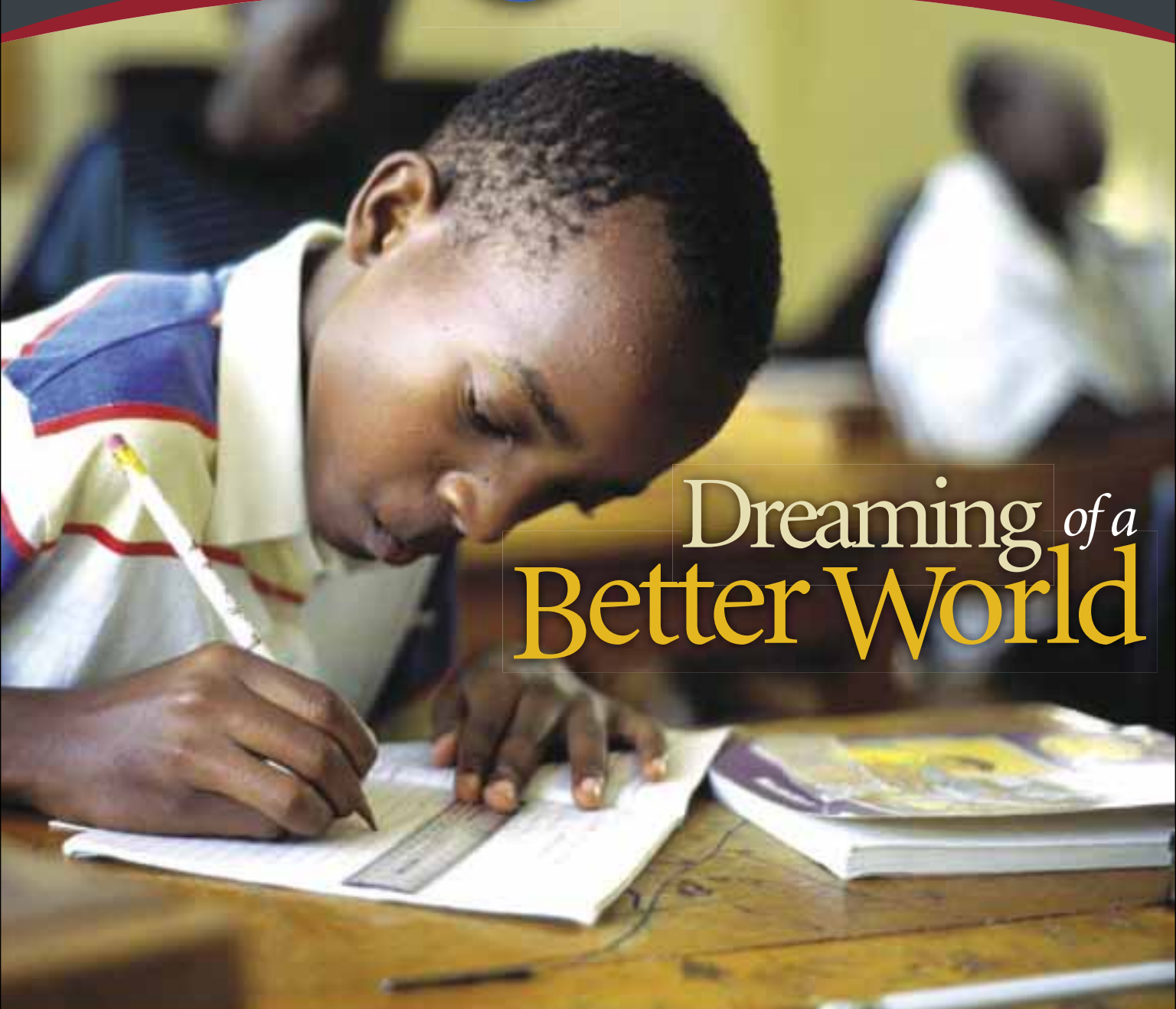


May 2008

# ADVENTIST WORLD



Dreaming of a  
Better World

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A BETTER WORLD

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ON THE COVER: A student at one of the schools supported by A Better World, receives an education that will improve his and his family's quality of life.



## WORLD VIEW

### Worship This Way

The 13-year-old African girl stood to sing at the worship service in the humid hall—slight-built, drawing back even as she stepped forward, clearly wishing she could be anywhere else. Her elderly accompanist seemed nearly as troubled. The anxious looks passing between them suggested that they had not had the usual opportunity to practice together.

As the first thin, reedlike tones of “Come, Come Ye Saints” floated over the heads of the congregation, I found myself admiring the young woman’s courage. At her age, I wouldn’t have dared to sing a hymn—particularly a complex one—in front of 500 people. She soldiered on, struggling in her nervousness to reach the higher notes. The encouraging words she sang might well have been directed to her own difficult task:

*Come, come, ye saints, no toil nor labor fear;  
But with joy, wend your way.*

*Though hard to you this journey may appear ...*

It was good, I reminded myself, that we should hear such a message on a Sabbath morning, even if the singer and the vocal quality were not superlative.

But then came one of those moments of heartfelt worship that made my eyes glisten with tears. Softly—so softly at first that I thought I was only hearing gorgeous acoustical overtones in the spacious room—a chorus of hummed and murmured harmony from hundreds of worshippers swept up the singer and wrapped her in warmth and strength. She brightened visibly and leaned into her song:

*Gird up your loins; fresh courage take;  
Our God will never us forsake ...*

This was the church—God’s beautiful, compassionate people—at worship, lifting up the one who felt her weakness, improving the song with all the rich varieties of gifts and harmonies the Spirit has given, joining in, instead of merely listening.

My voice broke with grateful emotion as I joined God’s people in supporting the singer:

*O how we’ll make this chorus swell,  
All is well! All is well!*

And it was. And it is. And it ever shall be whenever God’s people worship this way.

— BILL KNOTT

## WORLD REPORT

### For Arabs, Adventist TV Finally Speaks Their Language Church’s first Arabic-language broadcast in Middle East kindles hope.

■ An amateur crew of volunteers flown in from Egypt, Jordan, Cyprus, and Lebanon recently produced the first Arabic-language broadcast for the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s Hope Channel.

Working under the Hope Channel’s director of outside broadcasts, Andrew Hunt, the team completed a half-hour recording featuring a message on generosity by Jony Hajaj, an Adventist pastor from Amman, Jordan.

Hunt and his team offered a crash course on set construction,

camera operation, lighting, direction, and other fundamentals of studio production. Despite no previous media experience, the local volunteers delivered a “meaningful and relevant message for the people of the Middle East,” said Alex Elmadjian, communication and media services director for the region.

“Most of the good things in the world had small, humble beginnings.... With terribly limited resources, [the crew] is committed to sharing with their 300-million-plus Arabic-speaking community,” said



READY FOR HIS CLOSE-UP: Volunteers from the Adventist Church in the Middle East prep Adventist pastor Jony Hajaj of Amman, Jordan, for the camera. Hajaj later appeared in the church’s first Arabic television program in the region.

COURTESY OF MIDDLE EAST UNION

## WORLD REPORT

Gary Krause, director of the world church's Office of Adventist Mission.

"We want to maintain this energy and momentum by challenging our members to get together and explore creative ways to deliver God's unending love for the inhabitants of this region," said Kjell Aune, leader of the Adventist Church in the Middle East.

Elmadjian said the 10-day training event also equipped the volunteers with the skills needed for future production. One program in the queue, created by the drama team from the church's Nile Union Academy in Egypt, will address revenge—"a fitting subject in a region constantly longing for peace," Elmadjian noted.—*Adventist News Network, with MEU Staff*

### Alliance Links German, American Adventist Hospitals

■ The only Seventh-day Adventist surgical hospital in Europe, Krankenhaus Waldfriede in Berlin, Germany, is gaining a new ally in its desire to excel in medical treatment. The 88-year-old hospital signed a cooperation agreement with Adventist-owned Florida Hospital, which is celebrating its centennial this year.

Florida Hospital president Lars Houmann, and Krankenhaus Waldfriede chief executive officer Bernd Quoss signed the agreement in front of reporters, guests, and dignitaries, including the director of Health and Human Services from the American embassy.

"This partnership grew out of a shared desire to learn from the experience and expertise of these two world-class facilities. Our doctors, administrators, staff, and ultimately our patients will benefit from this exchange of ideas and sharing of best practices," said Houmann. "More and more, Orlando is becoming a global leader in health care."



COURTESY OF FLORIDA HOSPITAL

**NEW ALLIANCE:** Lars Houmann, center, president of Florida Hospital, celebrates the agreement between the Adventist-owned facility and Krankenhaus Waldfriede, the only full-range Adventist hospital in Europe, with Edwin Scharfschwerdt, retiring CEO and president, at left, and Bernd Quoss, incoming CEO and president at the Berlin hospital.

The two hospitals, which share a Seventh-day Adventist heritage, are agreeing to exchange scientific data and research equipment, benchmarking in administration and nursing, and medical work experience. These areas include surgical methods, pain management, and treatment approaches for gynecology, hand and ankle surgery, anesthesia, breast and colon cancer, general surgery, colorectal medicine, diabetes, and internal medicine. Doctors will also do rotations at the partnering hospital and refer patients to the other facility.

"After my two-month stay at Florida Hospital, I am pleased to announce this cooperative agreement," said Bernd Quoss. "While at Florida Hospital I met with highly professional medical staff, administrative staff, and frontline staff providing the highest level of patient care."

According to Quoss, Krankenhaus Waldfriede will benefit greatly in the

areas of economics, medical, and technology with this cooperative effort. In the federal capital of Berlin competition is very high with other health-care providers. Berlin is becoming a destination for treatment of foreign patients, as well as the headquarters for the use of high-tech medical equipment.

"This cooperative agreement is a first for Krankenhaus Waldfriede, and for this we are very proud. We are also very proud to partner with Florida Hospital," he added.

In a telephone interview, Quoss said that while only half of Berlin's population identifies itself as Christian, Krankenhaus Waldfriede, which has two Seventh-day Adventist pastors on staff as chaplains, is a desired hospital for many who want a spiritual touch to their health care. The chaplains try to visit each patient daily, they pray with those who desire counsel, and there are worship

services each Sabbath.

“We have a very good reputation in Berlin, because we have very good employees, physicians, nurses, and administrators,” Quoss told *Adventist World*. In a nationwide patient survey for the best hospital in 2007 regarding patient satisfaction and quality of treatment, Krankenhaus Waldfriede ranked number 6 among 2,000 hospitals.

