Although I hadn't known the individual, the hopeless despair that filled the sanctuary that afternoon filled my eyes with tears. What could possibly drive someone to commit suicide? Especially someone who had so much to live for?

On a micro level, the answer to that question is always deeply personal, varying case by case. However, looking at these situations broadly, we find commonalities. Those who take their own lives have reached a breaking point where they see themselves as hopeless, beyond anyone's reach. That despair leads them to do the one thing they can't take back. The next thing you know, loved ones are gathered in a church asking “Why?” and lamenting all the missed warning signs.

Filled With Hopelessness

Although suicide is an extreme reaction, at some point in our lives we've all been enveloped in despair that leads us to question the point of all this. Though most people don't commit suicide or even consider it, we've all been broken in different ways.

As Christians we often find that this despondency is directly related to our own actions—our sin, as it were. The apostle Paul seems to put the nail in the coffin, confirming what each of us knows about ourselves: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one” (Rom. 3:10-12).

Yes, we are all sinners. At times the reality of our human nature is something of which we're keenly aware. Yet awareness of our own weakness and frailty is not evidence that we're beyond saving; in fact, it proves exactly the opposite. Notice what Ellen White wrote: “The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you.”²

Paul once called himself the chief or foremost sinner (1 Tim. 1:15), using the present tense. He was not lamenting his past mistakes; rather, he was acknowledging his current state.

Those on the brink of taking their own lives lose themselves in hopelessness, fully aware of the depths of their own depravity. They think they're beyond saving.

That's not unlike those on the brink of salvation, who clearly see their imperfections and weaknesses. But they realize that the story doesn't end there. They understand that the atoning righteousness of Christ is the only thing that can save them.

It's the only thing that can vanquish the darkness. ■

¹The name has been changed to ensure the privacy of the individual and his family.

²Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), pp. 64, 65.

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**Jimmy
Phillips**

BY REINDER BRUINSMA

A Matter Of

Perspective

Two people may stand at the kitchen window and look at the outside world.

One will see colorful birds flying around in the garden, collecting the building materials for their nest, while the other sees only the endless string of cars on the busy road some 150 yards from the house.

Similarly, when I sometimes hear people discussing a sermon I have preached, I wonder whether they all actually attended the same church and heard the same preacher.

What we notice and experience depends on a wide range of factors. One of them is the relationship we have to a particular event. I know people who regard the British author C. S. Lewis as a saint and regularly meet to read from his works and discuss what they have read. For them, no doubt, November 22, 1963, is chiseled in their memory as the day on which their beloved writer died. For most of us, however, as much as we appreciate Lewis, this particular date is the day U.S. president John F. Kennedy was assassinated!

The way in which we view historical events depends greatly on our perspective. When I attended elementary school in the Netherlands, I learned about the four “English wars,” in which the Dutch fought against the British in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I left school with the impression that “we” won them all. Later, I lived for a number of years in England and bought some books about the history of my adopted country. I was surprised to find that these books did not refer to the “British wars,” as “we” did, but to the “Dutch wars.” And, strangely enough, these books claimed that the English performed rather better in these battles than the Dutch!

What Is History?

What is true of separate events also applies to history in general. There are various ways in which we can view history. Some see history as nothing but a

random series of events. It is all, they say, a matter of chance. Others maintain that evolutionary theory may also apply to the history of humankind. Just give it another million years and humankind will have improved to the point that it no longer makes war! Others again believe they can detect cyclic patterns in history, while many in the twentieth century held that history simply records the struggle between capital and labor.

For Christians, who take their cue from the Bible, history is more like a straight line with a beginning and an end. Human history starts in Eden and ends in the world made new. Somewhere on this line is a crucial spot that marks the birth of Jesus Christ. Therefore, history is divided into B.C. and A.D., before Christ and after Christ!

There is, however, more to the Christian perspective on history. The biblical view of history is best defined by the expression “the great conflict,” and suggests that everything that happens on our planet must be seen against the backdrop of something that far exceeds our human scope.

The last book of the Bible informs us that at a certain point in the distant past, “war” broke out in heaven (Rev. 12:7). A being created perfect challenged the love and goodness of God. We will never understand how that could happen, but it did. A few passages in the Old Testament (Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-18) provide us with some hints, but the origin of evil remains a dark mystery.

