

December 2008

# ADVENTIST WORLD



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## WORLD VIEW

### Making Room for Peace

“Lord, grant us peace.”

The prayer is as old as the Christian Church, and one of its most ancient hymns as well. From the catacombs of first-century Rome to the high-rise apartments of twenty-first century urban life, believers have been imploring the Lord of peace to quiet the “noise without” and the “noise within” through the gift of heavenly peace.

We crave a sense of inner calm as we wrestle with the pressures of daily life: getting—and keeping—a job in difficult economic times; relationships that change and age, sometimes painfully; the feeling that we are “behind” in almost everything—in time, in work completed, in things done for the Lord. One hundred million times a day—or more—believers ask for the peace they do not have.

We pray for peace, hoping that this gift will somehow bring order and quiet to our lives. But the Bible reminds us that the peace of Jesus does not simply settle over our lives like the spring rain that refreshes the land. Peace is one of the greatest spiritual gifts, but as one of my friends

likes to say, it is a “spatial” gift as well: it takes up room; it moves things aside; it displaces what was already there. The peace of Jesus does not simply cover up and mask the anxiety and conflict it comes to resolve. It moves them aside; it pushes them away, out of our lives. And it requires that we choose to make the necessary room by setting some things aside and embracing others.

I can increase my peace by doing certain things and avoiding others. If I turn down the media—the newspapers, radio, television, cell phones—I discover a blessed space in my life in which the peace of Christ may rule. If I silence my tongue when I am tempted to respond in anger or pride, the peace of Christ has new room in which to dwell. If I choose, by God’s grace, to mend broken relationships, I spend so much less time worrying about past pain and injury that I am suddenly freed to know God’s joy—and peace—in great abundance.

Next time you find yourself praying for peace in your life, allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of the space you can make in which this wonderful gift of Jesus can find a lasting home.

— BILL KNOTT

## WORLD REPORT

### Budget Adjusts for Tough Financial Times

■ The financial situation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is under pressure from the turbulence that rocked world financial markets in September and October, General Conference financial officials report, but world church leaders have taken what they call prudent steps to manage during the crisis.

On October 13, the Annual Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists voted to accept a 2009 budget based on 2007’s income levels, along with a resolution



**CAREFUL PLANNING:** General Conference treasurer Robert E. Lemon and associate treasurer Roy Ryan (left) discuss investment income and roiling financial markets during the October 13 Annual Council session in Manila, Philippines.

MARK A. KELLNER/ADVENTIST REVIEW

## WORLD REPORT

allowing the GC Administrative Committee, or ADCOM, to make interim adjustments to the budget between the Manila session and the spring 2009 business meeting, which is expected to be held at church-owned Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, United States.

General Conference treasurer Robert E. Lemon, addressing Annual Council delegates, noted that tithes received by the world church in 2007 amounted to U.S. \$1.78 billion, an 11-percent increase over 2006's \$1.6 billion. Worldwide mission offerings for 2007 totaled U.S. \$63 million, approximately a 10-percent rise over U.S. \$58 million received in 2006.

Though much of the increase has come from increased giving in local currencies, Lemon said a "major portion" of the increase is attributed to conversion into the U.S. dollar, which has weakened.

Tithes in the church's North American Division increased about 4 percent; the NAD also recorded an approximately 2-percent increase in mission giving, Lemon reported.

In commenting on the financial situation and the need to have the ability to adjust the church's budget as conditions shift, Lemon said the General Conference operates in a way that's different from some other organizations.

"Our budgets are not built on the dollars we have," Lemon noted, "but on the blessings we anticipate." This means, he said, "We don't know what effect the markets will have" on future income.



**THANK YOU:** Norman Maphosa, of church-owned Solusi University in Zimbabwe, which is facing an unprecedented daily level of hyperinflation, expresses appreciation for a grant to the church in that country.

MARK A. KELLNER/ADVENTIST REVIEW

In light of this, church leaders are already making moves to economize, Lemon said. "We will be holding off as long as we can" on filling vacancies at the world headquarters, he noted, though the hold is "not a total freeze" on filling vacancies that might occur. Similarly, the voted approval of a 3-percent increase in appropriations included in the 2009 budget might have to be delayed—or even eliminated—depending on economic realities.

A major portion of the October 13 Annual Council discussion surrounded the General Conference's operational funds equity investments. Some of these have taken a 30- to 40-percent "hit" in the days before the meeting, but they represent a very small portion of overall operating funds for the world church. Associate treasurer Roy Ryan said the purpose of most equity investments is to generate sufficient returns to

compensate for inflation and to preserve purchasing power. Ryan said it is not prudent to attempt to "time the market."

General Conference president Jan Paulsen agreed, saying the church "is as conservative as possible" with its investments.

Along with the budget modification resolution, other actions taken include a vote to raise, at a minimum of 1 percent annually, the working capital reserves for the General Conference from 40- to 50-percent of a year's unrestricted income. Another move would grant U.S. \$1 million to the South Africa Union, as well as loan an additional U.S. \$2.5 million, repaid over 10 years, to sufficiently fund the Union's pension obligations as required under South African law. The move, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean

Division president Paul Ratsara said, would finally unify the two pension plans of two former unions.

An additional motion gives the world church the ability to allocate as much as U.S. \$3.5 million to complete construction of the Adventist University of Africa, a graduate school being constructed in Nairobi, Kenya. By making that allocation now, Lemon said, it would allow construction to proceed in a better fashion.

Perhaps the most poignant moment came when appreciation was expressed for the grant of U.S. \$300,000 to the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division for use in Zimbabwe, which is facing a rate of hyperinflation unseen since the days of Germany's Weimar republic.

Norman Maphosa of Solusi University in Zimbabwe expressed his thanks to the world church for this grant, noting that the "situation is deteriorating" in his country.

In other financial news, church leaders said the "extraordinary tithe" reported earlier as the proceeds from a family's sale of a private business has reached just under U.S. \$102 million, to which another U.S. \$2.8 million in interest has been added. Of the U.S. \$104 million available for allocation some U.S. \$75.7 million has been allocated to world divisions, as well as GC institutions and programs aimed at world evangelism. Another U.S. \$15.7 million is reserved for future allocation, leaders said.

—By Mark A. Kellner, news editor, *Adventist Review*, with reporting by Ansel Oliver, *Adventist News Network*, writing from Manila, Philippines

### 1 Million Join Church in Year

■ For the fifth consecutive year, more than 1 million people have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide, according to this year's church statistical report.

Church leaders said for the year ending June 30, 2008, an average of nearly 2,800 people joined the church each day, bringing the world membership total to 15,780,719.

There is now one Adventist for every 425 people on the planet. In 1980, the ratio was 1 to 1,268.

This year's report reflects a membership audit of the church's South American region, which resulted in a more than 300,000-member decline.

"While previous audits in other divisions were also intense, the more accurate membership totals suggest a positive look toward the future," said Bert Haloviak, director of the world church's Department of Archives and Statistics.

Reporting a "realistic membership" can prepare a region to grow, church officials said.

Between 2003 and 2005 the church in Southern Asia-Pacific lost 400,000 members from membership audits, Haloviak said. But that region now has the second highest regional growth rate of 6.6 percent—the highest growth rate since the region organized in 1997, said world church executive secretary Matthew Bediako.

Bediako said he hopes more of the church's 13 world regions will conduct similar audits.

Both Bediako and Haloviak presented their findings during reports to the world church's Annual Council business session in Manila, Philippines, on October 12.

Church growth patterns indicate most church growth took place in non-Western societies. About 89 percent of church growth occurred in six of the church's 13 world regions—South America, Inter-America, East-



RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ANN

**AUDITS MEAN GROWTH:** World church executive secretary Matthew Bediako said he hopes more of the church's 13 world regions conduct membership audits. Church officials believe such audits generate more accurate membership totals and inspire new growth.

## WORLD REPORT

Central Africa, South Africa-Indian Ocean, Southern Asia, and Southern Asia-Pacific.

Africa and Latin America are now home to about 70 percent of the church's membership. About 18 percent of members reside in Asia, 7 percent in North America, and 5 percent in Europe and Oceania, Haloviak reported to delegates.

Bediako said he was encouraged that missionaries are now coming from more countries and serving in more countries than ever before. There are now more than 2,800 missionary volunteers serving throughout all the church's world regions.

Other church leaders presented their evangelistic efforts as part of the church's Tell the World initiative, the theme for the quinquennium ending in 2010. Gary Krause, director of the church's Office of Adventist Mission, reported the success of mission pioneers in countries where the church is developing.