Opened in 1908, Florida Hospital is one of the largest not-for-profit hospitals in the country, admitting more patients than any other hospital in the nation, according to the American Hospital Association. The more than 2,000-bed system, comprised of eight hospitals and 16 Centra Care locations, has been recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the best hospitals in the United States for the past nine years. Florida Hospital also has partnerships with hospitals and health-care facilities in other countries, including Mexico, Jamaica, and Peru. —*Florida Hospital, with Adventist World Staff*

### Italy, Adventists, Mark 20 Years of Religious Freedom

■ Seventh-day Adventist representatives met with Italy’s prime minister and officials March 6 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the agreement between the government and the Adventist Church. Once signed into law, it legalized relations between the church and the Italian state without compromising the church’s identity or independence.

“We wish to thank the authorities of our country for the freedom we enjoy,” said Daniele Benini, president of the Adventist Church in Italy. In 1988 Adventists were among the first Protestant denominations to sign the agreement in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation.

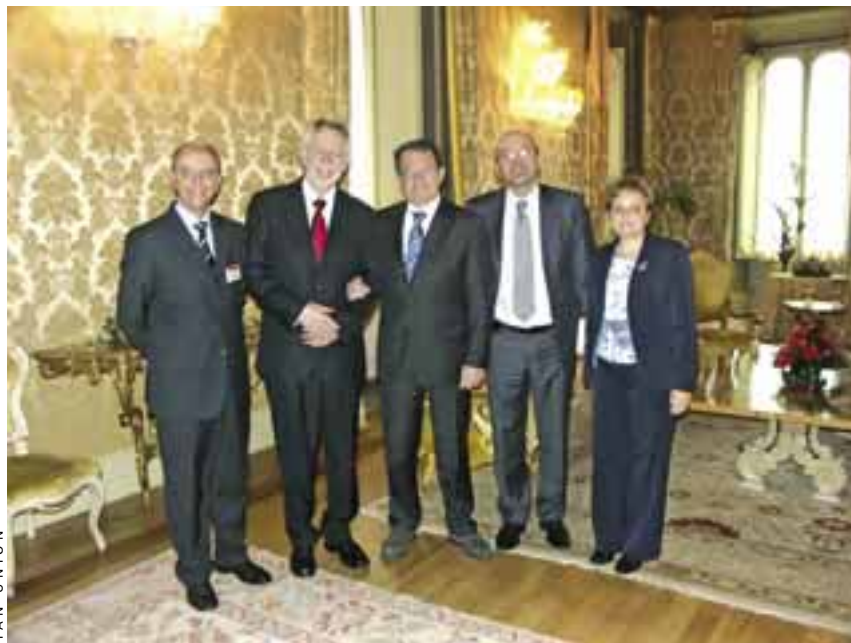
Dora Bognandi, director of the church’s department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) in Italy, said the agreement made full provision for seventh-day Sabbathkeepers in Italy. It also officially recognized Adventist ministers and ceremonies officiated by them, allowed Adventist young people to choose community service over compulsory military service, and established Adventist chaplaincy posts in the country’s hospitals and prisons. Following the agreement, the Adventist Church was allowed to advertise, as well as collect contributions.

“Italy is an incredible example of religious freedom,” said world church PARL director John Graz, who joined the Adventist delegation for the meeting. “In a country that is home to the Vatican, not only are we

recognized, but we are welcomed and well integrated. We have a voice in the public square and we are totally protected by the state.” Graz told the officials that he holds up Italy as a model of religious liberty during his travels to promote freedom of belief.

Prime Minister Romano Prodi, along with president of the senate, Franco Marini, and former republic president Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, said personal religious freedom is vital in a nation made up of many cultures and belief systems. Prodi, whose political career is ending, said he would continue to work for religious liberty.

Adventism first came to Italy in 1864. Today, nearly 8,500 Adventists worship in the country of nearly 60 million. “Despite our small numbers, almost everyone in Italy knows about the Adventist Church,” Graz said. —*Adventist News Network Staff*



COURTESY OF ITALIAN UNION

**CELEBRATING FREEDOM:** Adventist religious liberty leader John Graz and president of the Adventist Church in Italy, Daniele Benini, flank Italian prime minister Romano Prodi, center. The three joined other government and church officials at a meeting this month to observe two decades of full religious freedom in the predominantly Roman Catholic country.

WORLD REPORT

# Pentecost AND More Has Second Successful Run

*More than 38,000 join the church in a single day.* By LIBNA STEVENS,  
Inter-American Division

**M**ore than 38,000 people joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America as territory-wide baptisms took place during the second Pentecost and More event on March 15. The total is expected to rise to more than 40,000 as five of the church regions have yet to report. The historic three-and-a-half-hour program took place during a satellite broadcast viewed worldwide from the National Arena in Kingston, Jamaica—the event’s hub.

Pentecost and More represented the culmination of joint evangelistic efforts by thousands of church leaders and members throughout Inter-America’s 15 major church unions over the past several months. Last year’s program of the same name was hosted in the Dominican Republic, drew millions of satellite viewers, and accounted for 48,602 baptisms.

The title was inspired by the biblical Pentecost as recounted in Acts 2. The event featured a dozen satellite feeds from church sites throughout Inter-America as well as an array of musical and spiritual messages aimed at officially welcoming new believers and strengthening them as they join the church. The program was broadcast live through Adventist Television Network, the Hope Channel, 3ABN, and Red Advenir,

as well as Esperanza TV and 3ABN Latino. Translations were provided in French and Spanish.

“By joining the church today ... you are joining the likes of Adam, of Abraham, of Paul, of John, of Ellen White, of all the millions [of people] who are waiting for the coming of the Lord,” said Israel Leito, Inter-America church president, as he spoke to hundreds seated at the arena awaiting baptism, as well as thousands more viewing the broadcast.

“We must share the hope with the world, we must share hope with fellow believers, we must deliberately determine to be good and be good to others,” he said. “We have to stick together as fellow believers, we have to stick to our beliefs, we have to stick to our Lord, we have to stick to our hope, we have to stick to our commitment.”

It was that unity of hope and commitment to fulfill the mission of the church that brought the 3 million Seventh-day Adventists across Inter-America to celebrate together.

More than 7,000 people crowded inside National Arena to savor the culmination of the evangelistic efforts that swept through all of Jamaica’s 14 parishes during months of tent revival meetings and community outreach.

“Since January we have started our season of ‘reaping,’ which will be followed today by the season of

nurture and conservation,” said Patrick Allen, West Indies region church president, during the event. “We have prayed, we have fasted, and we have witnessed to men and women of the saving love of Jesus in small groups and in our local churches. Entire congregations have been involved. We thank God for the opportunity to rejoice with our brothers and sisters throughout Inter-America as we present our trophies to our God.”

Nearly 600 new believers, dressed in baptismal robes, arrived from throughout Jamaica in dozens of buses to publicly testify of their commitment to Christ. Dozens of ministers waited to submerge the new believers at the arena’s nearby Olympic-sized pool as well as one small baptistery set up inside the arena.

“I want the world to know that I am ready, that I’m not turning back,” said Admarie Hunte, a baptismal candidate who traveled with her youngest son, Denore Greaves, from the St. Mary parish in northeast Jamaica. She said she is the product of two generations of Adventists, but had never made the decision to get baptized.

“Jesus is my guiding light and I depend on Him day and night and every hour,” she added. “He never let me down.”

“I can’t explain how much I’m really happy, it’s the happiest time of



KEVIN HENRY/WIU/IAD



GROVER SAMUELS/IAD

**Top:** CROWD OF WITNESSES: Nearly 7,000 people crowded the National Arena in Kingston, Jamaica, to witness and participate in the Inter-American Division satellite event Pentecost and More, which resulted in more than 38,000 baptisms March 15.

**Right:** REPRESENTING THOUSANDS: Close to 600 believers—a representative number of the 38,000 immersed throughout the region—were baptized at the National Arena’s Olympic-sized pool in Kingston, Jamaica, as the Pentecost and More satellite event took place throughout the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America.

with the upper class, middle class, lower class, and the classless—all must be brought together under one great banner.”

In its second year as an evangelistic initiative, the 2008 Pentecost and More focused more on showcasing the impact the church has made in the local communities through unique outreach projects. Blood drives, feeding the needy, radio and television programs, Bible distribution, and aggressive health initiatives were just some of the outreach projects featured.


According to Balvin Braham, associate ministerial director for the church in Inter-America and main event organizer, another important objective this year was to refocus the gospel presentation on the consolidation and retention of new believers.

“We want these joint efforts to have lasting evangelistic effects throughout the territory, inspiring members to focus more on the felt needs of the people in their communities,” he said.

Plans have already been drawn for 2009’s Pentecost and More program. The idea is to host large events in each of the major 15 regions rather than having one hub for all, according to Braham.

“This will allow for yet more involvement of the membership in finishing the work,” he said.

“We are so grateful that the Lord has been using pastors, administrators, laymen, young people to carry the gospel as we look forward to the finishing of the preaching and the coming God and Savior,” Braham said.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America territory covers Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the northern tip of South America, and has more than 3 million members worshipping in 9,592 churches and congregations. 

my life,” said Wayne Whyte, another baptismal candidate. Whyte, now in his 30s, said although he had been exposed to the truth at an early age, he decided in the last few weeks to get baptized while attending a crusade at Padmore Adventist Church.

“I want to witness for Christ,” he said. “I want to be a true disciple.”

Thousands more baptisms were witnessed on the live satellite broadcast screens.

“This event not only dealt with the issue of baptism; it dealt with the issue of bringing the Inter-American Division together,” said Leito, following the program. “People saw each other, they heard each other, and we marched together as one [church].”

That message of unity has been more evident throughout the church in Inter-America during the past two decades as top church administrators have set out to encourage and

promote togetherness among its multi-cultural, multi-language countries and islands comprising the Inter-American Division. George W. Brown, former president of the church in Inter-America instrumental in laying the groundwork for the promotion of unity in the territory, delivered a special message on the subject.

“This is an ideal time for God’s church in the Inter-American Division to recapture once again the true spirit of Pentecost, the spirit of unity, oneness, and harmony as together we take the gospel of the kingdom to all the world,” Brown said.

“This is the key to a progressive advancing church in all the world: unity of spirit, unity of message, unity of purpose, unity as we go forward for the culmination of the work of God in all the world,” he added. “We are confronted with the rich and poor,

WORLD VISTA

# Five Things

By  
JAN PAULSEN

## the World Needs to Know About Us

There are moments when you're forced to step back and consider how your faith looks through another person's eyes. Sitting before the glare of television lights, speaking with a journalist who has perhaps never had a conversation with a Seventh-day Adventist, is one of those moments. How do you encompass, in just a few sentences—a few soundbites—the depth and breadth of your faith, the tremendous meaning it has for you personally, the richness of its history, the power of its message, and the promise it holds for both individuals and for society?

### Who Are You?

Over the past decade I've encountered the public media in many countries and in many different settings. And in each encounter I sense one basic, underlying question. It comes to me whether I'm speaking to a journalist in New York City or occupying the so-called "hot seat" on Malawi national television. It's

a question that is asked with an intensity that sometimes takes me by surprise: "Tell us, who are Seventh-day Adventists really?"

