

*February 2012*

# ADVENTIST WORLD



*Do* **We**  
**Hear**  
**Them?**

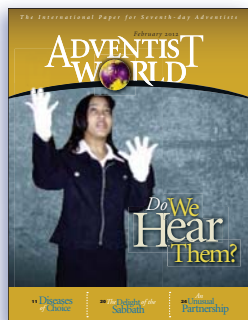
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# ADVENTIST WORLD

February 2012



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**On the cover:** CANADA: A Deaf woman sign singing for an Adventist hearing congregation in Toronto, Canada. The white gloves add a graceful style to singing in Deaf sign language.

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## Into the Silent World

For each of us, there is one special story about Jesus that stands for all the rest—a tale that stirs us well beyond the ability of words to express.

For me, that story has always been the Gospel of Mark's record of Jesus' encounter with a deaf-mute man (Mark 7:31-37). Apparently strange, full of seemingly odd bits and pieces, it ultimately unfolds into an unsurpassed narrative of the Lord who will cross any barrier to reach the hurting and the lonely. Through gestures, sign, and pantomime, Jesus enters the silent world of one who could neither hear nor speak: the Word of God became, for this one man, the Sign of God, wordlessly communicating the grace and love that both healed and restored him to his community. Our astonishment as the story ends is not that Jesus can cause a deaf man to hear, but that His compassion is so singular, so focused on this individual, that He will do what no one else in His culture would do to communicate God's amazing affection.

This story of healing is also a parable for His church, accustomed as it is to thinking of "the greatest good for the greatest number"—of majorities, efficiencies, and what most people want. Jesus intended that the church that acts in His name reproduce the same individualizing compassion—the same attention to unique challenges and giftedness—that characterized His own ministry. Jesus saw the potential disciple in each person He met—women and men, persons of all ethnicities, speakers of all languages, hearing and deaf, sighted and blind—and He tailored a ministry plan adapted to their need.

You'll be encouraged as you read this month's cover story to learn how your church is reaching out to the millions around the globe who specially identify with the story found in Mark 7. As you read, pray for a heart of compassion that is willing to cross any barrier with the good news of healing and restoration.

*Bill Kautz*

## WORLD REPORT

### Wintley Phipps *Brings Hope to Slovenian Prison*

■ Wintley Phipps, Seventh-day Adventist pastor and singer, visited prison facilities in Dob, Slovenia. Invited by European Union (EU) parliament member Lojze Peterle, Phipps performed in front of prisoners, their families, prison personnel, and invitees from political and church domains.

Phipps started the program with a rendition of "The Lord's Prayer," then included some well-known worship songs and spirituals and finished it majestically with "Amazing Grace." Through the messages of songs and his short presentations between them, Wintley truly "brought hope to all of us," as Joze Podrzaj, prison director, said in his thank-you speech. Inmates thanked Phipps with heartfelt applause and a handmade beehive panel, a traditional Slovenian souvenir. "It was truly an inspiring visit of a special person who invests his life in encouraging those who need encouragement most," said Peterle in his statement to AdventPress.

Phipps arrived to Slovenia together with his wife, Linda, from Brussels, where he sang at the annual Prayer Breakfast for EU parliament members. During his short visit he also met with Robert Friskovec, a coordinator for chaplaincy ministry in Slovenian prisons, and Zmagor Godina, president of the Slovenian Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.  
—reported by TEDNews



**VOICE OF HOPE:** Wintley Phipps, Adventist pastor and gospel singer, performs in Slovenia.

### Southernmost Adventist School Graduates High Schoolers

■ After 57 years of academic life, the Liceo Adventista de Punta Arenas (Punta Arenas Adventist Academy) had its first high school-level graduation. In a ceremony filled with emotion, 29 students graduated as the class of 2011. Some of these have been accepted into engineering, medicine, or education programs for advanced study.

Founded in 1954 with the pastor's wife as the only teacher, the school now enrolls 520 students in grades kindergarten through 12. Ten of this year's 29 graduates completed all of their education at Punta Arenas Adventist Academy. The school is valued in the region

*Continued on next page ►*

## WORLD REPORT

both for its academics and for its Christian values, and there is a waiting list for admissions.

Situated on the Strait of Magellan facing Antarctica, Punta Arenas Adventist Academy is the southernmost of all 7,806 schools in the Seventh-day Adventist system. Within this system there are 1,680,153 students worldwide.

Augusto Aguila and Isolina Olivares, together with the Melgarejo-Andrade couple, were present, representing the generation that saw the beginnings of the dream of having an Adventist church school in the southernmost city of the world. The guest list also included Cesia Aguila and Eliana Dobson, who received special recognition for being the first teachers in the institution.

Also present was Margarita Goic, lawyer for the secretary of education for the Magallanes Region, and Nelson Santana, supervisor of the Department of Education for Magallanes Province, both representing the minister of education of Chile. “We will continue to support the school,” said Goic, who was instrumental in the school’s receiving authorization to award secondary degrees. School principal Juan Carlos Diaz Costa added, “Ms. Goic has been a tremendous asset and support to the school.”

The ceremony was historic because of the presence of Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, education director for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, who spoke to the more than 300 persons gathered in the gymnasium. Beardsley-Hardy emphasized the importance of continuing their Christian education and challenged the graduating class to be adventurous and choose from among the 111 Adventist colleges and universities in the world. She encouraged them to be faithful in whatever task lay before them and to



**GRADUATION CELEBRATED:** Several leaders came together for the first high school-level graduation at Punta Arenas Adventist Academy in Chile, the southernmost school in the church’s global educational network. From left: Cesar Beroiza, Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, Juan Carlos Díaz, and Mauricio Galdamez.

MYRTA ROJAS

place their dreams before God in prayer, because it is His will to bless them and to bless others through them.

Diaz Costa spoke about the importance of the student body developing faith. He recognized the work of those who had played a part in the development of the institution in the past. Special mention was given to Cesar Beroiza and his wife and to Maruricio Galdamez, who are now serving in Talca and Angol, Chile. Both teachers were special guests of the graduating class and were recognized for the significant work they had done for the school.

Special music was provided by the insitutional choir and by the well-known Chilean Army trumpeter, Lt. Fernando Leiva.

—reported by David Mauricio Sandoval Romero, *El Liceo Adventista de Punta Arenas*; translation by Myrta Rojas

### Revived by His Word Initiative to Begin

■ A new General Conference initiative coordinated by the movement’s Revival and Reformation Committee, “Revived by His Word,” is especially designed to strengthen the spiritual experience of each church member through Bible reading.

Armando Miranda, a General Conference vice president and chair of

the Revival and Reformation Committee, said, “Nothing can possibly replace listening to God speak to us through His Word. Prayerfully meditating on Scripture is a primary source of spiritual strength.”