Several leaders also mentioned the success of church planting in developing church growth. Krause pointed to a Fuller Theological Seminary study that said three people are needed to bring someone to Christ in a church that is one to three years old. That figure jumps to seven people in churches that are four to seven years old. Eighty-five people are needed in churches 10 years and older.

Leaders said church growth came from many initiatives, including media outreach, personal witness,

**PRESS PLEA:** Robert Smith, president of the Review & Herald Publishing Association, urged a commission studying the status of publishing in North America not to "make the cure worse than the disease."



schools and other institutions, and public evangelism.

—By Ansel Oliver, assistant director for news, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, reporting from Manila, Philippines

### Annual Council Votes Administrative Changes

■ Leaders of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists have voted to ask the next world business session for broad authority to change church departmental structures and hiring, as they pursue greater efficiency than the current process, leaders say.

"It is important for the church to be able to move with flexibility and dexterity," said Jan Paulsen, General Conference president, the morning after the October 12 ballot. The decision, he said, "is a signal of the fact that we want to retain the flexibility to function as a dynamic community while protecting our values."

Paulsen's comments came after the Annual Council, the world church's yearly business session, voted to ask the 2010 General Conference

Session in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, to allow the church's Executive Committee to make changes in the structure of headquarters departments without first getting a quinquennial business meeting to approve the moves. The General Conference session will continue to have final authority to review or reverse adjustments made by the Executive Committee during the quinquennium. Also, the election of associate departmental directors or associate secretaries of associations will shift from a GC session to the first Annual Council following a session, if the proposal is approved in Atlanta.

The two administrative proposals were the result of the 3-year-old Commission on Ministries, Structures and Services, which held a series of global meetings in which the church's operations were evaluated. The report came to the floor of Annual Council on the day that General Conference treasurer Robert E. Lemon reported that the 16-million member

Seventh-day Adventist Church was dealing with the uncertainties of the current world financial market. Lemon, Paulsen, and other leaders emphasized the need for the church to be able to respond to such conditions more quickly.

A key rationale for allowing the Executive Committee to make departmental changes between sessions is this need for flexibility in changing times. The decision to ask for a change in the way associate directors and associate secretaries are elected is designed to relieve pressure on GC session nominating committees and newly elected departmental directors, some of whom have had to choose their associates with very little time.

The church did “not give up anything that is valuable” in taking the action, Paulsen said, but rather is enhancing the ability of church leaders to manage in a more dynamic fashion.

He noted that while “we have done things in a given way for so many, many years, perhaps there is another way.”

The potential for “another way” may also extend to the operation of two church-owned publishing houses in North America, the Review & Herald Publishing Association (RHPA) in Hagerstown, Maryland, and the Pacific Press Publishing Association (PPPA) in Nampa, Idaho. Both presses have historic roots in Adventism: Review & Herald was the church’s first publishing house, and for many years operated in Battle

Creek, Michigan, and Takoma Park, Maryland. Started in Mountain View, California, PPPA is another long-time publishing house for the church. Both houses have been central to producing literature and magazines for the world church, as well as North America. Review & Herald prints *Adventist Review* and many editions of *Adventist World*. Pacific Press is lead printer on the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, the church’s Sabbath school quarterly.

However, Paulsen said October 13, “publishing is also a business,” and “from time to time we have to ponder the question if we have the best arrangement of publishing institutions.”

Paulsen asked, “Have we put together the best publishing structure to serve the church?”

To find out whether that’s the case, Paulsen proposed—and delegates accepted—the creation of a commission that would have “the task of assessing publishing realities.” With members principally drawn from North America, the goal is to have the commission’s report ready for the 2009 Spring Meeting at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama.

Though the motion passed easily, Robert Smith, RHPA president, noted that the General Conference has studied the North American publishing system previously. He urged that the new commission not “study us to death and make the cure worse than the disease.”

Smith asserted that RHPA made a profit of \$100,000 in the year ending September 30. He said that if the General Conference “would give us all

the work that is justifiably ours,” the press’s business would be stable.

Pacific Press president Dale Galusha told *Adventist Review*: “We welcome opportunities such as this to explore better ways to even more effectively strengthen the church, promote its mission and deliver faith-strengthening and spiritually inspiring books and materials to our church members.”

—By Mark A. Kellner, news editor, reporting from Manila, Philippines

### **New Administrators Elected**

■ The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s Executive Committee elected four new church officers and leaders October 12, the first full-day business session of its Annual Council.

The committee voted new leaders for Southern Asia, North America, the world church headquarters and a legislative liaison for Washington, D.C.

John Rathinaraj, secretary of the church in Southern Asia, was elected president of the region, based in Hosur, near Bangalore, India, and provides administrative oversight for the church in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. He replaces Ron Watts, who resigned from the position earlier this year because of family health matters.

Rathinaraj, 59, said he will focus on growing membership in the region through church planting and evangelism, setting a goal of 200,000 new church members within one year. The region will hold about

## WORLD REPORT

1,500 public evangelism meetings this year, including 1,000 youth-to-youth meetings and 100 led exclusively by women.

“I praise God because the church has made me what I am,” Rathinaraj said after his appointment. “As long as I live I must do His work and serve wherever He places me.”

Rathinaraj said he is encouraged by the world church voting this week a \$225,000 appropriation to establish a seminary in Nepal, a country with some 6,000 Adventists.

Rathinaraj holds a master’s degree in history from Madurai University in the southern Indian province of Tamil, and bachelor’s degrees in religion and education.

The world church Executive Committee also appointed G. Alexander Bryant as an associate secretary for the world church and executive secretary of the church’s North American region, which includes the United States, Canada and Bermuda.

Bryant, 51, became an Adventist at age 15 and currently serves as president of the church’s Central States Conference, a historically African-American administrative church region in the Midwestern United States.

“It will be my goal to help the president with the tremendous mission we have in North America, especially in our large cities, and see what we can do to make greater inroads in those urban centers,” Bryant said.

Since serving as Central States president beginning in 1997, Bryant



ADVENTIST MISSION



**Top left: SOUTHERN ASIA LEADER:** John Rathinaraj was elected to lead the Adventist Church in Southern Asia, including the countries of India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. Rathinaraj was among four church officials voted into new leadership positions during

the church’s fall business meeting. **Left: HEADQUARTERS ROLE:** Homer Trecartin was voted to serve as the world church associate secretary in charge of Adventist Volunteers. **Above: NORTH AMERICAN SECRETARY:** G. Alexander Bryant was voted as executive secretary for the Adventist Church’s North American region. The position is also an associate secretary for the world church.

RATHINARAJ AND BRYANT: PHOTOS BY RAJMUND DABROWSKI



## WORLD REPORT

said he has focused on church planting, including the initiative “Each One Reach One,” designed for each member to see themselves as a disciple.

He said he plans to continue making an impact on church planting in his new role, as well as getting youth involved at all levels of the church.

Bryant, who holds a master of divinity degree from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, said he plans to transition to the headquarters of the world church and North American region in Silver Spring, Maryland, at the end of the year.

Homer Trecartin, current planning director of the church’s Office of Adventist Mission, was appointed to head up Adventist Volunteers as a world church associate secretary. Trecartin will continue to oversee the work of his current office as well as assuming new responsibility.

Trecartin, 52, who holds a master’s degree in educational administration, will direct the recruitment of volunteers for all missions, ranging from student and short-term to permanent missionaries and Global Mission pioneers.

The Executive Committee also voted Barry Bussey, an attorney and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) director for the church in Canada, as the new associate director for the world church’s PARL department. He’ll serve as the church’s liaison to the United States Congress.

Bussey replaces James Standish, who earlier this year was appointed executive director of the U.S.

Commission on Religious Freedom.

In 2004, Bussey argued the position of the Adventist Church on the same-sex marriage reference case in front of the Supreme Court of Canada. He also led the campaign for Canada Post to issue a stamp commemorating the church’s world session, held in Toronto in 2000.

“He’ll be an active participant in legislative life in Washington promoting religious freedom for all,” said PARL director John Graz. “This is a key position for us, not only for religious freedom in the U.S. but around the world.”

—Reported by Ansel Oliver, Adventist News Network

### Church Organizes Regions

■ Seventh-day Adventist world church leaders cited membership growth and need for flexibility when reorganizing administrative structures in August, including a large region of Brazil experiencing explosive membership growth.

Officials revealed to the church’s Executive Committee the changes in Brazil’s Amazon region and areas of the church’s Euro-Asia Division, while meeting October 14.

The former North Brazil Union Mission encompassed about 45 percent of Brazil’s land mass, spanning about 3.28 million square miles. The area, now comprised of two union missions, includes about 350,000 Adventists and charts some 45,000 new members each year.