And when I tell them that we have a presence in almost every country, that we're a rapidly growing Christian community of—children and adults—some 25 million people, it surprises them. They ask, with a puzzled look: "Why do we know so little about you? Where have you been hiding? So tell us, really, who are you?" They are intrigued by the rapid pace of our growth when so many other churches within historic Christianity are losing ground.

What answer do we give? How do we best introduce ourselves to the world through the public media? In posing these questions I'm not suggesting we stray from our core task—teaching and preaching biblical truths. Evangelism is our mission. This must never be compromised. It's at the heart of our identity, our spiritual anchorage. But from this secure base, let's also talk about how our spiritual foundations shape us as a people; let's talk about the values that flow from these truths, and the practical difference they make not only in our own lives, but in the neighborhoods and cities where there is an Adventist presence.

And so, against this background, I'd like to suggest five points I believe we would do well to profile more prominently through the public media.

### 1. A "culture-less" faith

In a recent television interview the host asked: "How can modern life be instructed by a book written 2,000 years ago? They had such different values then!"

As a Seventh-day Adventist, I want the public to know that the values the Bible teaches are not imprisoned within any one culture or any particular period of history. They are timeless and "culture-less"; they speak to us no matter where we live or what our background. And so we must show how the values we advocate relate to life as we live it now. Compassion, selfless service, love of freedom, tolerance and respect for each other, willingness to give rather than take—these eternal biblical values have immense significance in today's world.

### 2. A living faith

Not only are our values timeless, they are alive. Ours is not a faith of theory but of practice. The faith we hold is not confined in an archive or textbook; it's not a faith that's best explained by the academic or even the theologian. It's a faith that



**Jan Paulsen** is president of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.



finds its most compelling expression in the everyday actions of the man or woman whose life has been transformed by Christ.

So let's demonstrate in the public sphere how the truths we hold impact our lives. Let's talk about our advocacy for religious liberty; for we are freedom fighters in the truest sense, working not only for those who share our point of view, but for everyone regardless of their beliefs.

Let's talk about our commitment to the cause of temperance, our historic struggle against those destructive elements of society—tobacco, alcohol, drug abuse and misuse—which cause such suffering to the family and community.

Let's explain why we are so focused on health care, development aid, and combating some of the scourges of humanity such as HIV/AIDS. For just as Christ stepped into the world of His time and offered healing and hope, so we feel a deep responsibility to each of God's children who experiences injustice or hurt.

I want the world to know we will do more than simply talk about the Scriptures; we will live its principles. And because of this we will inevitably be drawn into positive, constructive engagement with our communities.

### **3. Shaping people for eternity**

Journalists are often amazed by the sheer size of our church's education system. The interest is natural—we have a worldwide network of more than 7,000 schools and almost one and a half million students. But it seems to me that in presenting this picture we need to talk not just about statistics, but the reason for this tremendous investment in education. We need to say, without falling too far into religious jargon, that our commitment is grounded in our belief that eternity begins *now*. This is the time when we want to start shaping

people for a never-ending potential. We live and plan for an infinite future, and our concern for the development of individuals—spiritually, mentally, physically—is driven by this perspective.

### **4. Peacemakers**

In Rwanda, during the horror of the 1994 genocide, the churches failed. The disastrous events of that time went largely unchecked by a community that had for many years considered itself thoroughly Christian.

Let us never forget that when it comes to fulfilling Christ's command to be "peacemakers," silence can be as much a failure as speaking the wrong words. Silence in the face of evil is complicity in what is wrong; it can be a killing weapon when hatred is having a field day.

I want Seventh-day Adventists to be known as people who lift high their commitment to hope and peace. Let us speak from the pulpit and show through our actions that we oppose anything that instills hatred or inflames violence.

As individual Christians we may have limited tools for intervening in some of the larger issues of our society. But we can speak out consistently for peace. We can demonstrate in our congregations and in our relationships within the community that Christ has the power to heal divisions of all kinds: personal, political, or ethnic.

This means taking risks at times, stepping outside what is comfortable. And it means acting carefully to avoid tainting the church with even the "aroma" of partisan politics. But difficulty does not excuse us from this fundamental Christian responsibility to teach and model peace.

### **5. A people of integrity**


In an era when corruption of all kinds dominates the headlines,

Seventh-day Adventists have something to say about morality, ethics, and integrity. We're not happy to confine our spirituality to the church pew. We don't subscribe to a theology that says actions don't matter. But rather, we know that our conduct is either a constant confirmation or denial of our faith.

I want Seventh-day Adventists to be known as honest people who teach and practice morality; people with the highest ethical standards; people who speak out against greed and against the self-serving attitudes that corrupt society.

In some places we are already recognized for these values. The president of an African nation recently said to me: "Adventists can teach our country so much about integrity and ethical behavior." And this is wonderful. These are areas where we have so much to offer—both corporately and as individuals—within the public sphere.

In these conversations with the public media I find an openness, even an eagerness, to hear more about us, to discover what we value highly, to understand those issues we are prepared to engage with. And every now and then I hear a quiet, "That's amazing!" It's as though they had not expected a dimension to our faith that steps so decisively into the everyday world.

"Who are you, really?" Let's answer the question plainly and boldly. And in the picture we present, I pray the world will clearly see an image of the One we serve. 

*Editorial note: To view a recent television interview with Pastor Jan Paulsen broadcast internationally by Bloomberg television network, go to: [www.adventist.org/mission\\_and\\_service/features/bloomberg.html](http://www.adventist.org/mission_and_service/features/bloomberg.html).*



WIM DELEN

## WINDOW

# Into Iceland

Located just south of the Arctic Circle in the North Atlantic Ocean, Iceland is the least-populated Nordic country. It is Europe's second largest island (following Great Britain), and its capital, Reykjavik, is the world's northernmost capital city.

In spite of its rather forbidding name, Iceland enjoys a rather temperate climate relative to its location, due in part to the mild currents of the Gulf Stream. Iceland is a geological hot spot, with active geysers and volcanoes dotting the island. Despite its proximity to the Arctic Circle, its coasts remain ice-free, even in winter.

The first settlers in Iceland may have been Irish monks or hermits, who came to the island in the eighth century. The first permanent settler is thought to be Ingólfur Arnarson, who settled in what is now Reykjavik in 874. By 930, settlers established the Icelandic Free State, governed by the Althing, a legislative and judiciary parliament. Christianity came to the island about 1000.

In the middle of the sixteenth



### ICELAND

Capital	Reykjavik
Official language	Icelandic
Religion	National Church of Iceland/Lutheran, 87%; Roman Catholic, 2.5%; other, 5.5%; none, 5%
Population	313,000
Adventist membership	563
Adventist to population ratio	1:556

century Danish King Christian III imposed Lutheranism on all the citizens of Iceland, and the National Church of Iceland is, in fact, a Lutheran body. Icelanders enjoy freedom of religion, but there is no separation of church and state per se. Polls show that 43 percent of the population never attend religious services and only 10 percent attend regularly.

### Adventists in Iceland

The first-known Seventh-day Adventist in Iceland was Norwegian minister O. J. Röst. According to a report that appeared in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (now the *Adventist Review*) on Feb. 11, 1915, Röst visited various ports around the island in 1893. At Eskifjörður, he convinced a Lutheran minister to begin keeping the Sabbath. Although the man never became a Seventh-day Adventist, he kept the Sabbath for the rest of his life, despite opposition from his own church, which kept him in his ministerial position.

In 1897 David Östlund, a Swede, was sponsored by the Denmark Conference as the first Adventist missionary to

Iceland. On his trip to the island he met an Icelander returning home who had begun keeping the Sabbath as a result of reading the book *The Great Controversy*. Östlund began his work in Iceland by publishing and circulating two books: *The Second Coming of Christ*, by James White; and *Steps to Christ*, by Ellen White. In 1900 Östlund, a printer by trade, began publishing a semimonthly magazine, *Fraekorn (The Seed)*, which for a time had the widest circulation of any paper in the country.

Part of the Trans-European Division, the Iceland Conference has a membership of 563 in six churches. The conference, headquartered in Reykjavik, operates the Iceland Publishing House and a Bible correspondence school.


Adventists in Iceland face the same challenges as those in other industrialized countries: reaching a society that tries to satisfy its spiritual hunger with materialism, high-tech diversions, and secular philosophies and lifestyles.

To learn more about reaching our world for Christ, visit: [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org).

MATTIAS DE HOLLANDER



PAUL DUVAL



# Bell's Palsy

By ALLAN R.  
HANDYSIDES  
and PETER N.  
LANDLESS

**I have been diagnosed as having Bell's palsy. It doesn't seem to have totally resolved. Can you give any suggestions?**

**B**ell's palsy is a form of acute peripheral facial weakness, of which the cause is not known. It is typically recognized by an inability to close the eye, and a drooping of the mouth on the affected side.

About a third of the patients with this clinical picture do not have Bell's palsy, but may have a varicella zoster virus infection (which causes chicken pox and then shingles later in life), trauma, Lyme disease, diabetes, hypertension, or even a tumor.

The majority two thirds have Bell's palsy. A few cases have been noted to have herpes simplex virus in the fluid around the facial nerve, which has led to the use of antiviral treatments.

Typically, in the majority of cases the palsy clears up; but without treatment, 20 to 30 percent will have residual weakness.

Some studies have shown swelling of the facial nerve, suggesting inflammation, so prednisone has been used as treatment. When given in the first 72 hours, it reduces the number of people suffering permanent damage to approximately 5 percent.

A couple of studies added acyclovir or valacyclovir, antiviral therapies, to the prednisone, and one found some benefit that the other did not. In fact, acyclovir alone seemed to have poorer recovery than no treatment in one group.

Our recommendation would

be early treatment with prednisone (within the first 72 hours), but after that it is probably too late, and you will not get much benefit.

On an encouraging note, you will be far more aware of minor residual weakness than anyone else. In fact, people don't always notice much about others, so stop worrying about your appearance and enjoy life!

**I have diverticulosis but no symptoms. My aunt had this, but with a lot of pain. Should I be worried?**

**W**e believe your aunt probably had diverticulitis. This is where there is inflammation in these diverticuli you have been found to have. Diverticuli usually form in the colon, and are characterized by outpouchings of the colon, which look like little buds on the colon. When these are present and no symptoms exist, they are usually not a cause for alarm. Should they become blocked or even infected, they may cause problems. Such problems can range from discomfort to serious situations of perforation or abscess formation much like appendicitis, and sometimes obstruction of the bowel.

Treatment may involve antibiotic therapy to kill the causative bacteria, or surgery to drain pus and possibly remove diseased segments of bowel.