After God had created this world, the battle scene moved to this earth. The book of Genesis (3:6-8) informs us about the “fall” into sin of the first human couple. The rest of the Bible describes the aftermath of this terrible event. But it also tells us that the power of God has already gained the decisive victory over all evil. Sin gained entrance into the world through the sin of one person. But sin is also conquered and destroyed through the life and death of one Person (Rom. 5:12-21). The problem has been solved, and a new sinless world is just beyond the horizon.

More Between Heaven and Earth . . .

People who flippantly suggest that there is more between heaven and earth than meets the physical eye often do not realize how much truth there is in that statement. The struggle between good and evil on this earth is a conflict with extraordinary dimensions. It is a conflict between light and darkness, between Christ and Satan, between the Prince of life and the super-angel-turned-rebel.

Therefore, we do not simply participate in a fight with beings of our own size and sort. The apostle Paul put it like this: “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12).

I must confess that I do not grasp the full meaning of what this means. But one thing is clear: Something momentous is going on “between heaven and earth,” in this cosmic “great controversy.”

I am reminded of this as I read the prologue to the book of Job (chapter 1), which tells how God meets with Satan, who has returned from “roaming” the world, to discuss the loyalty of an ancient patriarch called Job. I can think of quite a few questions I want to ask as I read this story. Did Satan still have direct access to God after he had been banished from heaven? And does (or, at least, did) God have a habit to discuss the spiritual condition of believers with the archenemy? But never mind these questions. What is crystal clear is that, once again, there is more going on between heaven and earth than we know and understand.

Recently I read the biblical book of Daniel in a single session. More than ever before I was fascinated by what I read in chapter 10. The chapter begins with a scene in which Daniel is greatly disturbed. It seems that God is not answering his prayers. But a heavenly being appears to set Daniel’s mind at ease. “Your prayers have been heard,” this being affirms. “I was sent by the

Almighty to visit with you and talk with you. I am a bit late—in fact, I was delayed for three weeks.” His words are even more specific. “I was detained by the Prince of Persia,” he declares. And this heavenly messenger says he must return to continue his confrontation with the “king of Persia” (see verses 10-20).

This passage is strangely reassuring. It tells me: Leave things to God. The “great conflict” is far more complicated than you can ever imagine, but there are all kinds of things happening “between heaven and earth,” and our God is in absolute control.

The Perspective That Counts

The history of the universe does not play out in a vacuum. Neither does our personal life story. Every single person is a player in this “great controversy” between good and evil. The powers of the evil one keep pulling us away from “the straight and narrow.” But the power of God also keeps drawing us with His infinite divine love. We must confess that in this struggle we do sometimes lose a battle. But the final victory has already been secured through Jesus Christ.

We must learn to look with new eyes at what happens in the world and in our life. There is more than what meets the human, carnal eye. When the apostle Paul was considering this topic, he concluded with the question: “What more is there to say?”

I want to join him in that concluding question, but also in his final triumphant remark: “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38, 39).

Never forget: That is God’s perspective. ■



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**THERE IS
MORE GOING
ON BETWEEN
HEAVEN AND
EARTH THAN
WE KNOW AND
UNDERSTAND.**

BY MICHAEL ZWAAGSTRA

For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jer. 29:11).

This verse is commonly quoted at high school graduations and chosen by many Christian young people as their "theme" verse. It is popularly understood to mean that God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives. As a result, if we remain within His will, we can expect great things from God in the future.

Sounds nice, doesn't it? The only problem is this verse says nothing of the sort. In fact, it means something totally different.

The passage is actually part of a letter the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the Israelites who had been taken into captivity in Babylon. In that letter Jeremiah tells the exiles to settle into their new homes because they were going to be there for a long time—70 years, to be exact. This is immediately followed by verse 11, in which the Israelites are reassured of God's plan to bless their nation in the future.

Clearly Jeremiah 29:11 does not originally promise individual Christians today that God has a wonderful plan for each of their lives. Rather, it was first a promise to the exiled Israelites about God's long-term plans for their nation. In fact, the initial recipients understood that they were unlikely to personally benefit, as they would almost certainly be dead in 70 years.

This should be obvious to anyone who takes the time to read this passage in its context. In fact, some might wonder how it is that so many well-meaning Christians have interpreted this verse as they have. The answer is actually quite simple.