Brazil has the most Adventists of any country, with nearly 1.4 million members.

“We see a lot of opportunities there, and we want to be able to better support our members,” said Erton

Köhler, president of the church in South America.

The former territory now comprises the North Brazil Union Mission and the Northwest Brazil Union Mission.

The distinction of a “union mission” indicates that the union receives appropriation for operation, unlike a “union conference,” which is self-supporting. Additional funding for missions is supplied by the parent division, one of the church’s 13 world administrative regions.

The Executive Committee also revealed to delegates changes in structures in the Eastern European Caucasus region. Leaders voted to reorganize the Caucasus Union Mission into two union missions: the Trans-Caucasus Union Mission with headquarters in Tbilisi, Georgia, and the Caucasus Union Mission with headquarters in Rostov, Russia.

Associate world church secretary Agustin Galicia pointed out that this change was studied prior to conflict in the region in August.

Church structure in the countries of Belarus and Moldova will become “unions of churches” with conference status. This structure, typically applied in smaller territories and countries, allows local churches to organize directly under a division. Moldova currently has nearly 11,500 members worshipping in 153 churches under two conferences.

The Far Eastern Mission in Eastern Russia will become a union of churches with mission status.

—Reported by Ansel Oliver, Adventist News Network

## WINDOW

Albania, located in southeastern Europe, is bordered by Greece, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, and the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Archaeological discoveries suggest the area has been populated since prehistoric times.

Surrounded by powerful, warring empires, Albania has been occupied at various times by Greeks, Romans, Venetians, Ottomans, and Italians.

# Into Albania



During World War II the population was forced to speak and use Italian instead of Albanian. Albania is the only European country occupied by Axis powers that ended the war with a larger Jewish population than it had before the war. Not only did Albanians refuse to turn over lists of Jewish families, they provided refuge to Jews of neighboring countries, and provided them with forged documents so they could be assimilated into the Albanian population.

Christianity has been part of Albanian culture since the first century. After 395 Albania fell under the administrative umbrella of the Eastern Roman Empire; but Albanian Christians remained loyal to Rome. During the Schism of 1054, Christians in southern Albania came under the jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople, and those in the north became loyal to the pope in Rome. During the Ottoman invasion of the fourteenth century, the Islamic faith was imposed on Christians and pagans alike.

After independence from the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century, political regimes followed a systematic practice of separating state and religion. In the latter half of the twentieth century the government practiced a policy of eliminating organized religion

from its territories. Albania officially declared itself to be the world's first atheist state.

Although religious freedom has since returned to the country, most Albanians do not practice any religion, but align themselves with one of the three traditional religions.

### Adventists in Albania

The first Albanians to become Adventists were baptized in an area that is now part of Greece in 1909. In 1932 E. Hennecke, director of the Grecian Mission, moved to Tirana when he was forced to leave Greece. He obtained permission, with two German nurses, to begin a medical work in Albania. The project lasted only a few months when all foreign workers had to leave the country. One woman was baptized as a result of their efforts, however.

In 1938 an Albanian, D. C. Lewis, learned about the Adventist message in the United States. Upon returning to Albania he began to share his faith and four people were baptized.

During World War II, contact with Adventists in Albania was lost. After the war it was learned that Lewis died shortly after the war ended. For more than 40 years the church had no contact with any of its members. But in 1991 the church discovered that two believers had remained faithful during this period of isolation. And in 1992 a team of evangelists under the direction of David Curry, Ministerial Association secretary of the Trans-European Division, held meetings in Tirana and Korce that resulted in the first baptisms in 50 years.

In 1993 the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) leased land from the local council in Tirana for development of a warehouse, community center, health center, and micro industrial units.

Today nearly 300 Adventists worship in three churches in the Albanian Mission Conference.



ALBANIA	
Capital	Tirana
Official language	Albanian
Religion	Muslim, 70%; Albanian Orthodox, 20%; Roman Catholic, 10%
Population	3,619,778
Adventist membership	287
Adventist-to-population ratio	1:12,612



# Addictions and At-risk Behaviors

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES *and* PETER N. LANDLESS

**Addictions and at-risk behaviors obviously impact our health very negatively. What is the best way to educate our youth in order to prevent these behaviors?**

**Y**ou ask a vitally important question. We often think that education and information are the main pillars of prevention. Information and facts are important, but they are not enough. If education or the understanding of the dangers of tobacco use was enough of a deterrent, warning signs and notices on cigarette boxes would be sufficient to stop people from smoking. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Warning labels are very necessary, and some countries are placing warnings of the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy on bottles of alcoholic beverages. There should be more of this. Sociologists and psychologists, however, have found that even life-threatening events such as heart attacks or the diagnosis of cancer are not sufficient to produce changes in health behaviors in a large percentage of individuals. This is frightening! Should we be reading labels on the foods we eat and what we drink? Absolutely! It is essential to know the sodium content, fat content, transfat content, number of calories, etc., of the products we consume. If we paid more attention to labels, we would have fewer cases of high blood pressure and diabetes.

In the area of behaviors—specifically addiction—if education alone is not enough, what else should we be doing? There are many well-conducted and analyzed studies that show there is power in connection, or connectedness. This should not

be surprising to a people who preach that our religion depends on a close relationship with Jesus. (Maybe as with our health habits, we preach more than we practice!)

But to what or whom should we be connected? In order to help people resist at-risk behavior (alcohol, drugs, premarital sexual experimentation, etc.), they need to have a meaningful relationship with a person of significance in their life. This would be a parent, grandparent, teacher, pastor, or other trusted friend. There is also a second and equally important component, and that is a connection to a set of values. We identify these values as those found in the Bible and exemplified in the life of Jesus.

What is the result of this kind of connectedness? The development of resilience. Resilience is the ability to cope under difficult circumstances and in stressful situations. Resilience is something that develops over time and is nurtured by a support system such as that found in families, churches, and communities. Youth who are connected to those of significance in their lives have more confidence and self-respect. This is fostered further by love, respect, and acceptance from the significant individuals in their lives and environment. Such relationships provide golden opportunities and methods for addressing the very serious problem the Adventist Church faces in trying to retain its youth.

Two other important factors

strengthen the benefits of supportive relationships. One is the active mentoring of our youth. We need to become mentors and life coaches, sharing skills and knowledge that will help youth travel life's road. Mentoring needs to be combined with the other essential ingredient—service. Our youth are tired of our attempts to entertain them; they need rather to be involved in service. Service for others has been shown to strengthen resilience and the ability to cope despite the chaos that shows up in life from time to time.

Meaningful relationships and good friends are beneficial to our health. Positive friendship connections promote positive mental health, a sense of belonging, self-respect, and the strengthening of purpose. This can occur at any age. It is vital to foster resilience in our youth; investment in our friendships can improve health and brighten disposition for the long haul.



**Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCSC, FACOG**, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



**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 the Health Ministries Department.

Soon, we will usher in a new year. Many of us probably start New Year's resolutions. Some will struggle to fulfill them, while others will forget them after just a few days or weeks.

Whatever the situation, as followers of Christ we have a certain mission to fulfill. We've been given a special calling. Peter says, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). We are no more in darkness. We are in the light, the marvelous light that will brighten us up to accomplish the mission entrusted to us.

### **Being in Darkness**

When we are in total darkness we cannot see the things around us. We're ignorant of what's happening and know not what to do. To remain in darkness is to remain in our sinful condition. Here self alone is our focus. How to gratify our own desires, no matter what happens to others, becomes the whole purpose of our lives. We lose our connection with Him who said, "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). The end result is that we are tied up with the world and our hearts become filled with "malice, ... deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and ... evil speaking" (1 Peter 2:1).

To get out of this situation, we need to get connected with the source of light—Jesus our Lord. But mere words are insufficient to get us connected. What we need is to experience Jesus in our lives. And this is possible only through the study of God's Word, asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten us.

# Walking

*It's the only way to freedom and joy.*



# in the Light

By  
RAMANI  
KURIAN

## Being in the Light

When we get connected with Jesus, we'll learn how He lived while here on earth. He lived among the people, mingled with them, attended to their needs, healed their sick, comforted the downheartened, cast out devils. He did nothing with an intention of self-glory, but everything for the comfort of others. When we are in the light, that same spirit of unselfishness will enter into our hearts, and we'll be able to continue the mission He started—which is what heaven expects of us.

When we really know Him, our vision is enhanced, and we get a true picture of our real condition. Jesus is the Light, and by beholding Him we are changed into His likeness. He was full of compassion for His erring children. When we're in need of cleansing, He is ready and willing to cleanse us.