The diagnosis of diverticulosis is made with some 95 percent accuracy with a computed tomography (CT) scan; this may be able to show a difference between diverticulitis

and other problems. The disease diverticulitis is staged into four levels of severity, ranging from a small pericolic abscess to a large abscess, then to perforation; stage four is where fecal material has spilled into the peritoneum, the thin membrane that lines the abdominal and pelvic cavities. Being symptom-free, you do not have this problem but perhaps a look at causative factors might help you limit the progression of your diverticulosis.

Men and women seem equally at risk for diverticular disease, and its prevalence increases with age. It is more common in Western and industrialized nations, where it may be present in 10 percent of those younger than 40 years of age, and in 50 to 70 percent of those age 80 or older.

Epidemiologic studies suggest diets low in fiber and high in refined carbohydrates may play a role in the cause of diverticulosis. Decreased physical activity, constipation, obesity, smoking, and the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have all been implicated as possible causative factors. So if any of these factors apply to you, and we suspect some will, you should try to change your lifestyle in those areas.

Even for readers who don't have diverticulosis, the same recommendations apply: more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, exercise, and less refined foods! ●



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**Peter N. Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M.Med., F.C.P.(SA), F.A.C.C.**, is ICPA executive director and associate director of Health Ministries.

Looking for a good devotional plan is not always easy. Each year many excellent devotional books are published, but somehow, no matter how many inspiring stories and profound thoughts I would read in these books, I always found it hard to have a consistent devotional life.

Finally, I decided to go to the source. After all, as a research teacher, I always encourage my students to go to the source. So why not try it with my devotional life as well?

**Finding My Own Way**

While millions of Bibles are sold or given away every year around the world, it seems to be “the book that everyone wants to read but few do.”\* Uncomfortably, I fit into that category. I always wanted to read my Bible through, but somehow those “read your Bible through in a year” plans never worked for me.

Eventually, and partly out of a sense of desperation over being a 40-something, lifelong Adventist who had never read her Bible through, I came up with a crazy plan that actually worked. *Why not read my Bible through backwards?* I thought. After all, I read everything else from back to front—magazines, newspapers, books (reading the last few chapters first before going to the beginning). *Why not put this strange quirk to good use by enhancing my devotional life?*

Being more of an Old Testament person, so to speak (there are more stories in the Old Testament than in the New), I decided to try a modified version of my “backwards” plan—starting with Malachi and ending with Genesis; then jumping to Revelation and reading backwards to Matthew. I made an exception with the series books (books such as 1 and 2 Kings, and 1, 2, and 3 John. These I read in order—the first book before the second, etc.

**It Worked!**

The plan did wonders for my devotional life. First, it rid me of the compulsion of *having to get through a certain number of chapters each day so that I could reach the end on time*. With the pressure off, I was able thoughtfully to spend time with God’s Word, really listening and absorbing what God was trying to say to me that day.

Furthermore, the approach also enhanced my prayer life, since I now had much more to talk about with God, rather



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than just coming with a list of “thank Yous” and requests.

I also started being much more interactive with my Bible—writing comments or questions in the margins, and even dates when I wanted to claim a particular verse, or when a certain promise was fulfilled. The Word thus became a living, vibrant reality in my life, and I looked forward to my devotional time each day. As I continued reading, the margins started filling up with cross-references, as what I was reading on one day reminded me of things I’d read previously.

While I had no set agenda regarding an amount of reading I had to accomplish each day, it generally averaged out to about a chapter per day. The main rule was this:

By  
GINA WAHLEN  
**Reading**  
**BAC**  
*My devotional life was dull*

before ending my devotional time for the day, in my mind I would summarize what I’d read, meditating over it, searching for “a gem for the day”—some special thought from the passage that I could carry with me throughout the day.

**Gems and Eye-openers**

It was amazing the gems that would surface, even from what might be considered less-likely places in the Bible, such as Zechariah 11:15, 16. Here a “foolish shepherd” is described as one “who will not care for the perishing, [or] seek the scattered, [or] heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but [who] will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs” (NASB).<sup>†</sup>

As I thought about that verse, I was reminded that Jesus describes Himself as “the Good Shepherd,” and that since such a vivid description of a “foolish shepherd” had been given, surely the attributes of a good shepherd would be the opposite. Looking at things that way, I was able to discover a beautiful description of some of the attributes

*“The mind will enlarge if it is employed in tracing out the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture, and spiritual things with spiritual. There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God’s Word were studied as it should be, men [and women] would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that is rarely seen in these times.”*

(Christian Education, p. 249)

# KWARDS

*and frustrating, until ...*

of the Good Shepherd as One who cares for the perishing, One who seeks the scattered. One who heals the broken. And One who sustains those still standing.

I’m not sure this method would pass in a class on hermeneutics, but I know I was blessed many times by taking the time to reflect on what I read and then trying to carry the main thought with me like a special treasure throughout the day.

This plan will certainly not work for everyone. But the point is to find what will work for you; what will bring newness to your devotional life; what will bring you closer to God and His Word; what will give you strength for each day.

We should never be afraid of trying new ways of finding Him.

“So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth” (Hosea 6:3, NASB).

\* David Gibson, “Bible Illiteracy Rampant in America,” Religion News Service, 12/01/00.

† Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

## Questions for Reflection

1. What does it mean to have a good devotional life? And why is that important?
2. What do you see as the main threat to prayer and Bible study in the culture where you live?
3. What do you think of the method described in the article? Might it work for you? What strategies have you found most effective for you?
4. How can we teach new believers to develop an effective devotional life? How about children and teenagers—how do we teach and encourage them?

“Why does everything seem to smell of diesel?” I wondered as I turned on my water faucet one Sabbath afternoon. Living on a school campus that has an excellent water supply and a deep borehole, I had never considered the possibility of encountering water problems. But before the sun went down that day, our campus was buzzing with the news that our borehole had been contaminated. Fortunately, the school has a first-rate team of plant facility experts, who began grappling with our water problem. Soon some large Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) water trucks arrived, supplying us with potable fresh water.

**“If I had been there ... !”**

*If all else fails, I thought that day of the campus “water crisis,” we can always collect rain water—after all, this is the beginning of the rainy season here in the Philippines.*

The biblical Israelites, however, were not fortunate enough to have rainwater options while traveling through the desert. No ADRA water trucks either, only dust, stones, lowing cattle, and children begging for something to drink. I can imagine the excitement of the Israelites on one occasion, when after traveling in the desert for three days without finding any water, the news spreads through the crowd, “Water ahead!”

thirsty, and tired as they had before. And so the people begin to grumble.

When reading the stories of Israel’s desert wanderings, I have always been rather critical. I have marveled at their lack of faith in God and the speed at which they seemed to forget His miracles. In my mind, traveling back to the time of the Exodus, I would imagine myself standing next to Moses, shaking my head at the Israelites’ faithless behavior.

The experience of our own on-campus water problems, however, has taught me otherwise. I now realize if I had been one of the Israelites facing a contaminated water supply, I would have been in the front row complaining

# H<sub>2</sub>O—Pure and Simple

Water is something I have always more or less taken for granted. It’s always been there. But after this experience, as I carry buckets of water into my house, I have begun noticing and have been surprised by how much of it I use in a day and how dependent I am on water. I need water not only for drinking, showering, and doing the laundry. I also need it to wash my toothbrush, wipe the kitchen counter, rinse my hands while cooking, and wipe the mud from my shoes. I just *need* water!

The children find new energy and begin running. The cattle surge forward, sniffing the air eagerly. Dust, dirt, heavy loads, and aching feet are forgotten. *Water at last!*

Perhaps it is a cow or a little girl who arrives first at the pool of water, or maybe several people arrive at the same time. They may be expecting the water to be lukewarm rather than cold, but they do not expect it to be bitter. They find the water to be contaminated and unusable. It must seem to them like a cruel joke. I imagine everyone suddenly feels twice as hot, dusty,

By  
CHANTAL J.  
KLINGBEIL

the loudest. I would have been shouting, “What are my children supposed to drink? Why wasn’t this better planned? *Who* is responsible for this?”

I think I previously viewed the Israelites’ problems as spiritual and somewhat disconnected from everyday life—at least from *my* everyday life. But having faced the reality of contaminated water, I have now begun to understand some of their fears and concerns. I realize that spiritual issues and the basic necessities of life are intimately interwoven. My spiritual life is not something I can put on and off on Sabbath. It is not disconnected from my everyday life. In reality, it has everything to do with how I face bitter disappointment, whom and what I blame for my circumstances, how I handle my fears and worries for my children, or to whom I turn in order to have my basic emotional and physical needs met.

### **Learning to Be Thankful**

Perhaps I take too much for granted, such as the drinking water in my faucet. I assume I should be provided with my basic needs, as if I signed a preagreed-upon list of rights before consenting to be born while forgetting that nearly half of the world’s population doesn’t have water faucets that can just be turned on to enjoy potable water in the comfort of their homes. Too quickly I find myself failing to remember to be thankful for the essentials: When I say grace before eating, am I grateful? Am I thankful for a comfortable place to live, relationships that work, and people who love and support me? Do I keep in mind the exodus experiences God has brought me through, the lifestyle He has saved me from, the sins He has paid for in full?

Moses did what I need to learn to do: he cried out to the Lord (Ex. 15:25). We do not know the exact words he used, but it seems this “crying out to the Lord” involved laying out the problems before God as Moses saw them. His relationship with God was honest and open. He poured out his heart to God. He expressed his worries and fears. And then the miracle happened. Moses became quiet and gave God a chance to speak to him. God showed him a piece of wood. “Now what does a piece of wood have to do with contaminated water and a large group of unhappy people yelling for water?” he might have wondered. But as confusing as it may have seemed, Moses followed God’s instructions and threw the piece of wood into the pool and suddenly the water became sweet and usable.

I suspect that the first person to try the water again must have been rather skeptical. The solution to the problem perhaps seemed a little simplistic. It was, after all, just a piece of wood that had been lying there all along. But the person scooped the water in one hand and held it to the light. Then perhaps he smelled it, and

finally he tentatively took a small sip. “The water is sweet!” he exclaims.

### **Crying Out to God**

The objective of my spiritual life is to get to the place where I can cry out to the Lord, the place where all my self-made security blankets are stripped away. And once I have poured out my heart to the Lord, I need to be open to His Spirit and allow Him to show me the “piece of wood” I need. It may be a phone call and a simple “I’m sorry” to mend a relationship, or it may be more complex because God is wildly creative.

On one occasion, in order to meet the Israelites’ water needs, God told Moses to strike a rock (Ex. 17:6). Another time, He commanded the leaders to drill in the sand with their staffs (Num. 21:16-18). My relationship with God is not governed by set formulas. It is not a political negotiation game between two powerful parties. Amazingly, God offers to step into my small life with me. He wants to be involved. Together we can walk through the dry patches.

### **My Own Pieces of Wood**

As I carried buckets of water around the day our water was contaminated and wondered about the long-term prospects of getting clean water again, I decided I wanted to be more aware of God’s everyday presence and more open to the guiding of the Holy Spirit. That way I will allow God to show me the “pieces of wood” I need to transform the “bitter” in my life into “sweet.”