“Revived by His Word” is a unique approach to reading the entire Bible through. Church members worldwide will be encouraged to unite in reading or listening to one chapter of the Bible each day, beginning April 17, 2012, during the church’s Spring Council. The Bible reading plan will conclude at the General Conference session in San Antonio, Texas in 2015.

There are 1171 days from Spring Council 2012 to the beginning of the General Conference session on July 2, 2015. There are 1189 chapters in the Bible. By reading one chapter each day, and two chapters during the General Conference session, millions of participating members will complete their journey through the Bible by the end of the General Conference session. An Internet component on the Revival and Reformation Web page sponsored by the world church’s Ministerial Association will allow participants to share inspirational devotional thoughts internationally.

“Revived by His Word” is much larger than reading or listening to one chapter of the Bible each day. It will

direct the attention of the entire membership to the importance of knowing Jesus through His Word.  
—reported by Mark Finley, assistant to the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

## Moscow Conference Highlights Religious Freedom

■ Participants at a recent high-level religious freedom meeting in Moscow vowed to keep the plight of persecuted religious minorities in the Middle East and Africa in the international community spotlight.

About 100 million Christians worldwide—mainly in the Middle East and parts of Africa—suffer persecution or are caught up in violent religious conflict, according to conference organizers.

The three-day International Conference on the Freedom of Religion and

Discrimination against Christians began November 30, 2011, and brought together a diverse group of leaders from the Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Islamic communities. Topping the agenda was the growth of what some have called “Christianophobia” in many countries where dominant religions or ideologies exert significant political and social power.

Vasily Stolyar, public affairs and religious liberty director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Euro-Asia Division, said conference participants were united in their resolve to do more to alleviate the plight of religious minorities suffering persecution worldwide.

Discussions at the conference also focused on the impact of the so-called Arab Spring on the rights of religious minorities in countries that have experienced dramatic political change.

John Graz, secretary general of the International Religious Liberty Asso-

ciation, described the issues raised at the conference as a “significant and growing concern for religious liberty advocates.”

Graz said the IRLA has been tracking an upswing in social harassment and attacks against religious minorities in the region over the past year, including a rise in anti-Christian sentiment. He pointed also to United Nations reports that have tracked a steady exodus of Christians from Iraq and, more recently, Libya—a trend that indicates a significant sense of unease among minority religious groups.

“We urge governments around the world, along with international bodies such as the United Nations, to do everything in their power to ensure that religious freedom, as a fundamental human right, is both recognized and protected in these countries,” Graz said.

—reported by Bettina Krause/Adventist News Network



**FREEDOM FOCUS:** Religious liberty proponents meet in Moscow to propose ways of keeping the plight of persecuted religious minorities in the public eye.

VASILY STOLYAR

# Adventist Pastor's Quick-Meet Ministry

By  
ANSEL OLIVER/ADVENTIST  
NEWS NETWORK

## *They have chaplains at an airport?*

Every Thursday morning, José A. Barrientos, Jr., leaves his home shortly after 5:00 a.m. and drives to Washington Dulles International Airport to minister to his flock for several hours. Instead of church members in pews, his congregants are scurrying commuters and employees in one of the United States' largest international airports.

Barrientos, a Seventh-day Adventist minister, is one of 18 assistant chaplains at the busy hub. Not only is he the youngest—he's also the only Hispanic chaplain there, which makes him the go-to guy in offering assistance to Spanish-, Portuguese-, and Italian-speaking passengers, as well as the maintenance staff, the large majority of whom are Hispanic.

He and other chaplains offer support while roaming the terminals looking for people to assist with directions, calming passengers who haven't received their luggage at baggage claim, or reading faces to find those who might need solace. Once a month Barrientos leads the Wednesday evening Protestant service held at the international terminal's interfaith chapel.

Barrientos' main employment is as the children's ministry pastor at Community Praise Center Adventist Church in nearby Alexandria, Virginia, but he volunteers several hours each week at the airport.

Denominational leaders hope the

idea of Adventist ministers serving as airport chaplains will take flight.

"We favor more pastors extending their ministries into the community," said Gary Councell, director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM), the movement's ecclesiastical endorsing agency. "We have influence only when we mingle with people and spend time with them for their interests instead of our needs."

Adventist pastors who become endorsed by ACM serve in such places as corporations, fire and police departments, sporting events, and cruise lines.

Many people will talk to a chaplain at airports just to share their good mood for a few minutes, while others are desperate for spiritual support, such as a woman who was sobbing during a chapel service after discovering her significant other was unfaithful. Some seek other things.

"Need help finding your gate?" Barrientos asked a man wandering toward a dead-end corridor carrying a large backpack, computer bag, and neck pillow.

Barrientos is a pastor, but he also serves as a guide, restaurant critic, and first-rate public relations representative. He talks up the architecture of newer terminals and boasts of upcoming renovations. Dulles airport is currently involved in the largest public transportation construction projects in the nation.



"You'll love it. When it's done, you'll say, 'I want to travel more,'" he tells passengers.

Opened in 1962, Dulles International is 26 miles from downtown Washington, D.C., and employs almost 30,000 people. Last year it served nearly 24 million passengers, according to its Web site. In 2009 Dulles International was America's ninth busiest airport in terms of international passenger traffic, with just under 6 million international passengers recorded.

"It's a huge, huge place," Barrientos said one recent morning while walking through the predawn chill to the terminal. "Are you ready to do a lot of walking?"



**Above:** HELPING OTHERS: José Barrientos, a volunteer chaplain at Washington Dulles International Airport, helps the Ribeiro family find a shuttle to a nearby mall during their five-hour layover between Rio de Janeiro and Orlando. Barrientos assists Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking passengers with practical support and sometimes prays with those who may need spiritual comfort.

**Opposite page:** MANY STEPS: Barrientos, left, helps a traveler find his gate on a recent early Thursday morning. Some

days he meets with people in the airport chapel, while other days he walks several miles assisting passengers with directions. **Left:** GREETING WORKERS: Barrientos often goes out of his way to greet Hispanic employees at Dulles. Here he chats briefly with a security guard in the international terminal.

His supervisor, Ralph Benson, wears a pedometer and estimates he walks five to nine miles each day he's there. An American Baptist minister, Benson frequently sees Barrientos on his rounds, and requests his assistance in working with Spanish-only speakers.

"He's wonderful; everyone loves him," said Benson, who serves as director of ministry for the Metro Washington Airports Interfaith Chapels, Inc. The nonprofit organization provides ministry for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority,

which owns both Dulles International and Ronald Reagan Washington National airports.

Barrientos has dark, spiky hair and wears a charcoal-gray suit, and a dress shirt with a green tie. It's up to each chaplain to decide how they want to dress, he says, but Barrientos says he prefers business apparel—claiming he needs all the credibility he can get. He's 28 years old with a cheery, young face and a slight build. Many Hispanics, he said, don't expect a minister to be young.

"But you're not old," a quizzical passenger on the underground train between terminals said to him in Spanish.

Passengers are often surprised that his position even exists.