But that is our choice. We ourselves must choose to seek that cleansing. Unless we personally feel the need for it, it is impossible for us to receive it. And without it, we cannot abide in the light of Jesus. We are too often proud, arrogant, self-seeking, and unaware of our need. But unless we surrender to the cleansing power of Jesus, we remain in darkness. We're made new creatures only when we surrender ourselves willingly to the source of power, our compassionate Savior. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ," Paul says, "he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Each of us should think about it: am I experiencing the new birth in my daily life?

## How We Shine

As followers of Jesus, we need to serve our fellow humans with the same compassion and kindness Jesus showed while He was on earth. Only unselfish service is acceptable to the Lord. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

This should lead us to examine our motive for service. Are we doing it to glorify God, to whom alone glory and honor belong?

Love is the means to light up the world. Without love everything remains in darkness. As human beings, we are willing to love the ones who love and favor us. But Christ says, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you ..." (Luke 6:27). Christ loved us when we were still His enemies (Rom. 5:8). It is the kind of love that reaches out to the wicked, the downtrodden, the poor, the stubborn, the unlovable—a love that soothes and enlightens, making a difference in the lives of people.

As Christ's followers, we need to exhibit that same love, a love that draws people and gives them worth. Those who practice this kind of love live in the light and their work will never go unrewarded. The Bible admonishes us to "love ... [our] enemies," being examples of our heavenly Father who "is kind to the unthankful and evil" (Luke 6:35).

Of course, we're unable to achieve all this in our own strength. But we have been privileged to obtain strength from God to go forward victoriously in unselfish service for

others. As Jesus prayed for strength to accomplish His mission, so also—and much more—we need to spend time in prayer and Bible study, seeking power from heaven. Difficulties, trials, and persecution will never stop us from continuing our victorious journey, so long as we keep holding the hand of God.

And we have the assurance of His presence: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, ... and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19, 20).

## We Must Strive for It

By walking in the light we are moving forward to an eternal goal. "Those who hesitate to devote themselves unreservedly to God make poor work of following Christ. They follow Him at so great a distance that half the time they do not really know whether they are following His footprints or the footsteps of their great enemy.... The life and spirit of Christ is the only standard of excellence and perfection, and our only safe course is to follow His example. If we do this He will guide us by His counsel and afterward receive us to glory. We must strive diligently and be willing to suffer much in order to walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer. God is willing to work for us, to give us of His free Spirit, if we will strive for it, live for it, believe for it; and then we can walk in the light as He is in the light" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 408, 409).



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For more than three years Adventists around the world have enjoyed inspirational articles in this magazine. Circulation for the monthly journal has exceeded 2 million copies.

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*This article was originally presented as a Sabbath morning sermon to church leaders at the 2008 Annual Council in Manila. We believe the message will greatly benefit the wider church.—EDITORS.*

*So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:16-20, NIV).*

**T**his passage of Scripture speaks strongly to me about the new kind of humanity God will create through a process described as “reconciliation.” But before we explore this further, I want to first recognize two “buffer zones,” or “bookends,” that support and shape this message of a “new humanity.”

1. *What God has done for each of us personally and individually:* Through Christ He extends salvation—complete, total, and never-ending—to all who accept Him as their Savior. He says: “I am not going to hold your sins and transgressions against you. Christ has taken care of that; He paid for it when He died on the cross. And that is enough.” By this act—by this means—He says, we have been reconciled with God.

2. *God wants us to tell the world about His salvation:* I want you to be my witnesses—my “ambassadors”—says God. Your assignment is to tell everyone who is a stranger to Jesus Christ that God is offering a fresh start, a new start, to every man, woman, and child. This is the “new humanity” He offers, and it is different from anything you have been before. It has to do with basic values and qualities of life. This is the witness you have to bring to the unbelieving world, He says. And I don't want you to stop doing it until I come again. In fact, I will not come back again until you have done this.



**Jan Paulsen** is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

# A New Hum





Our lives on earth  
should reflect our  
heavenly hope.

# aninity

By JAN PAULSEN



JEFF SCOGGINS/JOHN BURROE/GLOBAL MISSION/DIGITALLY MODIFIED

These form the bookends for this new humanity—the personal gift of salvation in Christ, and His second coming, when the full benefit of this gift will be realized. Today we live between these two moments. God says to us: Because of what I have already done for you through the death of my son, Jesus Christ, I will begin *now* to create a “new humanity” of those who accept Jesus. I will do this in preparation for the second coming of My Son, at which time it will be completed.

Seventh-day Adventists are well familiar with the truth of Christ’s second coming. It has defined us as a community since we began 160 years ago. It is a truth that is solidly based on Scripture. Therefore, we know that His second coming is not an imaginary idea. We know that it is not an unrealistic, vague, existential notion. We know that it will be a real event in time, just as real as His first coming. We know that it will end the ongoing process of history. We know that it is only after the second coming of Christ that we will discover what it really means for Him to “make all things new” (see Rev. 21). If this is not clear to you, or if you do not believe this, you have a major problem with Scripture.

## New Relationships

We are people who have been reconciled to God by Christ’s death, and who are awaiting the full consummation of that reconciliation at Christ’s second coming. And so now the big question is: *How is this meant to shape our relationship with other people?*

Christ says, through the apostle: I am sending you out and I want you to be My ambassadors. Clearly, then, our life and our mission mandate involve relationships with people on a comprehensive, grand scale. How is that to be?

Reconciliation with God translates into reconciliation between people—people who, for one reason or another, have been estranged and hostile to each other. It is not enough to preach reconciliation between an individual and God; there has to be reconciliation between people. It is with this in mind that God says: My intention is to make of you “a new humanity” (see Eph. 2:11-18).

What does this “new humanity” look like? “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17, NIV). The new humanity has a new attitude in relationships with other people; in Paul’s words: “From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view” (2 Cor. 5:16, NIV). The world of prejudices looks at the external—what immediately meets the eye—and judges you on that basis. That, says Paul, will not do for reconciled people. We do not value people by external considerations such as wealth, status, position, education, race, color of skin, language, culture, tribal identity, gender, or age.

We are a global church. How is the church in your

country doing in this regard? People are on the move, and we are constantly in contact with people who are different from us. Do the differences bother you? Some people we meet are dispossessed by war, some are victims of poverty, and others are just seeking better opportunities for their children. We meet them by the millions in the more highly developed countries. Wars, poverty, or ethnic persecution, whether it be in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, in Sudan, in the Middle East, in the rest of Africa, or in Asia, have set masses of people on the move.

How do we deal with this *flood* of “strangers”? Is it the flood—the fact there are so many—that is the problem, or is it that they are “strangers”? What if they are Adventists? Do our basic sentiments change? Yes, I know, we are to treat with particular kindness those who are our brothers and sisters in faith, but we also have an obligation to relate to people just simply because they are human beings—whether in the faith or out of it.

In Ephesians 2:11 Paul speaks of the “circumcision” and the “uncircumcision.” The setting is the barrier between Gentiles and Jews. The Jews called the Gentiles the “uncircumcision”—a description of contempt, because the Jews had nothing but contempt for the Gentiles. There was a saying among the Jews that God created the Gentiles to be the fuel for the fires of hell. Until Christ came the barriers between Jews and Gentiles were absolute. Marriage could not cross that line. Even to enter a Gentile house was for a Jew to become unclean. Before Christ, the barriers were up. After Christ, the barriers are down.

The Gentiles had no hope of the Messiah. They were described as being “separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants” (Eph. 2:12, NIV). They were considered to be without promise, without hope, without God, and without a future. To the Gentiles history was cyclical—it was going nowhere. By contrast, to the Jews history was a march toward God. Even in their most bitter and defeated moments, the Jews never doubted that the Messiah would come and the future would be glorious.

What does it mean to be a stranger to the covenants on which the promises were made? Israel was the covenant people. They believed that God had handpicked them in preference to all other peoples. He said: “I will take you to me for a people” (Ex. 6:7, KJV). This was both a privilege and a responsibility. It involved keeping the law that God gave them. And they affirmed: “All the words which the Lord has said we will do” (Ex. 24:3, 7). It was a grave and serious commitment, but it gave to the Jews a special consciousness of being the chosen people of God. This is a mind-set Paul was well aware of, for it was part of his own heritage and

culture. It is a mind-set that could be a problem.

Maybe it is good to pause just for a moment and reflect on what it does to you and me if we believe we are God’s handpicked people. Is it wrong to believe we are God’s movement of destiny? I think not, but the big question is: What does it do to our self-consciousness and to our relationships with other people? How genuinely open and caring can we be toward others? Can we function in an inoffensive way as witnesses for God?