The Importance of Context

There are two key reasons this and other passages of Scripture are often misunderstood by Christians. The first is the all-too-common tendency to overlook context. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines context as "the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning." In other words, it is important to avoid falling into the trap of reading Bible passages in isolation.

Incidentally, the same principle also holds true for nonbiblical writings. Suppose a friend were to tell you that he has discovered the true meaning of the classic children's tale *The Story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. With great excitement your friend explains that the main point of this story is to encourage parents to have only one child. After all, there was only one baby bear in the story, and Goldilocks appears to have been an only child herself. Thus the story serves as a reminder to parents that one-child families are the best option for everyone.

Before you can object, your friend is

children in the bear family is a relatively trivial fact. Only by reading the entire story in context is it possible to get an accurate understanding of its key theme, which has nothing to do with the number of children in a family.

As noted earlier, context explains why we should not interpret Jeremiah 29:11 as a guarantee of personal prosperity to individual believers today. It's also the reason we don't indiscriminately combine Matthew 27:5 ("Then he went and hanged himself") with Luke 10:37 ("Go and do likewise"). This may be an accurate quotation of Scripture, but it certainly is not the proper use of these passages!

The disregard of context is one of the key reasons some religious groups do such a poor job of expositing Scripture. They cherry-pick verses to support their arguments but overlook the clear meaning of these same verses in their proper context.

For example, Jehovah's Witnesses adamantly hold to the belief that Jesus is a created being and is not the second

Biblical Herm

quick to point out that he is quoting accurately from the story. After all, there really is only one baby bear in the story, and it definitely does seem as though Goldilocks is an only child. Since his facts are correct, on what basis can you reject his interpretation?

Of course, the answer is obvious: his interpretation violates the context of *The Story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. A straightforward reading of the entire story makes it clear that the number of

member of the Trinity. As a result, they grasp on to verses such as John 14:28 ("The Father is greater than I"), but overlook the way in which the apostle John upholds the full divinity of Jesus throughout his Gospel, beginning with the very first verse. We can understand who Jesus is only if we are willing to read the verses about Him in their proper context.

This is why it is risky to base our doctrines on isolated proof texts. When it comes to the state of the dead, many

A photograph of a person's hands holding an open book. The person is wearing a dark t-shirt and dark pants. The background is a textured, light-colored surface. The word 'CONTEXT' is repeated diagonally across the image in a light gray font. A solid orange horizontal bar is positioned below the book, containing the text 'eneutics 101' in white.

eneutics 101

WE CAN LEARN FROM JABEZ BY EMULATING HIS EXAMPLE OF FAITHFULNESS TO GOD, NOT BY MINDLESSLY RECITING THE WORDS FROM HIS PRAYER.

Christians fall into the trap of citing Paul's "desire to depart and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23) as proof that our souls continue living after death. However, this isolated text needs to be properly weighed against Paul's lengthy exposition on the importance of the bodily resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. In this section Paul makes it abundantly clear that a future bodily resurrection, not a present disembodied existence as a soul, is the reason we can have confidence that deceased believers have not perished in their sins.

Thus it is important to examine verses in their immediate context and figure out how they relate to the other parts of the Bible.

Understanding Cultural Context

However, there is more to a proper understanding of context than simply reading the words that appear before and after a particular passage. In fact, Merriam-Webster adds a second part to its definition of context: "The interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs." In other words, it is important to understand the historical and cultural background in which a passage is written. This can be thought of as cultural context.

To illustrate, let's go back to Jeremiah 29:11. As noted earlier, many Christians interpret this verse as a personal guarantee of prosperity for their lives today. This happens because our Western culture places a high value on individuality. We strongly emphasize independence and freedom of choice for everyone. So when we come across a passage like Jeremiah 29:11, it seems tailor-made for our desire to have God bless each of our individual lives.

But as E. Randolph Richards and Brandon O'Brien note in their book *Misreading Scripture With Western Eyes*, this is not the cultural context Jeremiah lived

in. Ancient Israelite culture placed a much stronger emphasis on the good of the collective as opposed to the individual. For example, the "you" in Jeremiah 29:11 was plural rather than singular. As a result, people at that time would have interpreted God's promise as one to their entire nation rather than for their individual lives.