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**E**ric Rajah spent most of the month of February in Nakuru, Kenya. Rajah, director of the Canada-based relief

and development agency, A Better World, had traveled to Kenya in the wake of the social instability that had rocked the nation after that country's presidential elections late last year.

A Better World supports an orphanage in Nakuru, and the rioting and looting that followed the contested election and swept the country caused the destruction of many of the nearby homes and other buildings close to the orphanage. At times members of competing tribes appeared at the gates of the orphanage, only to be told that it was trying to remain neutral in the struggle, and that its only mission was to care for the children under its supervision.

Rajah's immediate concern was to procure food and other essential supplies for the orphanage, cut off during the chaos that accompanied the violence. But with thousands of displaced people in desperate need of food and shelter, Rajah and A Better World swung into action with emergency aid to assist with the larger relief effort, cooperating with local government and other relief agencies.

"Right now the camp we are in has 14,000 people who are displaced," he reports. "It's a terrible situation.

Our focus is mothers and children. We have about 2,000 mothers with children under the age of 1, that we do everything for—from mattresses to pots and pans, to feeding them, medicine, the whole works."

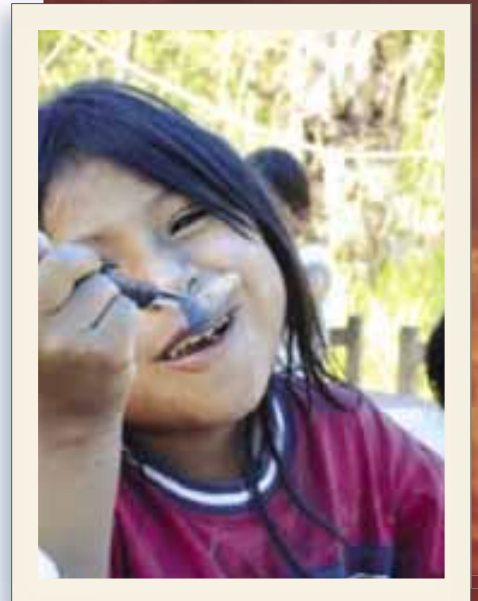
### **Giving Back**

Eric Rajah was born in Sri Lanka 50 years ago to parents who taught in a Seventh-day Adventist school. Eric's mother, when she was a child in Sri Lanka, had lived in a village where Adventist missionaries set up a school for local children. "My mother came from a very poor family," Rajah remembers. "Because of her education in a church school our entire family benefited by getting out of poverty." Rajah, his parents, and his two brothers eventually made their way to Canada, where Eric attended Canadian Union College (now Canadian University College).

After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree, Rajah received a business degree from the University of Vancouver in British Columbia. Then he returned to Canadian University College and served as director of Student Finance. Five years later he started his own business in Red Deer, Alberta.

"When I started my business I said, 'Someday, if I'm successful in Canada, I want to give back some money and time toward helping people.'"

In 1990 Rajah teamed up with Brian Leavitt, then campus chaplain at Canadian University College, to fund development projects around the world. Using the College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church as a base to receive funding for A Better World, and with members of the church board serving as the administrative body for A Better World, Rajah and Leavitt began their modest operation by donating CAN\$5,000 to fund a rehabilitation program for victims of polio in Kendu



# Bet



**Stephen Chavez** is managing editor of *Adventist World* and *Adventist Review*.





**Clockwise from right:**  
AFGHANISTAN: Volunteer couple Arni and Elvine Skoretz helped to fund this tent, one of 14 being used temporarily at schools for girls sponsored by A Better World in Kabul.  
BOLIVIA: A small girl enjoys a meal at the Familia Feliz (Happy Family) School and Orphanage in Bolivia.  
KENYA: A member of the Masai in Kenya tries on a pair of eyeglasses obtained at one of the many eye clinics provided by A Better World.

# Dreaming of a Better World

By  
STEPHEN  
CHAVEZ

*An Adventist organization provides education, health care, and shelter to those who have done without for too long.*

Bay, Kenya. (A report of that project appeared in *Adventist Review*, “Tall in the Village,” Apr. 5, 2001.)

“I tried to adopt a business model for humanitarian work,” Rajah explains. A Better World views its projects as investments, not only as charities. “Our returns don’t have to be monetary, but [the projects] have to produce some results,” he says.

Another part of this “business model” requires local communities to contribute an amount equivalent to 25 percent of the amount they receive from A Better World.

And finally, overhead expenses are kept at an absolute minimum. “Our goal is zero overhead,” says Rajah. “Nobody’s paid; we have no office; we don’t even have a telephone bill. Everybody who travels has to pay their own way; they have to donate their own time. None of the donor money goes to pay for overhead.”

Eighteen years later A Better World works in 12 countries, including Afghanistan, Bolivia, India, Kenya, Rwanda, Tibet, Uganda, and the United States (following Hurricane Katrina).

“Third World countries don’t have the social networks and the tax system to support the population, and we are still dealing with the basics of education, water, and health,” he says.

### How It Works

From its modest beginnings 18 years ago, A Better World now oversees nearly 20 projects a year and brings in more than CAN\$2.5 million in donations. “We invest a lot of money in education—building schools, training teachers, supplying books and desks to these schools,” says Rajah. He notes that in many parts of the world local governments cannot provide the infrastructure necessary for the education and health needs of their citizens. But that

with a little help from organizations, such as A Better World, teachers and medical professionals can serve their communities in facilities provided with outside help.

“We build [schools] and clinics in partnership with local governments so that we don’t have to sustain them,” he says. “We expect them to put their teachers in place, and we have that agreement before we start [building] the school.”

A Better World also works with a “community development council” in each community, made up of the five or six most influential members of the community. A village chief, school principal, hospital or clinic supervisor, and a couple of others help determine priorities for their communities and help implement the projects. The council then monitors the fund accounts and provides periodic reports.

Then volunteers for A Better World, traveling at their own expense, visit each project once or twice a year to check its progress and make sure everything is running smoothly. “They spend two or three days at our project sites monitoring the previous year’s work and planning the next year’s

**Top:** KENYA: Nine-year-old Jackline, with Andrea Giacobbo (left) and Paula Munro, takes her first steps. A Better World provided elbow crutches, standing frames, braces, shoes, and other materials for disabled children at Small Home. Because of a congenital condition, Jackline had never walked before.

**Bottom:** TIBET: Holiness Karma Gyurme Rinpoche is surrounded by children at the grand opening of the Waritan School in Quinghai Province, China. The school is sponsored by A Better World.



ALL PHOTOS BY A BETTER WORLD

work.” Says Rajah: “We work in a community for five to 10 years.”

A Better World has a volunteer base that is 90 percent non-Adventist and 10 percent Adventist. And Rajah estimates that 98 percent of the financial donations to A Better World come from non-Adventist donors.

Rajah explains, “In my business I saw many people, most not religious, who were not going to church but had a deep desire to help people. They didn’t have a mechanism to engage themselves.” Some independent churches in and around Red Deer that don’t support a regular mission/humanitarian organization donate to A Better World to fulfill their Christian duties to the “least of these” in other parts of the world. Public elementary, high school, and college classes have joined A Better World to raise money and donate services to projects around the world. “This is an unwritten passion for me,” says Rajah about the wider community in Red Deer, “to engage them and let them know what the church does.”

At the completion of a project, donors are invited (at their own expense, of course) to attend the grand opening ceremonies and see for themselves what their donations have accomplished. “It fires them to come back and raise more money,” observes Rajah.

The profile of the College Heights Adventist Church in Lacombe has risen dramatically in the last 18 years. All donations to A Better World are receipted through the church. People from the community attend the annual Humanitarian Day service, at which different community leaders have been keynote speakers. Last year’s speaker, Gord Bontje, president of Laebon Homes and chair of the Catholic school board, commented, “I have been supporting A Better World for the past seven years. I

had a chance to go on a trip last November with my daughter. I am amazed how a group of volunteers can make such a huge difference.” An editorial in *The Lacombe Globe* (Jan. 22, 2008) entitled “The Ripple Effect of Kindness” accompanied a front-page story by the paper’s editor, Lisa Joy, reporting on a trip she took to a Muslim community in Kenya where medical and optical services are provided by A Better World.

The broad donor base to A Better World is reflected also in the cross-cultural projects funded by it. “We don’t want people to think we’re just taking their money and supporting Seventh-day Adventist projects only,” says Rajah. A Better World serves communities where the majority religion is Muslim, Buddhist, Roman Catholic, or Protestant, as well as Adventist. “Every time we name a building, A Better World is always at the bottom,” says Rajah. “[The sign] will say, ‘Funded by the local community and A Better World of the College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church.’”

A Better World also sponsors short-term, two-week mission programs. “We say, ‘Take your vacation, turn it into a mission, and enjoy both,’” says Rajah.

### **Always a Need**

A Better World partners with other development and relief agencies around the world, notably the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Red Cross, Action for Hunger, and Medical Assistance Program (MAP) International.

Rajah’s next initiative is to enlist youth and young adults in the work of A Better World, especially those who study on public college or university campuses. “Two years ago we got a group of engineering students from

the University of Ottawa to set up their own chapter,” says Rajah. “They worked on a water system and solar lighting. They did it as a class project with their professors.” Another group of five high school students and two college students were part of a group in Kenya earlier this year.

This year A Better World is supporting the following projects:

- Balochi Breakfast Center in Kisumu, Kenya, provides breakfast to 200 orphans who attend three local elementary schools.
- Familia Feliz Orphanage in Bolivia cares for 50 orphans and is helping to develop an agricultural program that will provide for their nutritional needs.
- Kedowa School for the Deaf in Kenya needs permanent buildings to replace the temporary ones that serve its more than 60 deaf students and staff.
- Kipchichim Hostel in East Kenya provides housing for children with physical disabilities.
- In Afghanistan a school for the blind is in the planning stages, as is a school for girls.

Information about these and other projects, as well as how to be involved in A Better World, is available at its Web site: [www.a-better-world.ca](http://www.a-better-world.ca).

Anyone who has traveled in a developing country is familiar with the systemic needs such as poverty and sickness caused by lack of education, medical care, food, and shelter. Those who volunteer with A Better World know that their actions touch only a fraction of the world’s needs. Yet they also know that while we wait for the “new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. 21:1) seen by the prophet of Patmos, their duty is to the ones Jesus described as “the least of these” (Matt. 25:45).