### No More Barriers

Paul continues, and here we see the “newness”: “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.... He has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” (Eph. 2:13, 14, NIV). This “dividing wall” is a symbol from the Temple. There was the court of the Gentiles; then there was the court of women; then the court of the Israelites; followed by the court of the priests and the Most Holy Place. It all had to do with access to God’s presence. No foreigner could go into the inner courts of the Temple, and for someone from another nation to violate the sanctity of the Most Holy Place would result in death.

This kind of religious or cultural barrier was not unique to the Jews. The Greeks had the same as they related to the “barbarians,” on whom they similarly looked with contempt. Refugees, people—foreigners—who come from a foreign land, are very commonly viewed with suspicion. Consciously or unconsciously we may ask: “What luggage, in terms of crime or even just different cultural habits, do they carry?” There is a saying: “Unknown makes unloved.” Is this the kind of measured apprehension we have toward foreigners who come and invade our space?

But the text says that people reconciled to God relate to other human beings *differently*. “From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view.” That is a foundational statement for us as Seventh-day Adventists to take with us as we relate individually to people who are different from us. It is true in respect to how we view anybody, but it is all the more true about how we view people who are part of our spiritual community. In the church, an international and cross-cultural community, we see and treat diversity as an enrichment factor, not as something negative. Racial discrimination and a sense of racial superiority do not belong within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A sense of respect or disrespect must not arise from either wealth or poverty, formal education or none, public position or the lack of such. We will treat all people with a sense of respect and dignity, for we are all children of God.



*Before Christ,  
the barriers were  
up. After Christ,  
the barriers are  
down.*

We have in so many countries around the world a considerable number of “ethnic” or national churches. They are churches to which people, immigrants or refugees, can come and taste and feel a bit of their own home culture, speak their own language, sing their own songs, and nurture much-needed social links. That is the reality we live with in which people are on the move, and many of them are our brothers and sisters. That is how we must accept those who have come into our areas—into our space. “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household” (Eph. 2:19, NIV).

Being reconciled to God causes barriers to be gone! As God reached out to His reconciled people and embraced them, so reconciled people reach out to each other and embrace. Being “reconciled” is inclusive, affirming, and nonjudgmental. Yes, they may come into your space; yes, they may take your job; yes, they may eat your food; but we are joined as human beings by values that are greater.

I have to come back to what I have commented on many times before, namely the engagement of youth in the life of our local congregations. We say: “They are too young. They lack experience.” I say: experience is overrated. Get the right personal qualities and personality. Experience will come with exposure to the assignment. Inclusion, affirmation, and empowerment come first. Only after you have done that do you come to the next question: are they able to do it? You make sure first that the spiritual gifts, personal values, and commitment are in place. And then, let us help them to be able!

Paul’s discussion of the removal of barriers among God’s people is in the context of unity. Suppose two people have a quarrel and a difference. How can that be resolved? The surest way to bring the two sides together is through a mediator—someone whom they both love and respect. That is what Christ is. He is our peace. He heals broken relationships. He reconciles (Eph. 2:14). It is God’s plan that the people who share faith and hope, and who live in anticipation of Christ’s second coming, should be bonded and united as one. This is a sacred bond ministered to by the Holy Spirit. These are Paul’s words: “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3, NIV). This is why Christ, during the last few hours He was with His disciples before His death, underscored repeatedly the importance of unity. He prayed: “... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.... May they be brought to complete unity” (John 17:21-23, NIV). The catalyst that brings this about is the love ministered by the Holy Spirit.

When Paul makes the point that Christ made “a new humanity out of the two,” he chooses the word for “new” (*kainos*), which means a new quality (not new in time), meaning “newness” of a different kind. The newness that Christ achieved is not that He made all Gentiles into Jews or Jews into Gentiles. By becoming reconciled to God one does not become deculturized or denaturalized; you don’t lose your racial, tribal, national, or cultural characteristics. You just become, additionally, what you were not before:

us to live in peace” (1 Cor. 7:15, NIV). Living in peace is the commission that the Lord Himself gave when He said: “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matt. 5:9).

### Pardoning Grace

This all demonstrates the different kind of person that you and I are meant to be. In addition to the word “love,” the one word that catches my attention more than any other in a reconciled community is the word “forgiveness.” It is difficult to find any word that describes the Christian attitude better than the readiness to forgive. We have all been faulted; we all need forgiveness. As Albert Schweitzer wrote: “Why do I forgive anyone? I must forgive the lies directed against myself, because my own life has been so many times blotted by lies; I must forgive the lovelessness, the hatred, the slander, the fraud, the arrogance which I encounter since I myself have so often lacked love, hated, slandered, defrauded, and been arrogant.”<sup>1</sup>

We have this in common: we are all sinners in need of forgiveness!

“Forgiveness” does not trivialize sin; it heals the damage and hurt caused by it. That is as true for the relationship between God and humanity as it is for the relationships between people.

Listen to the inspired words of the Lord’s servant: “The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God, but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own.... He who is unmerciful toward others shows that he himself is not a partaker of God’s pardoning grace.”<sup>2</sup>

## What does this “new humanity” look like?

citizens of God’s everlasting kingdom. People on both sides of the previous dividing line have been reconciled to God. Through Christ people from “all sides” have equal access to the Father (Eph. 2:18).

By what language does the Bible describe the relationship between reconciled people? “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love” (Eph. 4:2, NIV); “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger” (Eph. 4:31, NIV); “Do nothing out of selfish ambition ... but in humility consider others better than yourselves” (Phil. 2:3, NIV); “As God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with ... kindness.... Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another” (Col. 3:12, 13, NIV); “Live in harmony.... Do not repay evil with evil” (1 Peter 3:8, 9, NIV); “God has called

“In the consciousness of sins forgiven there is inexpressible peace and joy and rest.... ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.’ ... Ps. 23:4.”<sup>3</sup>

God, who reconciled us to Himself in Christ Jesus, has appointed us, as His ambassadors, to be ministers of reconciliation. That is our assignment, our mission, until He comes again when we shall see Him face to face, as literally as we see and greet each other here today, and we shall hear from Him the blessed words: “Well done, good and faithful servant! ... Come and share your master’s happiness” (Matt. 25:23, NIV).

<sup>1</sup> A. Schweitzer, *Civilization and Ethics*, II, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 251.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 267, 268.



GLOBAL MISSION

# Serving *the* Master

*Every talent has a place.*

By ELLEN G. WHITE

It is the purpose of God that the plan of salvation shall not be wrought out independent of human instrumentalities. He has not chosen angels, but men of like passions as ourselves, to proclaim the gospel to the human race. Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." It was that He might receive the honor that this work was committed to weak, erring mortals.... It is important that all who have been made partakers of this great salvation communicate to others that which has been made known to them.

## Give Your Best

All who have received the light of truth are placed under solemn obligations to let that light shine forth to others. Each can, in his humble sphere, do something for the Master. He may not be able to make magnificent offerings to advance the cause of God, but he can give the willing, cheerful service of an obedient heart. All cannot be preachers; all cannot be generals in the army of the Lord; but all can be faithful privates, following in humble obedience the commands of the Captain of their salvation. They can cheer their companions with words of hope and courage, and by so doing will show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. God demands of all the very best service that they can give....

Let each anxiously inquire, What have I done for Jesus? ... And then in humility let each surrender himself unreservedly to God, saying, Here am I; Lord, send me.

In that great day when every work shall be brought into judgment, the words will fall from the lips of the Master upon the astonished ears of the humble, patient worker, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me." The ones thus addressed have no knowledge that they have done anything worthy of this commendation, and they ask, When saw we thee thus, Lord? The answer comes, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." ...

## There Is Work for You

Wherever a church is raised up, the minister should not consider his duty done until it is thoroughly organized and placed in working order. Every member should become a missionary. All should be given something to do to help spread the light of truth; for this very activity will cause them to grow in spirituality....

Never should the laborer who raises up little companies here and there give the impression to those newly come to the faith, that God does not require them to work systematically in helping to sustain the cause by their personal labors and by their means....

## Freely Received, Freely Given

Those who have been made partakers of the grace of God should not be slow to show their appreciation of that gift. They should not look upon the tithe as the limit of their liberality.... None should forget to make thank-offerings and free-will offerings to God....

The Lord gives some an opportunity to honor him with the abundance of their substance; others, if they can do no more, can honor Him just as much by watching for an opportunity to give a cup of cold water to the weary, thirsty disciple. It is the privilege and duty, not only of those who have large possessions, but of those who have but little, to be faithful, to grudge nothing from the Lord.... He who follows God's arrangement in the little that has been given him will receive the same returns as he who bestows of his abundance....