"I didn't even know airports had chaplains," said Betsy Buckner, who had flown with her husband all night after visiting friends in Argentina.

They were looking for the Air France executive lounge during their five-hour stopover before a flight home to San Diego, California.

"Passengers are usually one of two extremes: people are either really, really happy or really sad," Barrientos said. Many passengers he meets are going to visit loved ones, while others have just lost loved ones.

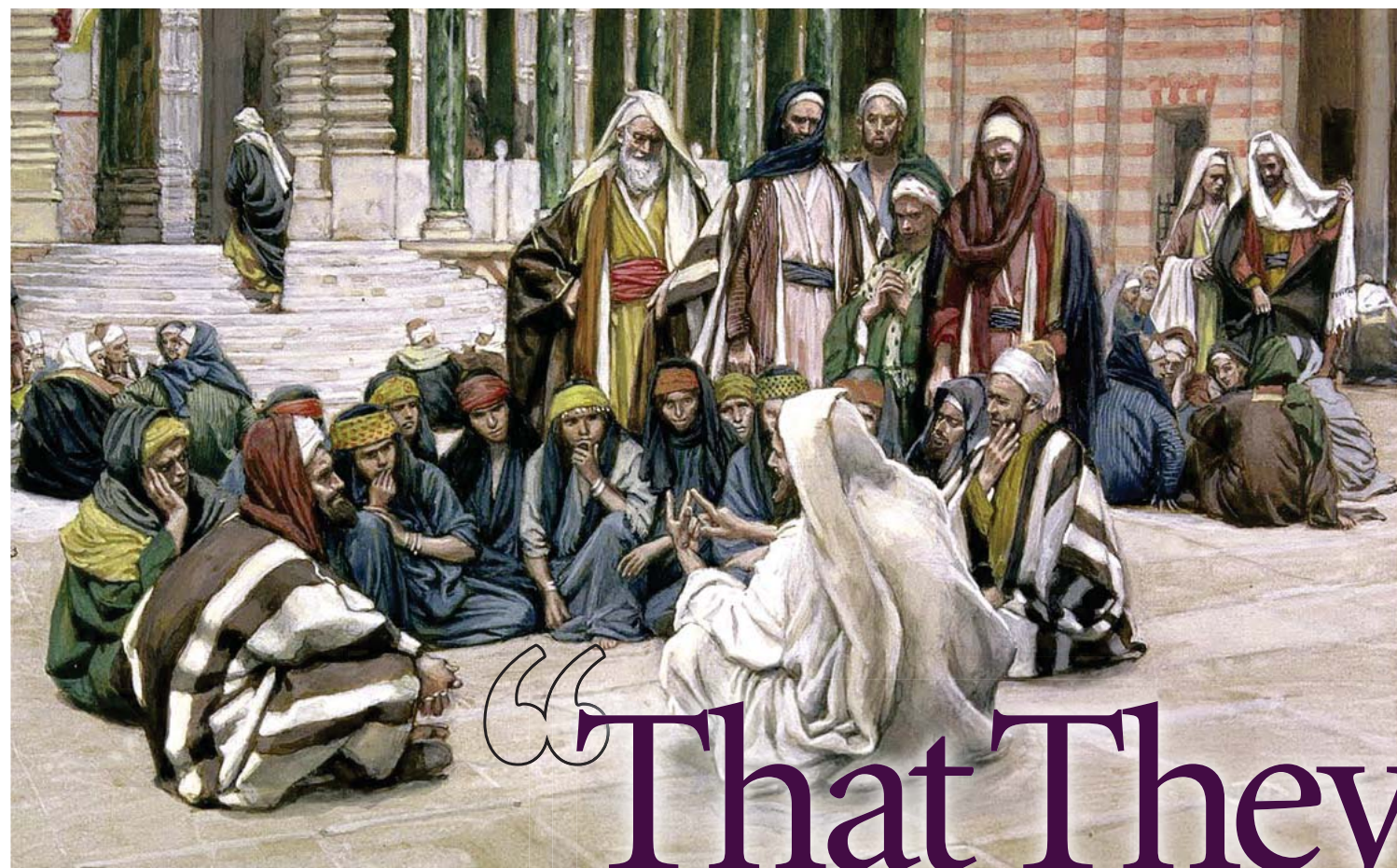
Airport ministry is fast—a chaplain must get to know someone quickly and then, just as fast, let them go.

"It's easy for me. I like to make friends," he said after chatting up a security guard. "[My girlfriend] will tell you I talk too much."

When not talking with employees or leading passengers, Barrientos lets people know about the chapel and its services. Of the literature rack, he says the Adventist book he has to restock most often is *El Camino a Cristo*, the Spanish version of *Steps to Christ*, written by Seventh-day Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White. About 300 people visit the chapel every day.

The first airport chapel in the United States was established in 1951 at Logan International Airport in Boston, Massachusetts. Now more than 140 airports worldwide have chapels, usually designated as "interfaith" locations, according to the International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains, a nonprofit organization. ■

PHOTOS BY ANSEL OLIVER



# “That They May Be One”

By TED N. C. WILSON

Beginning with just a few faithful Bible believers in mid-nineteenth-century America, the Lord has abundantly blessed the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Today it has grown into a worldwide movement, working in hundreds of languages, encompassing a wide diversity of millions of believers found in 206 countries around the globe.

And while the Lord has certainly blessed us, we also have challenges. Not only do we live in a complex, diverse world, with clashing cultures and rampant secularism, but we must also come to terms with a variety of cultures within the church, varying perspectives on policy, socio-economic challenges, and other factors. Among these, one of the greatest challenges that we face as a worldwide body of believers is that of unity.

*Keeping  
the Remnant  
Together*

Unity is defined as a state of being united or joined as a whole. It is harmony or agreement between people or groups.

Unity is what God wants for His believers, His church. Just hours before the Crucifixion we find Jesus on His way to Gethsemane, pleading with His Father for unity among His believers, “that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us. . . . I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one” (John 17:21-23).

Jesus knew the individual strengths and weaknesses of each disciple. We are told that “in these first disciples was presented marked diversity. They were to be the world’s teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ’s object to secure. . . . His constant prayer for them was that they might be sanctified through the truth. . . . He knew that truth armed with the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit would conquer in the battle with evil” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 20, 21).

At first, however, it seemed as if Jesus’ prayer for unity went unanswered. Frightened and ashamed, the disciples fled from their Master as He was arrested and carried away by the mob. After the Crucifixion they were confused, discouraged, and hiding out of fear of persecution. Yet just 50 days later these same disciples were confident and united as “they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

How is it that in such a short amount of time the disciples went from being discouraged, divided, and demoralized to being reconciled, confident, transformed? What can we learn from them as we seek to be embraced by the unity Christ longs for us to have? There are at least seven lessons we can glean from the experience of Christ’s disciples.