"If God meant each Israelite individually, then the promise is nonsense before the words are fully out of God's mouth. We must teach every new student that the 'plans to prosper you' involved the killing and enslavement of thousands of individual Israelites, who might dispute the promise 'not to harm you,'" explain Richards and O'Brien.

The Western emphasis on individualism is also largely responsible for the "Prayer of Jabez" phenomenon among North American Christians. In 2000 Bruce Wilkinson's *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* was published and quickly became an evangelical best seller. In this book Wilkinson claimed that an obscure prayer found in 1 Chronicles 4:10 could transform the lives of Christians and lead to great blessings from God. All they needed to do was regularly repeat the prayer of Jabez.

However, it is highly unlikely that the author of Chronicles intended for this passage to be used in this way. Instead of providing a guarantee of health and wealth to anyone fortunate enough to discover this verse hidden within a set of genealogical data, this passage records the actions of a member of the tribe of Judah who acted more honorably than his brothers. We can learn from Jabez by emulating his example of faithfulness to God, not by mindlessly reciting the words from his prayer.

Incidentally, when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, Jesus did not get them to recite the prayer of Jabez. Rather, Jesus taught them what we now

call the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13). The first few lines focus on God's place in heaven, His holy name, and His coming kingdom. Only after that are we to ask for our daily bread. The focus is on God, not our individual wants and desires.

Reading the Bible Properly

As we have seen, understanding context, both linguistic and cultural, is integral to a proper understanding of Scripture. This is no easy task, but is still something we have to do.

One of the best ways to develop an understanding of context is to regularly read the Bible in its entirety. By immersing ourselves in God's Word, we become equipped to discern truth from error. Instead of limiting our Bible reading to isolated passages or favorite books, we must leave no section unread. This way we will always read each verse in light of the rest of the Bible.

In addition, we are fortunate to have access to many high-quality Bible dictionaries and commentaries. They provide a wealth of information, not only about how to interpret difficult passages, but about the culture the Bible writers lived in. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* is a great place to start, as it was put together by some of the church's foremost experts.

Finally, we must always approach the Bible with a humble and teachable spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. The Bible is God's Word, and we should listen to what God has to say to us through it, even if it isn't always what we want to hear. In contrast, using the Bible to prove a preconceived point or settle an argument is a surefire path to misinterpretation.

There is too much at stake for us to waste time misinterpreting the Bible. Carefully reading Scripture will not only help us listen to the God of Scripture—it will also inspire us to share its truths with others. ■



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BY JULIE GRISWOLD

In 1993 my husband, Scott, and I were serving as missionaries in Cambodia. I was pregnant with our first child—and I was living in fear.

For as long as I could remember I had wanted to be a missionary. I had always believed it was what God was leading me to do. But it wasn't long after Scott and I arrived in Cambodia that I no longer felt so sure mission work was my calling.

Conquer Your Fears

NO MATTER
WHAT LIFE
THROWS
YOUR WAY

Cambodia was not a safe place to live at the time. It was dangerous to be out on the streets after dark. The government had set a curfew of 6:00, and almost every night I could hear shots being fired as I tried to go to sleep.

One Christmas we received word that our good friend Kavut had been shot. He and his fiancé had been down by the river and had lost track of time. When it began to get dark, thieves demanded the keys to Kavut's motorcycle. The motorcycle belonged to the organization Kavut worked for. He didn't want them to take it, so he moved too slowly. They shot him, and he died in the hospital.

Another time, very early one morning, the mission president banged on our door.

"Ben has been shot!" he exclaimed.

I immediately thought our good friend had been killed. But no, the bullet from the Khmer Rouge soldier had just grazed his neck, spurting blood everywhere. He managed to stay on his bike, even after a second bullet hit him in the foot.

Land mines would explode in various places throughout the country. In fact, in the marketplace down the street from

where we lived, where I shopped almost every day, a land mine had gone off. I was so glad I hadn't walked to the market that day! After that, I felt I couldn't go outside my door for fear I would step on a land mine.

Paralyzed by Fear

With all these things playing again and again in my mind, I became increasingly uneasy and unable to function. I felt paralyzed by fear. I was young and pregnant, and I wanted to go back home to America.