Oh that I could impress all with the importance of following God's order in all things, and of becoming workers for Him! Let us humble our hearts before the Lord, and when we become indeed His true followers, we shall feel to confess that we have done very little for the dear Saviour who has done so much for us. ●

This article is excerpted from one that first appeared in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, now the *Adventist Review*, August 24, 1886. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

NUMBER 26

THE  
Final  
Rescue

By  
MARK A.  
FINLEY

*Words of hope  
for the darkest  
times*

I first met Bill 17 years ago, in 1991. Through the years since then, we talked often about his favorite themes—vision, optimism, defeating the odds, faith in God, and making a difference in this world. Those of us who knew Bill well knew that he had a passion for life and a passion to make other lives better because of his own.

In the last few months of his life Bill and I talked regularly, often weekly. In one of our conversations, I sensed Bill's illness was terminal and that he probably did not have long to live. That final conversation is etched in my mind forever. We talked about the fact that, ultimately, Jesus would triumph over all the powers of hell, and death would finally be defeated.

I would like to mention here some of the thoughts I shared with Bill that day as well as some further reflections.

Death is not some unsolved mystery. It's not a dark hole in the ground. It's not a long night without a morning. Jesus met the Grim Reaper head on 2,000 years ago and conquered.

In the life of Jesus there are three episodes in which He confronts death. And although the lessons are old, they speak with increasing relevance to us in the twenty-first century. They are ever new, ever fresh, ever speaking hope and comfort to new generations.

**Episode #1—The Death of Lazarus**

Jesus' friend Lazarus developed a sudden illness and died unexpectedly. The shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus

*His tears speak of a*

wept" (John 11:35), is found in this story. Why did Jesus weep? One reason is simply this: He identified with the pain in the heart of Lazarus's two sisters, Mary and Martha. His tears speak of a Savior who understands our tears.

Jesus identifies with our pain. He understands our grief. He experiences our sorrow. He is one with us in our suffering. He is our companion in tribulation. When our hearts are broken, His heart is broken too. When we hurt, He hurts too. When Mary and Martha wept, Jesus wept too.

He shares our tears!

Jesus not only weeps, but He has the divine power to do something about Lazarus's death. Jesus declares to Martha, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" (John 11:40, NASB).<sup>\*</sup> Those words echo down the centuries to our times: *Believe, and you will see the glory of God.*

We have not seen our friend Bill for the last time. In the catacombs under Rome, chiseled in the pagan graves are these sorrowful words, "Goodbye, my love, forever." By contrast, Christian graves ring with words of hope. For us, it's: "Goodbye, until the morning."

Believe, and you too will see the glory of God. You have not seen your loved one for the last time. In some of the most powerful words of the entire Bible, Jesus cried "with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!'" (John 11:43).

Death flees at the words of Jesus; the tomb gives up its dead at the words of Jesus; Satan trembles at the words of Jesus; Lazarus arises at the words of Jesus; and death is vanquished at the words of Jesus!

Here is something we can be certain of: Jesus has never lost a battle with death. And He is not going to lose the battle with death in regards to Bill. The resurrection of



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# Death *and* Resurrection

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 11:11-14; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:1-10.)

## *Savior who understands our tears.*

Lazarus is a type of the resurrection of all believers at the coming of our Lord.

### **Episode #2—The Testimony of Jesus**

The resurrection of Jesus Christ speaks of a Savior who has power over death, even His own. “I am He who lives, and was dead” he says, “and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades [hell] and of Death” (Rev.1:18). We need not fear death because Jesus has the keys to the grave.

Come with me to a place called Calvary and a hill called Golgotha one Friday afternoon 2,000 years ago. It was a dark, dark Friday. The sun refused to shine. Thunder crashed. Lightning flashed. That dark Friday, Peter denied the Savior. Judas betrayed Him. The Jews forsook Him. The disciples abandoned Him, and the Romans crucified Him.

They took His broken, bloody body down from the cross. And the disciples’ hopes were crushed.

*But that dark Friday was followed by one bright Sunday morning.* Jesus is resurrected from the dead. Death is defeated. The enemy is conquered. And the grave no longer holds its victim.

And because Jesus lives, our loved ones will live again.

### **Episode #3—Jesus Conquers Death Forever**

The victory of Jesus speaks of a conqueror with a lasting and final power over death.

The apostle Paul speaks of our final hope in these words, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together

with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

Jesus will return. The last enemy will be defeated. Death will be gone forever. “Death is swallowed up in victory. ‘O Death, where is your sting? O [Grave], where is your victory?’ ... But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

In my last conversation with Bill, we talked about eternity. We talked about heaven. We talked about forever. And my last words as a pastor and a friend went something like this. “Bill, you are not alone. Christ is with you, and one day soon, my friend, you will see Him face to face.”

### **Bill’s Final Moments**

As Bill faced the last few moments of his life, his wife, Bonnie, and his sons, Bart and Brad, gathered around his bed. Bonnie asked that they play the CD of religious hymns by Wintley Phipps. She wanted the message of a familiar old hymn to be in Bill’s mind as he lingered between life and death. Soon the words of the familiar song flowed into the room: “When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high, and don’t be afraid of the dark.”

The message of the song is that regardless of what faces us, *we never walk alone.*

During life and in death, *in Jesus and through Jesus and because of Jesus* we never walk alone. One day we will see Him come. Our hope is built on the certainty that the Jesus who rose from the dead and conquered the grave is coming again to take us home. ●

\* 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.

I was 5 years old when I started visiting my grandparents on their farm in Aroostook County, Maine. Dad had died the year before from war injuries. Suddenly Mother's parents became a big part of my life. Almost weekly I visited them in what I thought was the biggest farmhouse in the state.

If I stayed for more than a day, Grandma insisted I take an afternoon nap. It didn't matter to her that I was not tired. "Children need naps," she'd say. Occasionally she'd let me rest on her and Grandfather's big bed. I loved the smell of their room—it was like springtime with an aroma of flowers



# THE Guiding Light

*How one master's art influenced another man's life*

By RON LAING

and freshness everywhere. In my childish mind I rationalized that this came from the roses on the wallpaper, but probably it was the perfumes and powders on Grandmother's dresser.

"Just lie down for a bit, even if you're not sleepy," she'd say.

"But Grandma, there are so many things to look at in here, why would I want to go to sleep?" But she had closed the door.



**Ron Laing** is a naturalist and photographer of renown who blends his art with his writing—his favorite subject remains

his native New England where he resides. He was employed at New England Memorial Hospital (later Boston Regional Medical Center) in Stoneham, Massachusetts, for 35 years.

## Putting Myself in the Picture

The thing I liked most in the room was a big picture with a brass plate that said in fancy writing, "The Guiding Light," the same title as one of Grandmother's favorite radio programs she listened to when I napped. In the picture was a girl about 4 and a boy just a little older walking down a narrow wooded path with steep drop-offs on either side. An angel with wings of grandeur and arms outstretched was walking close behind, a beam of light illuminating their way.

He's just guiding them along, I thought, imagining that Lorraine, my little sister, and I were the ones on the path. We stopped now and then to watch a butterfly or to smell the blue forget-me-nots beside the path—and then hurried on, careful not to fall down the embankments.

"Come, sleepyhead, we have things

we must do before supper." I heard Grandmother's voice. Naptime was over, and I hadn't even been asleep! I tried hard to act like I just awoke. I walked in a wobbly way, wiping sleep from my eyes, but I was never sure Grandma believed my little act.

Years passed and my wife, Carolyn, and I had two little girls of our own. One day we discovered that a gifted artist, Harry Anderson, had painted a picture with a theme much the same as the one that hung in Grandmother's bedroom. I hung a copy in the bedroom our daughters shared, hoping they'd receive the same nostalgic satisfaction from this picture as I did from Grandmother's.

## The Artist

Years later Carolyn and I had an opportunity to meet Harry Anderson. New England Memorial Hospital,



a medical center north of Boston, was given a monetary donation with the proviso that it “must be used to reflect God’s love to mankind for all people to see.” Anderson had been commissioned to create a painting to embody this theme. Hospital administration, impressed with my cabinetmaking skills, requested I work with him in designing a suitable frame.

On a warm spring day we visited the Andersons in their cozy Connecticut home. Harry was a tall gentleman in the finest and most specific definition of the word: gentle, well spoken, perhaps a bit shy and reserved. The kindness in his eyes made me feel I was seeing right into his soul.

Later we followed him through a flowering apple orchard to his studio. Standing before us in the sunlight was an aged building—all weatherworn, with large windows on three sides. Its faded redwood stain made it blend picturesquely with the landscape. What a wonderful place to work. Inside, the smell of oil paint and turpentine was heavy, and there were dabs of every color of paint one might imagine. The large 8-by-11-foot painting hung on the wall. Without speaking we gazed at a masterpiece.