### Seven Steps to Unity

**1.** *The disciples’ confidence and beliefs were based on Scripture.* The first thing Jesus did for His disciples after the Resurrection was to open their understanding, “that they might comprehend the Scriptures” (Luke 24:45). He had tried to do this earlier, but “up to that time the disciples had not comprehended them, for the rubbish of rabbinical lore had hidden the truth from their view” (*That I May Know Him*, p. 340).

Jesus explained the Scriptures beginning with Moses, David, and all of the prophets, and teaching them how the Messiah had to suffer, die, and rise on the third day (see Luke 24:44, 45). Taking each passage point by point, He

showed how He was the fulfillment of each prophecy. What a Bible study that must have been!

Jesus continued appearing to His followers in various places during the next 40 days, teaching and encouraging them. By the end of that time, they understood prophecy and its fulfillment, and their faith was firmly grounded in Scripture. They were ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The same is true of us today. To the extent that we see the fulfillment of prophecy in the rise of the Advent movement, and our purpose in fulfilling prophecy—proclaiming the three angels’ messages and preparing people for Christ’s return—we will be ready to receive the Holy Spirit.

**2.** *Their fear of death was gone.* Jesus spent three and a half years teaching His disciples the important principles of His kingdom, through both word and example. But they were slow to understand and believe Him. But when they saw their risen Lord, they were much more willing to listen and believe, because He had conquered death. They no longer feared death (or anything else), and this gave them a new boldness in following the call of Jesus (see Heb. 2:14, 15). Even though we have not physically seen Jesus, we can still claim His promise “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

**3.** *They recognized their great need.* The disciples began to understand the immensity of the task to which Jesus was calling them. How could they possibly succeed in following the Great Commission (see Matt. 28:19, 20)?

Jesus instructed them to begin their work in Jerusalem, the most unpromising field imaginable. They also knew that their fiercest enemies would be the “principalities” and “powers,” “the rulers of the darkness of this age,” and the “spiritual hosts of wickedness” (Eph. 6:12). They realized that they could succeed only as they depended on a power greater than themselves. We have to recognize our great need and ask God for the gift He has promised.

**4.** *They believed the promise that their risen Lord would be present with them.* Ringing in their ears was the assurance that Jesus gave them just before ascending to heaven: “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20) and “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (verse 18). It is no accident that the Great Commission is surrounded by these two promises. Before sending them out on what could be seen as only an impossible mission, Jesus assured His disciples that His presence would go with them and that His power would be made available to them.

**5.** *They obeyed Jesus’ command to wait together in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit and to begin their proc-*

lamation of the gospel there. The place where Jesus was crucified was probably the last place the disciples wanted to begin their work. But they didn't scatter; they obeyed. They believed the promise that they would soon be "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). When the Holy Spirit came upon them, their efforts were crowned with success.

lowed in the paths He would lead them. What mattered most was to be like their Master and to win as many as possible to His kingdom.

In the church today many things help keep us together—our common beliefs, policies, worldwide Sabbath school lessons, a closely connected worldwide leader-

“One of the greatest challenges we face as a worldwide body of believers is that of unity.”



It is through the gift of the Holy Spirit that “Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus. Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ and of His power to take away sin” (*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 30).

**6.** *The disciples were not idle while waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit.* After Christ's ascension the disciples were “continually in the temple praising and blessing God” (Luke 24:53). In addition, for 10 days they prayed with intense earnestness for the gift of His Spirit and the wisdom to lead listeners to Christ.

**7.** *After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, the disciples' overriding ambition “was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom”* (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 48). The disciples remembered Jesus' pure, holy life, and His humble, unselfish service they had witnessed over the past three and a half years, and there was a radical change in their thinking and behavior. No longer did they try to be the greatest; instead they were humble and longed to have the mind of Christ, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. . . . He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death” (Phil. 2:6-8, KJV). They determined that with the help of His Spirit, no work would be too difficult and no sacrifice too great as they fol-

ship team, and our wonderful belief in the soon coming of Christ. However, as we have seen from the result of the disciples praying and humbling themselves before God, the real resulting unity was through the power of the Holy Spirit. The same is true for us today. What keeps the Adventist Church together is the Holy Spirit.

As we seek for unity within the church, let's keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Let's diligently study the Scriptures, as Jesus did with His disciples, reaffirming the basis of our faith. Let's earnestly pray for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, who, “when He, the Spirit of truth, has come,” Jesus promised, “will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13, 14).

Then united, let us go in truth and power to a dying world, proclaiming the good news of a risen Savior who is coming soon to take His people home. ■



**Ted N. C. Wilson** is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



# Diseases of Choice

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

I hear talk about “noncommunicable diseases” as an important health topic around the world. What are these diseases, and are the infectious diseases more concerning as a global threat to health? Am I at risk?

This is indeed a very topical question, and there has been much in the world news lately about noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). In September 2011 the United Nations hosted a high-level meeting to address the global crisis caused by the growth of these mostly preventable diseases. The words of the secretary-general of the United Nations describe the concern these diseases are generating. “Our collaboration is more than a public health necessity. Noncommunicable diseases are a threat to development. NCDs hit the poor and vulnerable particularly hard, and drive them deeper into poverty.”\* This was after describing the outlook as grim because of the rapidly rising incidence of NCDs in all parts of the world, with poorer and emerging economies facing the greatest challenges and increase.

You are correct that communicable diseases are still a major problem, and this is illustrated by such conditions as tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS, malaria, and gastroenteritis still claiming millions of lives each year. For many decades there’s been a worldwide focus on initiatives to combat these diseases, such as improving sanitation and water quality and food security, as well as attempts to modify high-risk behavioral and sexual practices. While the spotlight has been directed at these infectious diseases, the NCDs have increased alarmingly and are a major cause of preventable death

globally. They also are contributors to poverty and loss of productivity.

NCDs include mainly heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases. They affect all people and communities. The main risk factors are well known and are similar everywhere:

- tobacco
- foods high in saturated and trans fats
- excessive salt
- alcohol
- excessive sugar, especially in sweetened drinks
- physical inactivity
- obesity

This list of risk factors will help you to decide if you are at risk.

Tobacco is smoked or chewed by more than 1 billion people daily and fueled by their addiction to nicotine. At least 5 million people die each year from tobacco-related deaths. These diseases are preventable if tobacco and tobacco smoke (including secondhand smoke) are avoided. Although tobacco use has decreased in many high-income countries, there’s an alarming increase of use in many low- and middle-income countries, and adolescents remain a prime target of the tobacco industry. In order to reduce the number of tobacco-related deaths and NCDs, not only does the rate of smoking initiation need to be decreased, but active stop-smoking strategies must be embraced and implemented.

It’s estimated that the consumption of foods high in saturated fats and trans

fats, salt, and sugar is the cause of 40 percent of all deaths annually from NCDs (a figure that approximates 14 million). Many studies have shown the negative effects of these foodstuffs. The Adventist Health Studies have been pioneers in showing the benefits of a plant-based diet, low in saturated fats, with a variety of grains, vegetables, fruits, and some nuts (a small handful daily).