At the same time, I believed in my heart that God had called us to Cambodia. We were there to share the love of Jesus with people who didn't know Him at all. But how could I do that when I could hardly walk out of my house? I certainly wasn't a good example of trusting my loving heavenly Father to take care of me.

Satan began to harass my mind with every imaginable scary thought. He tried his best to get me to be so afraid that I would give up and go home. I truly felt that almost every thought I had was a fearful one. I was sure I would be the next victim!

Enough!

One day, a few months after our baby girl, Joelle, was born, I told my husband that I had had enough. I wanted to go home. I was just too afraid to stay in Cambodia any longer.

"OK. We can leave," he said, surprising me. Then he added, "But before we start packing up and telling people goodbye, I want you to do one thing. Every time a fearful thought comes into your mind, I want you to drop to your knees in prayer, give that thought to God, and replace it with a Bible verse. Do this for two weeks. If it doesn't help, we'll go back to America."

I told him that I would do it, but that I was sure it wouldn't help and that he'd better prepare himself and start packing his bags.

Shortly after that, I went into the

kitchen to make spaghetti. Before the water could boil, I had a very scary thought and dropped to my knees. I gave my thought to God and then said out loud, "Perfect love casts out fear' [1 John 4:18].* I praise You, Lord, that You have perfect love and that You can cast out my fear."

I went back to preparing food. Again I was overcome by another fearful thought. So I dropped to my knees and gave it to the Lord. I replaced the thought with "God has not given Julie a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind [see 2 Tim. 1:7]. I thank You, God, for this promise. I claim it as mine right now." At this rate I was not getting the meal prepared very fast. In fact, before the noodles were even soft, I had dropped to my knees 11 times.

What was wrong with me? My husband seemed to enjoy the challenge. Why was all the paralyzing fear coming to me? Maybe it was because Satan knew my weakness and kept attacking me.

A Gun to My Head

It was in my own kitchen that a gun was held to my head. We were living with our Cambodian landlady and her family of nine at the time. It was a Sabbath afternoon. My husband had gone to the provinces to visit a new church, and I had decided to stay home with my baby girl. As I was enjoying playing with her, I suddenly heard what sounded like dogs fighting. I got up to look, and stuck my head out the window. It wasn't dogs. It was a bunch of police officers yelling and shouting at the son-in-law of our landlady.

I was shocked! My mind was swirling. How could this kind, friendly man who was living with us be in trouble with the police? I had had no idea that he was actually a drug smuggler and a car thief!

As I was still looking out the window, one of the officers put a gun to my head.



MOTHER AND DAUGHTER: Julie Griswold and her daughter, Joelle, when the family was still living in Cambodia



LANDLORDS: The family that the Griswold family lived with during their years in Cambodia



MINGLING WITH SHOPPERS: Julie mingles with shoppers and motorcyclists during a return visit to Cambodia some two decades after a land mine exploded in this same marketplace.



THE GRISWOLD FAMILY

I was surrounded by people speaking a language I didn't understand. I didn't know what was going on.

After what seemed like an eternity, the officer finally removed the gun that was pointed at my head and let me return to my crying baby. I could still hear them shooting as I grabbed my baby and crawled under the bed. I survived, but the fearful thoughts were with me all the time. These experiences and countless others left me shaky, nervous, and always on edge. My heart seemed as if it were always pounding.

It Won't Work

That's why I didn't think Scott's suggestion would work. But just the same, for the next two weeks I claimed God's promises. It seemed as though all I did was spend my days on my knees replacing my fearful thoughts with promises from God's Word. It didn't appear to be helping.

The two weeks were almost up, and then, on day 13, something amazing happened. I realized that I was getting a lot more things done in my day. I wasn't spending all my time on my knees battling with fear. By day 14, the last day of the agreed-upon timetable with Scott, I knew that God had performed a miracle for me. He had taken away the gripping, paralyzing fear and replaced it with courage. Oh, the Word of God! How powerful it is!

We stayed in Cambodia for five more years. God knew that I needed to learn how to overcome through claiming and believing His Word. He knew that later we would go through a military coup, with machine-gun fire and tanks in the streets. We had to know how to battle on our knees. And we did, claiming Psalm 27.

Returning to His Word

I still have fears. They just come in different forms: fears for my teenagers, fears of sickness, fears of not having enough money. How often I forget to use what He's taught me. But God has shown me what to do every time: to

search the Bible for that special word from Him that matches just what I'm dealing with. Then I replace the negative thoughts with His positive promises.