For those they serve, A Better World begins now. ●

God has a much higher standard for His people to reach than they have reached in the past. What can I say that will give them a consciousness of the responsibility resting on them to be Christlike in word and deed? ... Did we live the words of Christ, we should be brought into such close contact with Him that we should know what to do in order to advance the work of God. When we take Christ as our example in character-building, we shall make decided progress. When we are filled with a desire to be like our Saviour, when we refuse to weave self into the work that we

God points out the path of duty, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." In that path lie self-denial and the cross, but it is [the] only path of peace and safety. But there are many who are turning their backs on this path, and are walking in the companionship of self—a companionship that they have every reason to dread.

#### **Jesus First, Others Second**

The divine revelation and commission given to Moses made him great. He would not cease pleading, "Show me thy glory." And the Lord made His glory pass before

# PREPARE TO Serve

By  
ELLEN G. WHITE

*"I'll be a witness for my Lord."*

do for the Lord, when we look away from finite counsel to the One who is too wise to err and too good to do us harm, we shall be strong in the strength of the Lord....

#### **Putting Self Aside**

We need to feel our obligation to the higher Power. That presence is ever with us, asserting supreme authority, and taking account of the service that we render or withhold.... "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." This command must be sacredly observed if we would fulfill the purpose of God for us in our creation and redemption. We must rise heavenward, making God first and last and best in everything. He is our sole, supreme, and everlasting good....

him. Moses talked with God face to face, as a man talketh with a friend. The realization of his inability to do the work given him drove him to God, to plead for the people under his leadership. Naturally he was diffident, slow of speech, hesitating, self-distrustful; but he was eloquent as he besought the Lord in behalf of his people. He presented them before God, saying, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written."

It was mercy that ruled in the leadership of Moses. It was mercy that spoke through the words and deeds of Christ. Not one thread of selfishness was drawn into

the web. To those who today move forward under the command of Christ, God will give kindness, patience, long-suffering, and gentleness, with a trusting heart.

### Looking to Jesus

The representatives of Christ are to rely constantly on His wisdom. This is necessary for the safe guidance of those whom they lead. It is a sacred, solemn work to be in charge of and to lead the Lord's people. In this work there is need of constant watchfulness and prayer; and those engaged in it need daily to receive the gift of God's grace,



CARTER PERRIER

that they may have wherewith to impart to others....

God asks of His workers a humble, trusting, obedient heart, and the willing service of the whole being. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." ... The only power that is of worth in God's sight comes through the meekness and lowliness of Christ.

Every day God's workers are to be partakers of the divine nature.... Then God will work through them and with them, enabling them to scatter blessings wherever they go, and to build up the work where Christ is building,

strengthening the hands of His laborers, and discerning with clear perception what needs to be done. They are collaborators with Christ, representing His character in goodness and compassion and love....

### "I will make you fishers of men"

All along the path we travel we are to leave waymarks of the love of Christ. This love, acted out in the life, always brings a response. It causes offerings of gratitude to be brought to God by those who appreciate His goodness. God's workers will be acknowledged as their efforts to forward His cause are made in harmony with the plan of the Saviour.

Those who are connected with God as His collaborators can reveal greatness of soul only as they hide the life in the life of Christ, and strive to comprehend the exalted character of the work in which they are engaged. A true estimate of the sacredness of this work can be gained only as we behold it in the light of the sacrifice that Christ made in order that men and women might be saved from sin.

Christ expects each of His followers to do His work. This He has commanded in His Word. "Follow me," is His call to them. He came to our world to give men an example of a perfect life. He who in God's service sacrifices all of self finds his reward in the work of seeking to save the lost, and in the joy that he feels in seeing sinners brought to the Saviour. God wants men to forget themselves in the effort to save souls. He calls for light-bearers, who will fill the world with the light and peace and joy that come from Christ. He will use humble men,

men who cherish a sense of their weakness, who do not think that the success of the work depends on them. He will use men who will remember what the service of God demands—the Christlikeness of word and deed that God calls for. Such ones will reveal that Christ dwells in the heart, imparting purity to the whole life. ●

This article is excerpted from one that first appeared in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, now the *Adventist Review*, ([www.adventistreview.org](http://www.adventistreview.org)) November 24, 1910. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

It's 4:00 a.m. He's not home ... again! My feather pillow—a poor substitute for the body warmth I lack. Thoughts race around in my mind, rudely bumping into each other. *Where is he? What's happening to him? Why isn't he home?*

The Father's silent answer is simple: "Trust Me."

I ignore it and dial his mobile. I get the answering service. I DON'T WANT THE ANSWERING SERVICE! I want to talk to my husband ... NOW!

I want to scream out, "Why is this happening to me?" but replace the urge to wake my neighbors by making myself a warm drink I cannot swallow—my internal agitation won't allow it. Tears well up in my eyes, and I fight them back as I hear the patter of my 5-year-old on the stairs. I put on the bravest face possible when she asks me, "Mummy, where's Daddy?"

God helps me to hold it together. And I explain to her that "Daddy is not here right now." Then I'm hit in the face by her follow-up: "Is he coming back?"

Is he coming back?

I cuddle my daughter in my arms, and we return to bed together. As she saunters into dreamland, I face the reality of a life without my husband, without her father.

NUMBER 23

# Marriage and the Family

By  
CATHERINE  
BOLDEAU

*Under attack—internally and externally*

**Point of Desperation**

On January 21 my husband had awakened at 2:30 a.m. with a sharp pain in his calf. Because of a previous conversation he'd recently had with a medical friend, he called the emergency services, and a pastor friend took him to the hospital. There the doctors identified a life-threatening clot in his leg, a leg he'd broken some three weeks earlier while on a trip to the other side of the world. That same day, our daughter was diagnosed with a rare hormonal

abnormality that will mean numerous tests, hospital visits, and monitoring for the rest of her life.

I managed to hold it together for most of the day, but around 7:00 in the evening I had a plan of action that would solve all my problems. I would raid our bank accounts, cash in all our investments, sell my car, and hire a team of nurses and carers to look after the increasing needs of my husband and daughter. Then I would leave.

Now I know you're thinking: *rotten wife, cruel Mummy, selfish person!* But

## Marriage and the Family

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between partners who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church.

Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, marriage partners who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving disciplinarian, ever tender and caring, who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-9; John 2:1-11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; Matt. 5:31, 32; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6.)

for those 10 minutes I wanted to stop the roller coaster of misfortune that had become my life and walk away.

Those delicious thoughts of freedom and mouth-watering recklessness, however, were rapidly replaced by the realization that I was in a committed family relationship for “better or for worse.” *“Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church.”*<sup>1</sup> Pulling myself together, I banished all thoughts of “stop my world, I need to get off,” and determined by the grace of God to be as functional a wife and mother as I am able to be.

### **Beautiful (Tarnished) Gift**

Marriage is not easy. I can testify to that. The past seven years for us have had challenges that resemble a dramatic fictional novel. Except that it was all real, and both my husband and I lived through it. What kept us together is our fundamental belief in the sanctity of marriage and family as we believe God intended it—as stated in the Bible and as intricately woven into the fabric of the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I believe that marriage, along with the Sabbath, was a gift God gave to Adam and Eve as part of Creation. Marriage was intended to be beautiful, sacred, and intimate, one of the crowning acts of Creation—“bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23). But sin badly tarnished this gift. And the state of perfection that existed between Adam and Eve, which God wanted for all generations, changed. In its place emerged boundless pain and endless suffering.

Of all the Fundamental Beliefs of the Adventist Church, none gets attacked publicly on a daily basis more than Marriage and the Family. You have only

to turn on the television to see how distorted a view of family life it portrays. Affairs, incest, child abuse, spousal abuse, lying, cheating, materialism—these are integral to the dramatic scenes constantly being enacted. Marital unfaithfulness is depicted as fascinating and alluring, with few attending consequences. News reports highlight the growing problems in families, with little concern for long-term solutions. Documentaries take us into the homes of “real people” and exhibit the sorrow and anguish of daily life for a typical person. Society voyeuristically absorbs

## *Of all the Fundamental Beliefs of the Adventist Church, none gets attacked publicly on a daily basis more than Marriage and the Family.*

all the mess that it sees and then reenacts it, spewing its bile in front of up-and-coming generations of young people, who are led to believe that it’s “normal” to belong to a dysfunctional family.

An important, but often neglected, aspect of the doctrine on Marriage and the Family is that “increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message.”<sup>1</sup> I want a great family life for my own benefit and to enjoy my husband and daughter; but recently I’ve been wondering if I sufficiently appreciate the fact that “the greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family.” Says Ellen White, “This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.”<sup>2</sup>

When Christ told His disciples to “go and make followers of all people in the world” (Matt. 28:19, NCV),\* He was not only talking to paid

preachers and medical missionaries. He was talking also to everyone, including families. “I pray that they can be one. As you are in me and I am in you, I pray that they can also be one in us. Then the world will believe that you sent me” (John 17:21, NCV).

My Master was talking to me.

### **A Tad Guilty ... but at Peace**

It’s 4:00 a.m. one week later. My husband is asleep next to me. At least, I think he’s asleep, though I can’t feel his heart beating, nor hear him breathe.

He stirs. And all the muscles in my

body relax. I suddenly feel very guilty about my earlier thoughts of leaving. I feel a kick in my back. It’s baby! I give her a hug and kiss. I feel terribly guilty. Both of them need me. And I need to be the wife and mother God designed me to be. Not only to serve the needs of my family, but in order to be true and faithful to Him, and be a witness to my community, my friends, my neighbors. ●

\*Texts credited to NCV are from *The Holy Bible, New Century Version*, copyright © 1987, 1988, 1991 by Word Publishing, Dallas, Texas 75039. Used by permission.

<sup>1</sup> Fundamental Beliefs, No. 23, italics added.

<sup>2</sup> *Adventist Home*, p. 32.



### **Catherine Anthony**

**Boldeau** is a freelance writer/trainer and public relations practitioner. She is also a director of Vision

Solutions, a Christian business solutions company; and is currently completing a master’s in creative writing, specializing in memoir and nonfiction.

# PLANTING Gospel Seeds

By  
HANS  
OLSON

**TRADITIONAL WAYS:** These workers harvest tea the same way it's been done for generations. Those who share the gospel with them must know something about their lifestyle and traditions.



ALL PHOTOS BY HANS OLSON

*Global Mission pioneers reach out in Sri Lanka.*

As we drove into town the van stopped with a jolt. The side door slid open and a man jumped in. “Go that way,” he pointed. As we drove through Hewaheta, a colorfully decorated town crowded with people engaged in their daily activities, a question raced through my mind. *How are these people going to hear the gospel?*

We were in Sri Lanka, a picturesque, pearl-shaped island nation some 30 kilometers (19 miles) off India’s southeastern coast. It’s been more than 100 years since Adventist lay member Abram LaRue landed in Colombo, Sri Lanka, as its first Adventist missionary. Yet only some 3,500 Adventists live among Sri Lanka’s 20 million people. Its strong ethnic and religious divides have caused skirmishes and years of social unrest, making it a challenging place to share the gospel.