Alcohol consumption is the third leading cause of preventable death. It contributes to the causation of various cancers, and there is no safe level of consumption to prevent this particular danger. Sixty percent of deaths related to alcohol consumption are the result of NCDs.

Physical inactivity is related to the current pandemic of obesity, and also type 2 diabetes. Regular exercise leads to better heart health, improved weight management, prevention and improvement of type 2 diabetes, and a decrease in some cancers (breast and colon).

In summary, the NCDs are a major global threat, and concerted action and leadership at all levels are needed to curb this destructive scourge of illness. Many of the NCDs are totally preventable. Those at risk can be readily identified. This is a golden opportunity for each church congregation to be a community health center, and each church member a health promoter. It will make a difference to this broken world in which we live. ■

\* [www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39600&Cr=non-communicable+diseases](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39600&Cr=non-communicable+diseases)



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**Peter N. Landless**, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is associate director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

America in the early 1800s was the scene of drastic change, especially along the eastern seaboard, as the desire for increased wealth and living space became apparent. Great efforts were made to relocate large segments of the native population to the interior of the continent. Thus, in 1830 the U.S. federal government, in violation of an order by the country's Supreme Court, ordered the eviction of Native Americans, removing them from their ancestral lands in the Southeast to the Oklahoma Territory. This was a humiliating, difficult, and deadly experience. The

he passively relinquished the kingdom. It was a pathetic sight: a weeping elderly ruler abandoning his palace and his beloved city.

### Rock Bottom

For David, however, there were to be more tears. His palace, personal wealth, and belongings fell into the hands of those who had conspired against him. The capital city by its inaction had tacitly acknowledged an act of treason and rebellion. Many of his counselors joined the revolt. His other children, wives, and concubines were now in physical peril. The king was hitting bottom.

Events in the capital moved at a rapid pace. Absalom entered the royal residence and with the aid of Ahithophel, a wise and trusted counselor of the court who had joined the conspiracy, wrested the crown from the son of Jesse.<sup>2</sup> News reached the king that Mephibosheth—a son of Jonathan on whom he had bestowed many favors—had also



# Hitting BOTTOM—

# Lifting UP

emotional anguish of abandoning their homes, along with the hardships and deaths of thousands of Native Americans, made the westward trek devastating. The Cherokees nicknamed the journey as *nuna-da-ul-sun-y*, “the trail where they cried”—The Trail of Tears.<sup>1</sup>

### A King Deposed

King David, a national hero of legendary proportions also waded through a trail of tears. Absalom, David's third son, had his eyes on the throne. He conspired with a group of supporters who, at a precise moment, using the traditional sound of a horn as a prearranged sign, hailed Absalom as the new king of Israel.

David was rudely shaken by the news that the pretender to the throne was his own son. The David of yesteryear would have fought his way out of that precarious situation. That David, however, had waned through the decades. Now

By  
GILBERT VEGA

turned his back on him and had joined the insurrection (2 Sam. 16:1-4).

As the royal entourage made its way toward the Jordan River, they were met by another disgruntled subject named Shimei. He was a clansman from the tribe of Benjamin, and thus bore some kinship with Saul, who had also been a Benjamite. Apparently there was much repressed resentment against David within that tribe. Taking full advantage of David's vulnerability, Shimei hurled curses, threw stones, and created havoc for the retreating royal retinue (2 Sam. 16:5-10). David had hit rock bottom.

When an individual hits bottom, those around him will demonstrate predictable behavior. Some quickly turn away—it is just not “cool” to associate with a loser. Others go beyond that—they see it as the perfect time to strike back. Old grudges are brought to the forefront; past experiences are recast in the light of present realities. It's payback time! The bandwagon of disdain rapidly fills with such opportunistic characters. Such was Shimei. How effortless it is to kick the wounded and step on those who have fallen. It is within our vengeful nature, and quite often it is vindictively displayed. Such vile actions are so common that we have coined catchphrases to describe them: *pile on, shooting the dead, kicking the wounded, throwing them overboard.*

## Lifting Up

This difficult episode in the life of David reveals the volatility of the human heart. Many took advantage of the distress of the hour and simply jumped on the bandwagon of disdain. On the other hand, there were those who stood by their principles in spite of danger and opposition. They could have easily joined the masses that heaped contempt on the royal family. Or easier yet, they could have ignored the entire crisis and simply gone on with their lives—unruffled. That would have been a path without any tears.

Yet some took the narrow and arduous path of service and compassion and dared to stand their ground. They stepped out of the shadows, thus demonstrating a nobler side. Food, comfort, and friendship were provided in the midst of cruel and haphazard circumstances. Whereas treason is despised, even by those who benefit from it, loyalty is greatly admired and universally respected.

Whenever we see a fellow pilgrim stumble and fall, we can respond in different ways. We can ignore; we can “pile on”—or we can “lift up.” The first two responses are crass and calloused; only the third is virtuous. The path of least resistance is usually a path of compromise. Even in the face of insurmountable opposition, in spite of being a minority of one, we should never quiver or give in. What is right,

*When an individual hits bottom, those around him will demonstrate predictable behavior.*

## A Helping Hand

David's advisers suggested that they cross the Jordan and seek shelter outside Judean territory—even though it was nighttime. They hastily forded the Jordan and reached Mahanaim.<sup>3</sup> David at this point was emotionally drained, physically worn out, and politically dead. The world as he knew it had been shattered. In mere hours his entire life had turned upside down.

As King David and his party meandered up the hilly countryside, they were warmly received by some local chieftains—Shobi, Machir, and Barzillai—who brought them much-needed food and supplies (2 Sam. 17:27-29). The food was warmly welcomed and heartily devoured, but their demonstration of loyalty, respect, and decency was even more appreciated at a time when the king felt devastated. The monarch was so moved by the noble gesture that later, as a demonstration of appreciation, he offered Barzillai a place with him in Jerusalem—an unquestioned honor for any of the king's subjects.

noble, and proper ought not to be evaluated in light of popular sentiment. When we act to lift up a fellow human being (any human being, for that matter), we are standing on the side of the King—that is, King Jesus! ■

<sup>1</sup> *Family Encyclopedia of American History* (Pleasantville, N.Y.: Reader's Digest Assn., 1975), s.v. “Trail of Tears.”

<sup>2</sup> Psalms 41 and 55 express the anguish of treachery by a close friend—a possible reference to Ahithophel. See Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1987), p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Psalms 3-5 record the anguish and pathos of the revolt as perceived by David as he fled from Absalom.



**Gilbert Vega** is senior pastor of the Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church in Loma Linda, California, U.S.A.

“My daughter Betty has decided to stop attending church,” Mrs. Pérez told me in deep distress. “Earlier today we had a bad argument. She told me she hates the church. She said that she does not want to be manipulated anymore, and that no one is going to decide for her what to believe or not believe in,” she added.