### The Painting

Pictured is a hospital sickroom—as real as if we’d walked into the canvas. A young girl lies quietly on white institutional sheets, beside her a concerned doctor. On the other side of the bed, a nurse looks on. The figure beside the doctor is Jesus, His hand resting lightly on the sick girl’s forehead. The solemnity of the scene struck us, yet we felt an unspeakable calmness. We expressed our personal appreciation for this picture. More than ever we felt we were with a man of greatness.

This seemed the right time to tell him of his picture that hung so long in our daughters’ bedroom and the joy it brought our family. He was delighted. “Call me Harry,” he said, “Mr.

Anderson is far too formal. Come, let me show you some of my other work. You see, painting is my profession, but carving is my hobby.”

At the house we looked in amazement at sea birds seeming real enough to fly away if startled. Near sunset we got to the reason for our visit. We exchanged ideas for the frame’s design and soon had decided on its esthetics and details. He explained how to properly mount the canvas and even gave me a tool to make my task easier.

“Keep the old tool as a remembrance of our day together,” he said with a twinkle in his eye. Together we rolled \$40,000 worth of artwork onto a piece of 5-inch plastic drainpipe and said goodbye. I could hardly wait to start construction and see Anderson’s exquisite painting in our hospital lobby.

### A Blessing Preserved

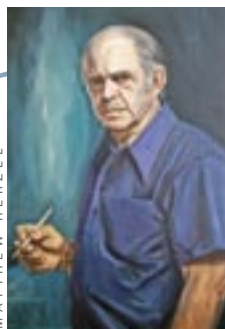
Visitors viewing the piece were in awe of the profound and powerfully conveyed image. For 20 years the piece remained where I hung it; then in 1999, after 100 years of health care

service to the community, the 350-bed hospital closed.

For several years I did not know what happened to the Anderson painting, only that it was sold at auction. However, a few years ago I was delighted to learn that a friend, once an administrative intern at New England Memorial Hospital, bought the painting for a hospital where he was president. I visited the hospital in a brand new city called Celebration in central Florida and once again had the privilege to gaze at Anderson’s masterpiece, still in my frame.

I talked with Harry on the phone several times after our visit. I even persuaded him to go to see the painting in its new home. He was delighted at the display and lighting; I was pleased when he smiled widely and approved of the framework.

The tool he gave me so long ago still hangs in my office as a daily reminder of all that’s good in the world. Harry Anderson passed away in November 1996 at the age of 90. Like so many people around the world, our family’s lives were impacted by his images, and we feel we lost a friend. ●



## Meet the Artist

Harry Anderson was born in Chicago in 1906. He had planned to be a mathematician, but in 1925 he took an art course and discovered both a talent and a love for drawing. He graduated with honors from Syracuse School of Art.

Harry and his wife, Ruth, joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1944. He was approached by the Review and Herald Publishing Association to produce religious illustrations. For 35 years he painted, representing religious characters and events within the backdrop of modern times rather than Bible times as they had been throughout history. He is best known for this great body of religious artwork. Throughout his career, Anderson received numerous awards from art associations, including the prestigious New York Art Directors’ Club. In 1994 he was inducted into the Society of Illustrators’ Hall of Fame. His artistic contributions have brought heavenly thoughts to many throughout the world.

Dictionary define “monotheism” as the belief that there is only one God; from the Greek, *mono* (“single”) and *theos* (“God”). Scholars from all Christian traditions have discussed the extent to which this term embodies the biblical view of God. The question they raise is whether the Bible recognizes the existence of other gods. I will describe some of the issues of this question and make some general comments on the biblical materials.

1. *Monotheism and the Bible*: Bible scholars used to believe that all religions were originally monotheistic, but that slowly the idea of the existence of many gods crept into their system of beliefs. Other scholars argued that monotheism is the end-product of a long process that began with the conviction that there were many gods or many spiritual forces. But this evolutionary approach to monotheism is alien to the Bible. Recently scholars have recognized that biblical materials on that topic are more complex than previously believed. But they are still asking themselves whether a narrow understanding of monotheism properly describes the biblical view of God. That depends on how we define monotheism.

2. *One, Yet Many*: The Bible clearly affirms the existence of one supreme God. This is the God introduced in the first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1:1. It was the Lord alone who created everything in an effortless manner, i.e., without having to face opposing forces. At the moment of Creation, He was the only and unique God, the Lord. We find passages stating that “besides him there is no other [God]” (Deut. 4:35, NIV), that “the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other” (Deut. 4:39, NIV; see also Isa. 44:6-8). Many other passages support the use of the term “monotheism” for the biblical understanding of God.

But we cannot ignore other evidence that complicates the issue; particularly passages such as Psalm 82, where God is described as sitting among the “gods” in judgment and pronouncing a final verdict against them: “You are ‘gods’; you are all sons of the Most High. But you will die like mere men” (verse 6, NIV). This has been called “monarchic monotheism,” that is to say, the other gods are under the headship of God (cf. Ps. 95:3); but this is too

close to polytheism (a belief in the existence of and the worship of many gods). The New Testament acknowledges the existence of at least another “god:” “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers” (2 Cor. 4:4, NIV).

Even the first commandment could be read as implying the existence of other “gods:” “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3, NIV). What is surprising about the first commandment is that—as far as I can tell—such a prohibition is unknown in ancient Near Eastern religions. Such religions did not know anything about a jealous God who demanded the exclusive service and adoration of His people. In such religions, honoring all the gods was a virtue and useful to their practitioners.

3. *Uniqueness of the Lord*: When examining this question we have to emphasize one thing: that the Bible depicts God as absolutely holy, unique, and without equal (cf. Deut. 6:4; Isa. 6:3). He is the Uncreated One, the Eternal (cf. Isa. 43:10; 44:6-8). His very nature places Him outside the realm of His creation—even though He chose to dwell with His creatures. Those who are called “gods” are in reality creatures and therefore essentially different from the Lord. They were created

by Him through Christ (cf. Col. 1:16), but they chose rebellion (cf. Jude 6) and sought to occupy the Lord’s place in the life of humans (Isa. 14:13, 14; Eph. 2:1, 2). They proclaimed themselves “gods” but they are still accountable to the Lord and cannot fully function independent of Him (cf. Job 1:6-12; Col. 2:10). This biblical understanding of God and the nature of the “gods” may not fully fit a traditional and narrow definition of monotheism, but it is monotheistic in that it does not recognize the existence of any other being that is in any way similar to the Lord God or that participates of His distinctive nature. The uniqueness of God does not deny the plurality of persons in the Godhead, but they should never be considered to be a plurality of “gods.” The mystery of the Godhead resides in the mystery of His uniqueness. ●

# Unique and Unrivaled

**QUESTION:**  
*What is monotheism?*



By  
ANGEL MANUEL  
RODRÍGUEZ

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



By MARK A. FINLEY

# Resurrection Power

Have you ever felt powerless in your Christian life? Do temptations seem to easily overpower you? Do you fail again and again? Perhaps you think: Christianity has to offer more than this. Where is the power? Why do I live in frustrated defeat? I have experienced God's saving grace for my past sins, but I long for His power now to live a different, victorious life.

You are not alone. Other committed Christians have felt the same way. In today's lesson we will discover how to tap into the same power that raised Jesus from the dead to live lives of moral strength and victory.

## 1. How did the apostle Paul describe the dilemma each Christian faces?

*"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find" (Rom. 7:18).*

a. In our flesh nothing \_\_\_\_\_ dwells.

b. We may have the \_\_\_\_\_, but

c. We are unable to \_\_\_\_\_ what is good.

## 2. Where did Paul find the solution to this problem?

*"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24, 25).*

The solution to the constant failure in the Christian life is a relationship with \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ our Lord.

There is only one answer to the problem of continual failure and constant frustration over our sins. Jesus makes the weak strong. He transforms defeated believers into victorious ones. He looses the chains that bind us and sets us free to serve Him and bless others with our witness.

## 3. What was Paul's inner spiritual longing?

*"But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ . . . ; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil. 3:8, 10).*

Paul was willing to count all things loss for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the  
 \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_

Paul's heartfelt desire was to know \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of His \_\_\_\_\_

The secret of living a joy-filled Christian life, rather than one of frustrated defeat, is "knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection." One of the central truths of the New Testament is the resurrection of Christ.



**4. What title did Jesus use to reveal Himself to the apostle John on the isle of Patmos?**

*“Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore” (Rev. 1:17, 18).*

Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_.

but now He is \_\_\_\_\_ forevermore.