**The Setting**

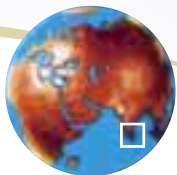
The man who jumped into our van is Sivayogam, a Global Mission pioneer serving Sri Lanka’s beautiful hill country. This region is noted for its tea plantations and exceptional local produce. These cool rolling highlands are filled with hardworking Tamil people brought from southern India during British colonial days to work on the tea estates. Many of these “hill country Tamils,” as they’re called, spend most of their lives on these estates.

Frontline mission work in Sri Lanka means meeting people in their homes. There are no large halls to host evangelistic meetings. Most people don’t own a car. They travel by bus, public minivan, or three-wheeled taxi. The lucky few own small motorcycles that can barely carry more than one person up the steep roads. Some pioneers walk as much as two hours each way to study the Bible with people in their homes. Most pioneers live in small houses that double as churches.

We head out of the village and turn onto a twisting

**Left: WILLING TO SHARE:** Sivayogam, a Global Mission pioneer, shares the gospel with groups small and large in Sri Lanka’s hill country. **Right: RESPONDING TO THE MESSAGE:** Christians make up less than 10 percent of Sri Lanka’s population, so progress in sharing the gospel is slow but steady.

**QUICK FACTS ABOUT  
Sri Lanka**



Capital	Colombo
Population	20 million
Adventist membership	3,500
Ratio	1:5,714
Official languages	Sinhalese and Tamil
Religions	Buddhist 70%, Muslim 7%, Hindu 7%, Christian 6%, unspecified 10%



country dirt road just wide enough for two small cars to pass—if one pulls onto the shoulder. We stop at Sivayogam’s home at the top of the hill. He likes living out of town, shielded from prying eyes. People in this region don’t always welcome pioneers and are skeptical of Christianity in general.

Over the past 15 years as a Global Mission pioneer, Sivayogam has endured his share of trials. In one village nearly 1,000 people gathered and threatened his life. “I felt scared,” Sivayogam admits.

### **Slow, Steady Progress**

Sivayogam and his family hold worship services in his home. His wife, his partner in mission, runs an English-language school for nearly 60 children. The school gives Sivayogam a chance to meet the children’s parents. This is a great gateway for him to share the gospel. Each Sabbath Sivayogam and his wife conduct a branch Sabbath school for the students and their siblings.

After meeting his family and seeing the school, we follow Sivayogam across town to a tea estate where he holds a weekly prayer meeting. We turn into the estate and slowly pass women filling large baskets with tea leaves. We wind our way up the hill, stopping to pick up Masilamony, a young pastor from another faith. He’s been studying for the past year with Sivayogam.

Masilamony told us that a fellow minister at his church learned he was studying the Bible with Sivayogam and called him into his office. The man was upset; he beat Masilamony and kicked him in the face. Undeterred, Masilamony now keeps the Sabbath and hopes to become a Global Mission pioneer himself.

Near the top of the hill the van stops. “We’ll have to walk from here,” Sivayogam says. The path is too narrow to drive. Sivayogam’s group of nearly 20 people is waiting for us. Sivayogam stands on a large, red, floral rug in the center of the room. People sit on smaller carpets along the walls. The service is simple but special.

The meeting ended, we say our goodbyes and make our way back to the van. As we wind our way down the hill I’m impressed with Sivayogam’s work. But I realize that unless we have more pioneers like Sivayogam, many people in Sri Lanka will never have an opportunity to meet Jesus. ●



**Hans Olson** is a communication project manager for the Office of Adventist Mission.

## *What Is* **Global Mission?**

Global Mission is the frontline mission arm of Adventist Mission, an office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s world headquarters. Since 1990 Global Mission has established new congregations in previously unreached areas of the world. These include everything from a North American suburb with no Adventist presence, to an entire country in the 10/40 Window—a region that stretches from West Africa to the Far East, and is home to many of the world’s major religions, the relatively fewest number of Christians in the populations, and fastest growing cities.

Global Mission projects start as local initiatives. They involve sponsoring lay members, called pioneers, who volunteer at least one year to establish new congregations within their own

cultures. Pioneers have the advantage of understanding their communities, speaking the local language, blending in with the local people, and often cost far less than traditional cross-cultural missionaries.

Just as Jesus sent out His first disciples to preach, teach, and heal the sick, Global Mission’s frontline workers reach out to meet the practical needs of people. Pioneers share the good news through a wholistic ministry that includes caring for the sick, running literacy programs, holding evangelistic meetings, and giving Bible studies.

The Adventist Church in Sri Lanka has made a concerted effort over the past 10 years to send pioneers into communities to meet people where they live. Since 1997 the total number of Sri Lankan congregations has grown from 28 to nearly 50.

Last year Global Mission supported nearly 1,500 church-planting projects in unentered areas of the world at a cost of nearly US\$18 million. Since 1990 pioneers have established more than 11,000 new Seventh-day Adventist congregations.

To learn more about frontline mission work, visit [www.Global-Mission.org](http://www.Global-Mission.org) or call 1-800-648-5824.

Public worship requires some kind of order. Through the performance of specific rites worshippers express their love and gratitude to their Creator and Redeemer. I cannot provide a specific sequence of religious acts to be performed during worship, but I can list some of the main elements and their meaning. Whatever takes place during the worship hour should be biblically grounded.

**1. We Worship God:** When we gather to worship we must bring with us the clear conviction that we have come to worship *God*. Anything that distracts us from that should be set aside as unworthy. In fact, whenever God is displaced and humans take “center stage,” the result is idolatry. When the Israelites were tempted to follow idols the Lord asked, “To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?” (Isa. 46:5, NIV). He seemed to say, “Explore the universe and find someone like Me. If you find a being like Me, then worship him.” But He immediately added: “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me” (verse 9).

**2. We Pray:** Prayer is one of the most sublime acts of private and collective worship, through which we come into contact with our Lord. The physical postures we assume as we pray are meaningful, and we should think about them when we worship. When *kneeling* we surrender our lives to God. We voluntarily go down to the dust from which we were created, acknowledging that our lives belong to God, and hoping He will return it to us enriched with His blessings. Sometimes we pray *standing up*. This was the posture of those who approached the king seeking an audience (see Esther 5:2). When we stand to pray we are collectively standing before our King in a private audience. At other times we pray *sitting down*. This is the posture of a student or a child who sits in order to be guided or instructed by the Lord, to be enabled to serve Him (cf. 2 Kings 4:38; Eze. 8:1; 2 Sam. 7:18). Through prayer we express to God our gratitude for blessings received and request strength to overcome new challenges and temptations.

**3. We Sing:** Our singing addresses God, not the congregation. The congregation appropriates the

message of the song and offers it to God as if it were its own. The hymn should not be about “me” or “us,” but about the One we worship. Through it we express our feelings, needs, love, and praises to God for His bountiful blessings. Congregational singing is a ritual act through which the unity of the church is expressed collectively as members lift their voices to praise the Lord in one spirit, one faith, and one purpose. The oneness of the church and its union with the risen Lord come to expression in a unique way through congregational singing. It binds us together by expressing common religious feeling and faith that shape our identity and allow us to join the singing of the heavenly family (cf. Ps. 148).

**4. We Give:** The expression of our gratitude to God reaches a particular climax during the collection of tithe and offerings. The offertory reaffirms our covenant relationship with the Lord. Through our tithe and offerings we acknowledge that He blessed us during the week, that He is our Lord, and that all we have is His. Our offerings indicate that our love for Him flows freely from a grateful heart.

**5. We Proclaim the Word:** It is from the center of the platform that the Word is proclaimed every Sabbath. Worship is centered in the self-revelation of God through the Scripture. It is a rational act because the divine speaking is intelligible. We come to learn from the Word, to be encouraged by it, to be instructed for Christian service, to be disciplined, and to rejoice in the good news of salvation through Christ. This places a heavy responsibility on those who preach, as well as on those who listen. The purpose of the sermon is not to create confusion or address theological controversies, but to allow the congregation to hear the message from the Lord through the Scriptures. That’s when we approach the Lord with open hearts in humility and submissiveness. ●

## Order *in* Worship

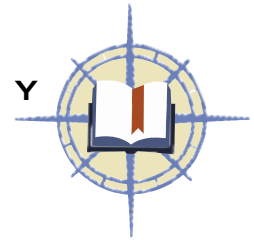


### QUESTION:

*What about a biblical order of worship? What is correct, and how and when should it be done?*

By ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

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



# Law, Obedience, and the Sabbath

By MARK A. FINLEY

If we are saved by grace, what is the role of the law in the life of the Christian? Does God's grace negate His command to keep the Sabbath? What part does obedience play in the Christian life?

Many sincere Christians have failed to find acceptable answers to these questions. In today's lesson we will explore what the Bible teaches about this vitally important topic.

**1. According to the apostle Paul, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have received "grace and apostleship." What is the purpose of these two wonderful gifts? Read the text below and write your answer in the space provided.**

*"Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name" (Rom. 1:5).*

"... grace and apostleship for \_\_\_\_\_ to the faith."

Through Christ's matchless grace we stand before a righteous God as if we had never sinned. Christ's perfect obedience is credited to our account; His righteousness is ours by faith; the same grace that cleanses our past empowers our present. Through His grace we live lives of obedience.

**2. To what does God's goodness lead? Put your answer on the line below.**

*"Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4).*

The goodness of God leads to \_\_\_\_\_.

The New Testament word for repentance means a change of attitude, either for or against something. God's grace changes our attitude about sin. His goodness leads us to turn away from sin and turn toward a life of obedience.

**3. How did the apostle Paul describe the reasons Christ died? Read the text below and list the three reasons Paul gave.**

*"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14).*

Christ gave Himself for us to:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ us from every \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ for Himself His own \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

**4. How do we show evidence of our faith?**

*"But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works" (James 2:18).*

We show our faith by our \_\_\_\_\_.

James also wrote: *"Faith without works is dead"* (James 2:20).



**5. What was the disciples' response when Jewish authorities tried to silence their preaching?**

*"We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).*

The disciples' motto was "we ought to \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_."

God's grace led the disciples to obey Him. Turning their backs on God's law would have been unthinkable. Keeping the seventh-day Sabbath was their loving response to the Christ who redeemed them.

**6. Paul preached the message of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles in Antioch. When did he preach? Circle your answer.**

*"On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:44).*

According to verse 43, Paul "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." Continuing in God's grace meant living an obedient life. Part of living obediently is keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.

The gospel also took root in Pisidia, as Paul preached God's grace in a synagogue on the Sabbath (see Acts 13:13, 14). These two specific examples of salvation by grace led to obedience in Sabbathkeeping.

**7. How does the Book of Revelation describe God's end-time people?**

*"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).*

God's end-time people are distinguished by:

1. Keeping the \_\_\_\_\_

2. Having the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Faith leads to obedience, and obedience to God's law is linked to Sabbathkeeping.