The story unfolded further. “Since her first years, we got Betty involved in church activities; she was part of Pathfinders and the children’s choir, and participated in plays and various church activities,” said Mrs. Perez. “I do not know what happened to her.”

The Pérez family had arrived in the United States 25 years before, and as they tried to pursue their version of the American dream, they had to work long hours. In the process, they were unable to pay enough attention to what is certainly one of the most important jobs of a Christian parent: to “train up the child in the way he should go” (Prov. 22:6). They thought that attending and taking part in their church activities every Sabbath would be enough for Betty to get to know and love Jesus personally. Commendably, they got their daughter involved in interesting activities, but perhaps they overlooked the most essential part. Now, full of grief, Mrs. Pérez asked a heart-wrenching question: “What can I do to save my daughter?”

### Going Beyond Attendance

Participating in church activities and programs and surrounding our kids in a church environment are all worthy and necessary components of Christian parenting. But are they enough to keep our children on God’s path? Undoubtedly those activities and programs help them to



# How Can We Help Save Them?

*It isn't enough  
just to take our kids to  
church.*

By CECILIA CORNEJO

# *Let's do all we can to take good care of the spiritual experience of our children.*

make good use of their God-given gifts. But the only safeguard against the enemy who so fiercely attacks our children is that they may experience personal love and faith in Jesus. "It is the privilege of the young, as they grow in Jesus, to grow in spiritual grace and knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

Another common misconception among many well-meaning Christian families is a belief that the spiritual growth of children is determined by external conditions. The Rodríguez family moved to a small city where most of the town residents were members of the local church. They thought that surrounding their children with a Christian environment would alone be enough to protect them from temptation. So when the couple noticed a few negative changes in their children's behavior, they didn't pay much attention. Unfortunately, one of their children soon became a single father and dropped out of school at age 18.

"I saw it coming," said Mrs. Rodríguez. She had noticed certain spiritual issues her son seemed to struggle with, but she also found no time to discuss them with him. In the end, she painfully asked the same question: "What can I do to save my son?"

There is a sacred work that many parents may struggle with. "Parents occupy their minds with other things to the exclusion of the work that is all-important—the task of patiently and kindly teaching their children the way of the Lord."<sup>2</sup> In the Bible we find that Solomon used two important terms to refer to a parent's attitude as they relate to the spiritual life of their sons. He wrote, "Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds" (Prov. 27:23). In this case "to know" implies a mandate to carefully think, ponder, and meditate. But the wise king also adds that we be diligent and constantly on guard lest we get sidetracked or distracted. And as we are "diligent to know" the spiritual state of our children, only the Spirit can lead us. Being diligent in knowing the Christian experience of our children should be an ongoing process that seeks to help them love God "with all [their] heart, with all [their] soul, and with all [their] strength" (Deut. 6:5).

The words "to attend" in Proverbs 27 also mean to pay attention to being diligent, thoughtful, and attentive in the tasks we undertake. This approach implies much more than mere thinking; it is a call to action. When something is valuable, we take good care of it. We are careful not to

wear it out, spoil, or destroy it. Likewise, as parents we need to take care of the spiritual health of our children with unquestionable love if we want to obtain eternal results.

## **Back to Basics**

Let's do all we can to take good care of the spiritual experience of our children by utilizing a simple, yet essential, practice: personal and family worship. By teaching our families of the benefits of personal worship, our children will learn to seek and meet God every day and will know Him as Father, Friend, and Savior. Let's provide them with fine examples through sound and encouraging readings, strong experiences of spiritual growth, and service to others. If they do not learn to experience the love of Jesus in their own lives, any church activity in itself will eventually become meaningless.

Just as Elijah "repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down" (1 Kings 18:30), we must partner with God so that He may turn the hearts of our children back to Him again (verse 37). Let's transform our family worship time into moments of spiritual growth by praying, praising the Lord, and studying His Word.

Life is harried, complicated, and tough. As parents we can sometimes shift our focus away from God in our personal lives, which leaves little time to turn our children heavenward. But the Lord is always there to give us His forgiving and comforting grace. Remember that Jesus gave His life for anyone who believes in Him (John 3:16). He came to seek and to save our lost children (Luke 19:10), and He is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). Renew your relationship with God every day and leave the life of your children in God's hands (Job 1:5). Remember that God is powerful enough to call the prodigal son back home! Hear His tender voice assuring us: "I will save your children" (Isa. 49:25). ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *That I May Know Him*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels for Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 129.



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# *Do* We Hear Them?

By  
LARRY R. EVANS

*Inclusion and recognition are the path to ministry with deaf individuals.*



**Top:** KENYA: A deaf quartet in Nairobi.  
**Right:** KOREA: Larry Evans, liaison for GC International Deaf Ministries (front row, second from right) signs along with a deaf Adventist church group in Korea. **Opposite page:** BRAZIL: A deaf Sabbath school class in Hortolandia





## *Kindness is a language the deaf can hear and the blind can see.*

—MARK TWAIN

In many ways it was a Sabbath like any other. As a representative of the Seventh-day Adventist world church headquarters, I frequently speak in churches and other meetings while traveling on business. This particular Sabbath I had the privilege of addressing a group of church members attending a large regional gathering in Brazil. To close my message, I invited the group to stand together and hold hands during prayer. Nothing unusual about that—except that in this situation I was inadvertently exhibiting insensitivity toward the people before me, who were Deaf.<sup>1</sup>

“We don’t hold hands,” one person gently explained to me, “because we use them to pray. Instead, we sometimes touch feet with one another as a symbol of unity while one person uses their hands to pray and the rest of us look on.” Fortunately, I hadn’t asked them to bow their heads and close their eyes!

Developing a ministry for Adventists worldwide who are Deaf is part of my current responsibilities as associate in the General Conference Stewardship Department and liaison to the church’s International Deaf Ministries. For more than two decades I’ve gradually been learning about this unique culture, whose feelings of isolation, exclusion, and aloneness while living in a hearing world often go unnoticed. This experience taught me, however, that I still had much to learn.

### **A Worldwide People Group**

Estimates of the number of Deaf in the world are difficult to substantiate. Reports range from 93 million to more than 300 million, although it’s likely that

those termed “hard of hearing” are being included. According to Deaf World Ministries, if the Deaf “were gathered together in one place they would comprise the fourth-largest nation in the world.”<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say, there’s a large international population of Deaf. Because they have difficulty communicating with the hearing world, few of us realize what a vast mission field they represent.

It’s estimated that only 2 percent of those within the Deaf culture are Christian.<sup>3</sup> To compound the challenge of sharing the gospel message with them, there is no single commonly used sign language. Within some countries, multiple sign language dialects are used. Recent research by Wycliffe Bible Translators concluded that nearly 400 identifiable deaf languages exist worldwide, for which only 40 have a Bible translation in some visual form.<sup>4</sup> That alone should cause us to pause and consider the urgency to reach out to this distinct people group.