Christianity is not simply another of the world’s belief systems. Jesus Christ is alive. His power is available to us. Just as our resurrected Lord conquered the grave and gave us freedom from death’s dominion, through the power of His resurrection we can live new lives.

**5. How did the apostle Paul describe the effect of resurrection power in our own lives?**

*“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Rom. 8:11).*

a. The \_\_\_\_\_ raised \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead.

b. This same Holy Spirit will give \_\_\_\_\_ to our mortal bodies.

This is an amazing truth. The same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from physical death will enter our lives, through faith, and transform us from spiritual death to spiritual life. New spiritual strength will be ours through the power of the Spirit.

**6. If we surrender our lives to Jesus, and are willing to be “united together in the likeness of His death,” what promise can we claim?**

*“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom. 6:5).*

If we are united with Him in the likeness of His death we shall also be in the \_\_\_\_\_

of His \_\_\_\_\_

To die with Christ is to surrender our lives completely to Him, to ask Him to allow our sinful natures to be crucified on the cross with Him. His promise is if we die with Him, we shall be resurrected to new life through His resurrection power.

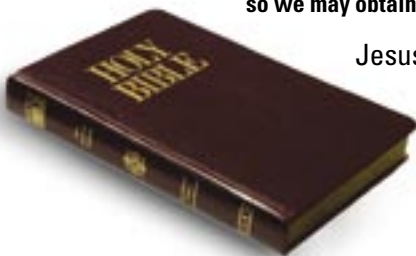
**7. What invitation comes to all who respond to the promise of new life?**

*“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).*

We can come \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

so we may obtain \_\_\_\_\_ and find \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus longs to turn our defeats into victories. He has overcome the temptations of the devil and conquered death itself. He invites us to participate in that victory, through the Spirit, in resurrection power.



## LETTERS

### **Building Up the Body of Christ**

Bill Knott, in his “World View” editorial, “Discerning the Body” (*Adventist World*, September 2008), expressed my sentiments exactly! How wonderful it is to come to church on Sabbath morning, not because we *have to* attend church, but because we are eager to attend!

There’s something about our meeting together that’s unexplainable to those who do not know God’s rejuvenating agenda for His special remnant people. He wants *all* people to participate in this experience, and it is our wonderful privilege to share this blessing with others until He comes. Then we will all participate in worshipping our Creator and Redeemer together for all eternity.

HELEN L. SELF

*North Carolina, United States*

### **Encouraged by Adventist World**

I am a regular reader of *Adventist World* and I really enjoy it. In past issues I have especially been encouraged by “Pulling Together,” by Ellen G. White (August 2006); “Once is Not Enough,” by John Wesley Taylor (August 2007); and “A Little Child Shall Lead Them,” by Wilona Karimabadi (January 2008).

God bless you.

WILLIE BANDA

*Katete, Zambia*

### **Caffeine Is Dangerous**

I am writing concerning the article “Caffeine—Has the Church Changed Its Stand?” (September 2008), by Drs. Allan Handysides and Peter Landless.

On one occasion while crossing the ocean in Ellen White’s early years she became sick. At the time she drank one cup of mild tea as a medication. On another occasion during her sickness she took one cup of coffee with a raw egg as a medication.

After she was given full light on the harmful effects of tea and coffee, she wrote that tea and coffee are health

destroying (see *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 63), and she listed many other harmful effects. In Ellen White’s experience, one cup of mild tea, plus one cup of coffee with a raw egg, in her lifetime, does not allude to her use of them as a medication.

E. J. NICHOLS

*Chetwynd, British Columbia,  
Canada*

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## THE PLACE OF PRAYER

God is great! Please help us render thanks unto Him. He has made a great breakthrough for us as students at the University of Fort Hare—we are no longer writing exams on the Sabbath. Satan would like to spoil all this but please pray that the Lord will sustain us.

GESHOM, *South Africa*

I am a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ituri province. I have been in Uganda since 2003 with my 12 children. I need your prayers for me and my family.

PIRACEL, *Uganda*

Please pray that Joseph is able to go to an Adventist college. He wants to be a pastor.

*Via e-mail*

Please pray for our marriage and finances. My wife decided to leave the marriage after the death of my mother, who passed to her rest this year (at the age of 92), after living with us for the past five years. My wife has just asked for a divorce.

PETER, *United States*

Please pray that I will be successful in taking my board examination, and that someday God will give me a good job to support my family.

RAIM, *Philippines*

I am a 20-year-old Adventist from Zambia, crying for help and prayers because I am sinking here. I thought I could have everything I wanted in this world, but the quest for eternal peace and hope took me to a lot of dark places and false worship. I couldn't find answers to my problems, but thank God I met an old friend who is now an Adventist. I'll never go back again to the world.

BRIGHTON, *Zambia*

I am planning a Christmas program with food and clothing for about 500 people. Please pray for this ministry.

YESAIAH, *India*

Please pray for my brother who had an accident, and for my family.

*Via e-mail*

My prayer request is for my family, specifically the financial situation of my husband. We are passing through a difficult period and are depending on the answer of a job for him, and that we will remain strong in faith.

ELAINE, *Brazil*

I am an orphan in Kenya. We are languishing in poverty under the care of our grandmother. Pray that God will close the doors of poverty and redeem our family from the wiles of the devil.

JILL, *Kenya*

I am requesting prayer for my son, to pass his exams. He is struggling with his school work right now and needs the mighty hand of God to move in his behalf. Please keep him before the Lord. Thank you.

SHERMA, *United States*



JESPER NOER

Please join me in praying for the Youth Guide Concern, a group of young people from our church who are doing charitable work in the church and community by supporting orphans and the elderly.

EPHRAIM, *Malawi*

Please pray for me. A situation is developing that could cause a lot of trouble in my family. Please pray that this situation will go away. Thank you for your prayers.

FANNIE, *United States*

**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.

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

My  
Prayer



*A reader shares his desire to be used by God.*

May my life be a light unto others, O Lord.  
That I might be a candle along Thy path is my prayer.  
In the darkness of the night may I shine brightest,  
Making the road a safer place for those upon it.  
Through the thunder and clouds may I be a haven of warmth.  
As a ship needs a lighthouse,  
A traveler, his compass,  
To make clear the way, O Lord, I need You.  
My light is fueled by Your love,  
My safety rests in Your hands.  
Always keep my light,  
Though small as a candle,  
Burning bright like a fire for You.

—By ADAM C. NEWBOLD, 18, College Place,  
Washington, U.S.A. This poem was written during Adam's  
senior year at Walla Walla Valley Academy, while he was  
taking an advanced placement class in literature.

PHOTO BY BEV LLOYD-ROBERTS

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

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Vol. 4, No.12

# The PEOPLE'S PLACE

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



MARCOS MOONDRAGON

## ADVENTIST LIFE

I turn out the lights, close my eyes, and wait for the familiar soft cloud of warmth and vibration to settle down upon me. Sound like something sci-fi, or maybe some psychedelic experience? No, it's just my 20-pound cat, Crusty Lou, purring and kneading as she prepares for the night. I sleep on my



back so she can sleep on my lap, her favored spot for the last seven years.

Cats are famous for seeking out a warm spot for their naps, and my 98-degree body certainly qualifies. But I choose to believe something more brings her to me each night at bedtime. I believe she seeks me out because she wants to be with me, and values my companionship, and it pleases me immensely.

As I drifted off to sleep last

night, I wondered if it pleases God when I seek out His presence. He made me to be His friend (imagine that!), and He waits for me to want Him as much as He wants me. Sometimes He tempts me with fringe benefits, like my warm lap lures my cat, but the goal is companionship. Friendship with an infinite God? Amazing!

—Linda J. Finster,  
Oklahoma, United States

## DID YOU KNOW?

Founded in 1899, Christian Record Services (CRS) is a ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that provides free Christian publications and programs for people with visual impairments. Each year the lives of approximately 100,000 visually impaired people are changed by services provided by CRS without cost. All who are blind, legally blind, or have physical impairments that prevent them from holding reading material are eligible for its services. Christian Record Services is located in Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A. Visit its Web site at [www.christianrecord.org](http://www.christianrecord.org).

## SOUNDBYTES

*“When an injustice stops the flow of love, we seek the way back to love over the bridge of forgiveness.”*

—Lourdes E. Morales-Gudmundsson, in her book *I Forgive You, But ...*, p. 22.



**ANSWER:** This picture was taken at the Marçionílio Souza Seventh-day Adventist Church, in the Central Bahia Conference of Brazil. The young people are celebrating the success of “Caleb Mission” (Missão Calebe), a project where young people dedicate their vacation time to evangelize a town with no Adventist presence.