**8. What is the only way to live a godly, obedient life? Circle the three words that say how this is done.**

*"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart" (1 Pet. 1:22).*

For the disciples, grace was the means of their salvation; obedience was the fruit, or result, of their salvation. The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead, gave them power to live godly, righteous lives. The Sabbath was part of that life of obedience. The Holy Spirit longs to do for us what He did for those believers. Let's submit ourselves to Him.

Our next Bible study will examine the role of the seventh-day Sabbath in the final events of world history.



## LETTERS

### What If ...

I celebrate the March 2008 article “The Third Person” and the importance that Roy Adams placed upon the coming of the Holy Spirit in power. My key contention with the article is that I think Adams understated the importance of the Holy Spirit.

What would the world look like if every church became a place where the Holy Spirit, the Father, the Son, and their presence in our midst became of primary importance in every gathering, ahead of our programs and our idea of what ought to happen at church or other gatherings? What if programs and the things we have crafted became secondary to God, and everything we did as believers became about Him? What if every prayer was crafted by the Holy Spirit, if every word spoken was only that which we could recall of what the Holy Spirit gave us to say? What if we learned how to hear from the Holy Spirit so clearly that we could do just what He said the Father wanted us to do? What if we all were to ask Him how to use the spiritual gifts He promised to give us? What if we all were to ask Him how to die to the things the enemy has in our lives and make room to be fully filled with the Holy Spirit so He could flow out of us like a river bringing life to everyone in our presence?

Let’s start crying out more earnestly, “Holy Spirit, Come!”

OWEN ROBINSON

*Perth, Western Australia*

### Adventist Judge in Uganda

I received a recent issue of the *Adventist World* magazine and was very pleased with the content, especially the World Report news, in which we meet the church’s administration and those chosen by God to lead His work.

I was also very happy to receive the news (in the March 2008 issue) that Daniel D. Ntanda Nsereko was nominated a judge for the International Criminal Court.

This nomination is a reason for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be proud. After all, the presence of an Adventist judge in the courtroom will promote the divulgence of our message through his example and professional ethics.

I would like to suggest an interview with Nsereko so that the Adventist community can know him better—his aspirations, ideals, dreams, and mission.

I am also a judge here in Brazil. Because of my profession I’m very pleased to know that a member of our church has such a responsibility. We should pray for him, his family, and work.

JOHN SILAS DA SILVA

*Brazil*

### The Role of Children

Thanks a lot for the January 2008 *Adventist World*. The cover story highlighted the role of children in the society (see “A Little Child Shall Lead Them,” by Wilona Karimabadi). I’m sure it was educational for all the people who read it. Once more, thank you.

JOHN OGANDO

*Karura, Kenya*

### Behind Prison Bars

I commend the magazine for printing the article “Behind Prison Bars,” by George Uba, in the January 2008 *Adventist World*. I believe that, as Uba stated, “no one is beyond the reach of God, even those serving time in prison. They too are of inestimable value to our heavenly Father,” as taught in Matthew 25:31-46.

And kudos to the Humanitarian Service for Prisons (HSP) for its invaluable and commendable services to the prisoners in Romania and its environs. This is not only humanitarian but ordained as a divine endeavor to reach those who are lost. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to earth more than 2,000 years ago to seek and save sinners. A religion without a prison ministry fails to observe the foremost reason why Jesus came to earth.

In the United States there are pastors, elders, and members in the faith who are active in reaching out to prisoners. It is also noteworthy to cite the indefatigable works of the Adventist church in Youngstown, Ohio, headed by Pastor Alejandro Rodriguez, Elder Felix Daniel Figueroa, and “Brother Rafiel,” who visit inmates in the Northeast Ohio Correctional Center every Wednesday and Sabbath. Their longtime involvement in reaching prisoners went a long way in sharing Bible

## LETTERS

studies in the pursuit of seeking the lost through the Word of God.

The apostle Paul exhorted early Christians not to forget those who are in prison. He said: “Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also” (Heb. 13:3, NKJV).

LARRY R. VALOROZO  
*New York, United States*

### **The Nature of Christ**

I read each issue of the *Adventist World* and enjoy its content. It so happened that I was to preach on the title “Jesus My Friend” and was overjoyed with the article “Christianity’s Great Mystery,” by Angel Manuel Rodríguez, in the November 2007 issue. I also appreciated Kris Bryant’s letter (see

World Exchange, *Adventist World*, February 2008), especially the last paragraph, and incorporated it into my sermon.

KINGSLEY PETER  
*Via e-mail*

### **From a Friend**

I’m very grateful for the *Adventist World* magazine, which I discovered from a friend. The copies I’ve read have really inspired my life. How can I get monthly copies of the magazine?

May the Almighty above reward you abundantly.

BENARD OUMA NYAKOYO  
*Nairobi, Kenya*

*Adventist World is distributed to church members for free. Our advice to this reader and others with similar concerns is to contact the Seventh-day*

*Adventist Church union or division office in your region of the world. To read online, visit [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org). We are gratified that the magazine is filling this important need.*

—EDITORS.

### **Spirit of Prophecy**

Thank you for including the Spirit of Prophecy articles in each issue of *Adventist World*. It is the best part of the whole magazine.

BARBARA KENDALL  
*Idaho, United States*

**Letters Policy:** Please send your letters to the editor to: [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org). Letters must be clearly written and to the point, 250-word maximum. Be sure to include the name of the article, the date of publication, and page number with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

## THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Please pray for my mum, who is not well. She is in Zimbabwe and her condition is really bad.

SIBONGILE, *United Kingdom*

My nephew, a newborn, has had open-heart surgery. He is in recovery now. Please pray that our family raises enough money to pay the necessary medical expenses.

ELMIE, *Philippines*

Please pray for the Adventist leaders in the Central Uganda Field.

LUBUULWA, *Uganda*

Please pray for the peace process in Kenya. Help us thank the Lord for the strides that have already been made and beseech Him to enable us to lay the criteria for sustainability, including electoral, judicial, and constitutional reforms.

JOHN, *Kenya*

We have lived in a warlike situation for 30 years, with our lives threatened. God has shown me that we have work to do together. We need your prayers.

JUAN AND JEAN, *United States*

By the grace of God, after I received my theology degree this year, I will serve in the mission field. I request

prayer for my parents who still have not accepted the transforming love of God. They both are ill and need a miracle—for a physical and spiritual cure. I ask that you pray that their hearts be opened to Jesus Christ while they still have time. Thank you.

OTACÍLIO, *Brazil*

**The Place of Prayer; send to [prayer@adventistworld.org](mailto:prayer@adventistworld.org).** Send us your prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer). Keep your entries short and concise, 75 words maximum. Items sent to this category will be edited for space and clarity. Even though we will pray for each entry during our weekly staff meetings, not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country’s name with your entry. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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## EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

# Goodbye Casino Owner, Hello Disciple of Christ

*A reader shares the story of how a taped testimony changed a man's life.*

The phone in my office rang at 4:00 p.m. on December 15. When I answered it my receptionist told me that someone from the St. James's Club Hotel wanted to speak to me. I asked her to find out what the nature of the call was. She reported back that a taxi driver had said someone from Ukraine wanted to meet me.

I decided to take the call and spoke to a woman who claimed to be the friend of a Ukrainian man staying at the hotel. The man spoke no English, so she agreed to speak for him. She was calling at his request.

Further inquiry revealed that the mysterious man had become a Seventh-day Adventist after hearing the testimony I gave at the General Conference session in 2005. Apparently, my testimony was taped by some of the Ukrainian members who were present at the session. They played it on the television when they returned home. One of the people who watched the testimony was a casino owner, Valery Ivanov, the visitor staying at the St. James's Hotel. After hearing my testimony, he decided to become an Adventist. In addition, he decided to travel to Antigua to meet with me.

I invited Ivanov to church the next day and he videotaped the service. He greeted the church members through his interpreter. After the service he and his friend had lunch at our home. Ivanov said he was moved by the fact that I decided not to be invested on the Sabbath by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Ivanov decided to change his lifestyle. He told me how he sold his casino and started another business that has enabled him to live in accordance with his newfound faith.

The interpreter was the wife of the captain of an oil tanker that makes regular calls to Antigua. If she had not been present at that time in Antigua, Ivanov and I would not have been able to communicate. I do not believe that her presence in my country at that particular time was a coincidence.

Brother Ivanov promised to return to Antigua someday and I promised to keep in touch with him through his interpreter.

The incident brought home to me the importance of giving our testimony whenever the opportunity arises.

I invite my fellow believers all over the world to pray for Ivanov and the other church members who live in Ukraine.

—SIR JAMES B. CARLISLE, former governor-general of  
*Antigua and Barbuda, West Indies*



MICHAELA KOBYAKOV

# The PEOPLE'S PLACE

## ADVENTIST LIFE

During Sabbath school our 4-year-old granddaughter, Savannah, learned a great Bible truth. The program was about the Good Shepherd and how He cares for His sheep.

Part of the way through the program each child brought their little sheep to the “water” to drink. When they were finished they were told to go back to their seats for the rest of the program. On Savannah’s way back to her seat, she looked to see how her little sheep was doing and noticed it was missing. She asked, “Where is my sheep?”

The teacher acted surprised and said, “Let’s look for your sheep.” The other children joined the search. After a few minutes, Savannah found her missing sheep. She was so excited! The class began singing, “Rejoice, I have found my sheep.” As we sang together, Savannah held her little sheep tightly and rocked it back and forth. She felt the happiness Jesus feels when He finds His lost sheep!

—Sharon Follett, Tennessee, United States

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*“Prayer is not a means to an end; prayer is the means to a Friend.”*

—Pastor Tim Peterson, Forest Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, Everett, Washington, United States

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



DARLENE MEYER ALLEN

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

As a young girl in her native Moldova, Hope Catcher\* says she loved it when her mother told her “stories of people who went to distant lands to share Jesus with others.” Today, Hope is one of those people, sharing the love of Jesus in a foreign land. Since August 2007 she has been volunteering in a closed country where she teaches English as a Second Language to more than 1,100 students. Hope admits that volunteering has its share of troubles, but she says “I know why my Lord sent me here, and I’m glad that I can share my faith with the people around me.”



Before volunteering in this closed country, Hope served for a year and a half at Helderberg College in South Africa. There, she worked in the college library. Next year she plans to volunteer in yet another country so she can continue to share God’s love with others.

If you would like to read stories about other Adventist volunteers around the world, or learn about how you can participate in the volunteer program, go to [www.adventistvolunteers.org](http://www.adventistvolunteers.org).

\*Not her real name.

**ANSWER:** At the Seventh-day Adventist church at the Burmese refugee camp located 87 kilometers south of Mae Sot, Thailand, these three girls posed for a photograph. Our photographer met them and other children, church members, and Pastor Winsleigh Chu when she visited on Sabbath, September 8, 2001.