Unlike some people groups, the Deaf are not gathered in specific geographic areas. Instead, they’re embedded within the general population and often connecting with them is difficult. One of the greatest challenges, however, hangs on the misunderstandings of who the Deaf are.

### **Disability Versus Culture**

It may surprise some, but if given the opportunity not all Deaf would choose to hear. I have asked large groups of Deaf in various countries, “If it were possible for you to hear, would that be something you would

want?” More than half said no. Why? Because for the Deaf, relationships are vital, and to become hearing would essentially mean leaving their cultural world of relationships.

One of the first thoughts that often comes to mind when hearing the term *deaf* is of someone who is disabled—but disabled compared with whom? Compared with the hearing, of course—as if every person, whether hearing or deaf, is proficient in every way. This concept is promoted with public signage often referred to as “signs for the handicapped,” when what the signs actually indicate is a lack of accessibility. No culture as a whole would appreciate being identified as “disabled.” It’s understandable that many Deaf are sensitive to this label.

There’s much more to deafness than not being able to hear. For example, the bond that the Deaf have with one another is very strong. It transcends the inability to hear as others do. Deaf cultures are as resilient and meaningful as other world cultures.

“Culture” is a reference to the full range of learned behavior patterns and a sense of identity. Deaf gatherings such as worship or Communion services, potlucks, or get-togethers with friends are filled with distinctive behavior patterns. Their language includes facial and hand expressions for communicating—not just words but a whole range of concepts.

Sometimes hearing persons may unintentionally appear insensitive to the Deaf because of not understanding the ways of their culture. And just as there is no single, common, world-

wide Deaf language, so too do Deaf cultures vary from region to region. The road of kindness begins with an intentional sensitivity to the personhood of the Deaf and the culture to which they belong.

### Unique Characteristics of the Deaf

Understanding grows by showing a genuine interest and listening intentionally. In order for that to happen, however, we must recognize some of the unique characteristics found among the Deaf. A few of the more notable and helpful insights include:

**1.** *Deaf language is an acknowledged language and for most in the hearing world it's a foreign language.* It's visual and gesture-based, and has its own idiomatic expressions. Communication with the Deaf goes beyond the mastery of the language. It's also connected to the relationship established with the person. By communicating from the heart, a huge first step is taken.

**2.** *Deafness is not a sign of weaker intelligence.* Most Deaf have a different learning process than that of hearing persons but "different" does not mean inferior. A deaf person usually thinks, not in terms of words, sentences, or abstractions, but rather in the context of visual, spatial, and concrete thought patterns.

**3.** *Deaf and hearing humor differs.* Because much of hearing humor is based on wordplay, the Deaf may or

may not "get it." They have their own sense of humor, which is obvious in any Deaf gathering. Many Deaf will laugh when they see others laughing at hearing humor, but in reality they often don't see the humor of the joke.

**4.** *Deaf music is rhythm- or beat-based.* It has three elements: timing, flow, and coordination. Hearing music has three elements as well: melody, harmony, and rhythm. Don't conclude that Deaf people are not musical because they cannot hear.

**5.** *The Deaf are visually oriented.* It's important for them to sit where there is an unobstructed line of sight with the signer. Many prefer the front of the church, where there are fewer visual distractions. A Deaf speaker is both the director and actor of the message.

By recognizing and appreciating these unique characteristics, those who are hearing can come to realize that the Deaf aren't disabled. They are "abled" differently from hearing people, and have abilities not usually found among the hearing cultural groups. Kindness sees the individual and affirms their personal worth.

### Are We Listening?

Although the Deaf actively share their concerns and hopes, their words often fall upon "deaf ears." I first realized this some 25 years ago while serving in North America as a special assistant to a conference president for multicultural ministries. I was attend-

ing pastoral meetings when I noted that our conference's only Deaf pastor didn't understand a word being said. He was attending simply out of loyalty. So I invited him into my office, and with the aid of a computer I shared highlights of the meetings.

"Why didn't I think of hiring an interpreter?" I wonder now. That experience served as my introduction to the Deaf culture.

### A Changing Landscape

Times are changing, and an arising awareness of Deaf cultures is gradually developing. Recently, at a meeting of the Deaf in Nairobi, Kenya, I learned of several Adventist Deaf who were attending Sunday churches. These churches were the only places in which they could worship in their own language. I was delighted when this group chose to attend the church meeting in Nairobi and to worship with us on Sabbath. They also brought their friends along to the Sabbath services. The union president in that region is now requesting each conference in his territory to educate and hire at least one Deaf pastor.

In Korea, a church facility for the Deaf was recently purchased. The local members say they are very grateful to have a place in which they can now worship and also use as a Deaf evangelistic center.

During a large meeting of the Deaf in Brazil, the enthusiasm of presenters



## ADVENTIST Deaf Ministries Web Sites

COMPILED BY LARRY R. EVANS

- Brazilian Seventh-day Adventist Web site for the Deaf:  
**[www.surdosadventistas.com.br](http://www.surdosadventistas.com.br)**
- Russian-Ukrainian site:  
**[www.deafasd.com](http://www.deafasd.com)**
- Three Angels Deaf Ministries:  
**[www.3angelsdeafministries.org](http://www.3angelsdeafministries.org)**

- Southern Deaf Fellowship  
(Sabbath service streamed each week):  
**[www.deafchurchonline.org](http://www.deafchurchonline.org)**
- Canadian Deaf Ministries International:  
**[www.deafhope.org](http://www.deafhope.org)**



**UKRAINE:** A group of deaf young adults from Eastern Europe sight-seeing in Kiev following a division-wide deaf congress

and attendees, the ministry reports, and the resources exhibited revealed just how much a team of dedicated Deaf and hearing lay leaders can actually accomplish by working together. The vitality and exuberance displayed by the Deaf youth at that same meeting illustrated the strong witnessing potential of young adults.

The power of inclusion and recognition can be life-changing for both the hearing and the Deaf.

### Continued Challenges

Unfortunately many challenges still exist. A Canadian Deaf person tells of the suffering endured—all alone—as a result of a serious family crisis. Because the individual was Deaf, the obstacles involved in communicating with and getting support from the hearing world were too difficult to surmount. In France a group of Deaf Adventists wrote, “The Deaf often go unnoticed and are seldom even considered [part of the church]. They face exclusion in a society of hearing and sometimes in the church.”

A challenge in the United States is having limited funds available to hire interpreters for the Deaf in order to make worship services and other church meetings and events meaningful for them. A hearing wife of an active and employed Deaf pastor interprets her husband’s sermons for hearing individuals who attend their Deaf church, reasoning that she and

her husband “want to be an example to the hearing people by doing to others what we would like done for us.”