Are you afraid of something? Are you afraid of being sick, or getting in an accident and dying? Are you afraid of not having enough money to make it to the end of the month? of losing your job? How about the fear of family members being eternally lost? Are you afraid of the end of time? of not being ready to go to heaven? There seem to be so many things of which we are afraid.

God's truth is for us. He can protect us. We don't need to be afraid. The Bible says, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:12, 13).

The Word of God confronts our fears and our negative ways of thinking. It can feel like a sword, cutting deep inside, laying everything bare. But God does this to set us free from our negative thoughts and depressing feelings. That's why He tells us, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (verse 16).

I know from personal experience that God's Word is more powerful than anything I think, feel, or face. I am sure He will also help us conquer our fears as we replace them with His amazing Word. Even if we have to do it 11 times before the spaghetti is done! ■

*All Bible texts are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

JULIE GRISWOLD AND HER HUSBAND, SCOTT, WERE MISSIONARIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR 16 YEARS. THEY HAVE FOUR CHILDREN AND A CAMBODIAN GRANDCHILD. THEY NOW LIVE IN BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN, WHERE JULIE HOMESCHOOLS AND SCOTT WORKS FOR ADVENTIST SOUTHEAST ASIA PROJECTS MINISTRIES.

The Guide

ON A MISSION TRIP TO HONDURAS THE LORD TAUGHT ME AN IMPORTANT lesson about His constant watch care for me.

We had been working hard all week, laying cement sidewalks at an orphanage in Santa Barbara. The last day of the trip was reserved to give our tired muscles and minds a chance to unwind and soak up the beautiful scenery at a natural park in the Honduran jungle. The park contained a large waterfall, and the leader of our group excitedly told us there was a cave behind it. He had hired a guide to lead us there.

Not one for risk-taking, I was reluctantly persuaded by my friends and by my fear of regretting not joining the single-file line of barefoot adventurers as we walked the muddy trail toward the waterfall.

Soon the soggy trail headed downward until it took us to the edge of the rushing river at the base of the waterfall. Huddled behind a large rock to protect my eyes from the spray of the agitated river water, I waited my turn to grab the hand of the person ahead of me and push off into the river. One by one we joined hands in a line and fought the current, pausing for brief moments to cling to slippery rocks and try to catch our breath and clear our eyes from the blinding mist. Several times on this treacherous journey I felt my hand losing its grip on the rock or on the hands of my partners on either side.

Amazingly, each time this happened, I felt the strong hand of our guide grabbing my wrist and placing my hand back in a place of safety. At just the moment I thought I would lose my grip and be swept down the river, his hand was there, giving me silent assurance that someone saw my struggle and would not allow me to be lost.

After what seemed like an eternity, we crossed underneath the waterfall itself and took turns sitting inside the acclaimed “cave” (actually, it was a small dark hole that fit four people inside if you sat on top of each other) before turning around to repeat the treacherous journey back to shore.

Finally, exhausted from the struggle but with our feet firmly planted on land (well, mud), we took turns telling each other how terrified we had been and how close we had come to losing our grip and being swept downriver. And amazingly, the same guide who had diligently grabbed my wrist each time I started to slip had done the same for each of my friends when their grip loosened as well.

When I think back on this experience, I am reminded of the words of Isaiah 43:1-3: “But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: ‘*Fear not*, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; *you are Mine*. When you pass through the waters, *I will be with you*; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. . . . For I am the Lord your God’” (NKJV).*

We have a Guide who knows us by name and calls us His own. He sees our daily struggles against the raging current of sin and at just the moment when our strength appears to run out, His strong hand is there to put us in a place of safety. No matter what trials we are facing today, He will be with us, and we have nothing, absolutely nothing at all, to fear. How wonderful is that? ■

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JENNIFER CALHOUN WRITES FROM BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN.

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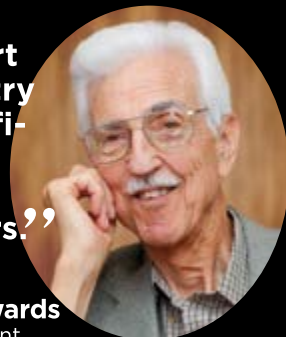


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