### Reaching Out to the Deaf

The implications behind three small words can make a huge difference when ministering with other cultures, including the Deaf. These words are “to,” “for,” and “with.” Ministry “to” implies no interaction and represents the least effective approach. Ministry “for” does show a higher level of concern but doesn’t reflect an interaction. A ministry emphasizing “with” opens the door for partnership and mentorship. It’s with this approach that the following suggested ministry strategy is outlined:

- **Love and compassion.** The foundation for any effective ministry is motivated by this twin combination.
- **Listening and observing.** Imposed strategies are neither welcomed nor appreciated. Get to know the “hearts” of the Deaf in your community.
- **Empathetic understanding.** Identifying with the Deaf comes through genuine interest and involvement with them.
- **Transparency and trust.** The Deaf are wary of hearing individuals who continually make promises but don’t follow through. Trust takes time to develop, but it’s the key to a lasting relationship.

■ **Partnership in structuring for mission.** The Deaf aren’t ignorant. They have experience, ideas, and insights. Partner with them for ministry.

■ **Development of Deaf leadership.** Any long-term ministry impact must be built around the development of more, not less, Deaf leadership at all levels of the church. This is a critical step if mission to the unreached Deaf is to be pursued seriously. We must not limit Deaf involvement only to ministries for the Deaf. They have valuable contributions for the full range of the church’s ministry.

■ **Implementation of Deaf-sensitive mission strategies.** This is possible if the previous steps have been followed.

The ministry of “with” far exceeds

the limitations of ministries characterized by “to” and “for.” Such a ministry underscores the great need for more Deaf pastors and interpreters. We would do no less for any other unreached people group.

As paradoxical as it may seem, having blind, deaf, and hurting individuals among us are all important ingredients for the body of Christ if it is to become whole, and reminders that no part of the body is dispensable (see 1 Cor. 12:22, 23). They provide the opportunity for the true character of the church to reveal itself.

Ellen White emphasized this point when she wrote, “It is in the providence of God that ... the blind, the deaf, the lame ... have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church.... This is God’s test of our character.”<sup>5</sup>

The ways we relate to one another in this world of diversity speak volumes about who we are as individuals and as a church. In bold contrast to the conventional wisdom and practices of the world, the church must stand as a beacon of hope demonstrating that the value of a person begins with the heart. The prevailing question that every part of the body of Christ must ask is: “Do we hear them?” If so, how will we respond?

Kindness is but the first step, but it is where the journey must begin. ■

 For more information, e-mail [gcstewardship@gc.adventist.org](mailto:gcstewardship@gc.adventist.org)

<sup>1</sup> The author is emphasizing the fact that deaf individuals comprise a unique culture and therefore refers to them as “the Deaf” in this article.

<sup>2</sup> [www.deafworldministries.com/CDA\\_project.htm](http://www.deafworldministries.com/CDA_project.htm).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Wycliffe Bible Translators provided this information to the author via e-mail.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 511.



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When I was 18 (and a nominal Catholic), my confessor told me something surprising. He thought that it was not necessary to come to confession every week. I took things a step further and decided not to go to church at all. I would make religion a private matter.

About this time a friend gave me a

seemed to contradict my (then) current lifestyle. What did catch my attention was another book entitled *Maranatha*. It clearly was a favorite with my friend, and he read it every morning for something he called “morning devotions.” Intrigued, I borrowed the book and began reading it too. This little book opened not only

stopped His creative work and rested on that first Sabbath so that He could spend quality time with our first parents. What a sublime appointment! In the beginning God *blessed* the Sabbath day. He *separated* it and *filled* it with joy and a sense of festivity.

The first Sabbath was a day of praise to the Creator and a commem-

NUMBER 20

# The Delight of SABBATH

By  
RAÚL QUIROGA

Bible as a gift, and I started reading. I didn't understand what I was reading, but the stories in Genesis made a big impression on me. I enjoyed reading and rereading them. Three years later I decided to explore my country armed with my guitar and some books, including my Bible. At a youth hostel I met a young Adventist my own age. Somehow we started a conversation about religion. This conversation grew into a three-month journey of wonderful discoveries with my new friend that changed my life forever.

## A Personal Journey

My friend had several books with him and lent me a book entitled *Messages to Young People*. This book didn't immediately become a favorite, as it

windows but huge doors for me. I learned about Jesus' second coming, unmerited grace, and forgiveness. I also heard the call to obey God's commands. I learned about the remnant and made the most marvelous discovery—I met Jesus. I accepted Him as my Savior and made Him the center of my life.

I then decided to accompany my friend to a local church to see what this “keeping the Sabbath” was all about. That first Sabbath would become a way of life that would continue for the next 33 years.

As I studied further I understood that Sabbath was created differently from the other six days. I realized that on Sabbath something special had happened that differentiated it from the other six days of Creation. God

oration of the creation of our world. In this sense the Sabbath has something that the other days don't have. It is not only what we don't do on this day that makes it special, but also what God can do with us on this day that makes it a day of delight.

## Sabbath Rest

No other of the six days of the week can function as a Sabbath, because only the seventh day is a memorial of Creation established by the Creator as a pact with the people He had created. He sanctified and blessed this relationship with the first humans by means of this special time.

The seventh day is the only day of the week that has a name in Scripture. The other days are named in relation to the Sabbath. There is the first day

# SABBATH

The beneficent Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in

Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between

Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and

redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11;

Luke 4:16; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Matt.

12:1-12; Ex. 31:13-17; Eze. 20:12,

20; Deut. 5:12-15; Heb. 4:1-11;

Lev. 23:32; Mark 1:32.)

after the Sabbath or the day of preparation for the Sabbath (Luke 23:54; 24:1). It is only the seventh day that God calls His day. Jesus identifies Himself as Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27, 28). Jesus does not specifically claim Lordship of *all* the days of the week or just *any* day of the week. In this sense human beings are masters of the six days of the week (Gen. 1:28), but on Sabbath human beings recognize the Lordship of God—as the Lord of all.

The Sabbath is a true gift of God to humanity (Mark 2:27). It was the first complete day that Adam and Eve spent as children of God and their first day as a married couple (Gen. 2:1-3). On Sabbath we stop worrying about our daily struggles (Ex. 20:8-11). We do not just rest: any day of the week would do as a day of rest. The difference between this day and any other day is that the Sabbath offers a rest not for inactivity but rather to undertake different activities similar to the first Sabbath in Eden. Sabbath is the moment to catch our breath (Ex. 31:17) as we change activities.

Interestingly, Jesus criticizes the inactivity that the religious leaders of His time tried to impose on the Sabbath and affirmed: "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working" (John 5:17). He, of course, refers to Sabbath work as being redemptive and not the type of daily labor we normally engage in during the week (Matt. 12:7). God's idea of rest for us frees us from ourselves and our worries so that we can have time and space for different activities. According to Jesus, Sabbath is the ideal day for blessing others (verses 9-14). It's a day of a change in activities centered on God meeting humanity—those He formed out of dust. It is a celebration of the rela-

tion-ship between God and humanity, the members of the family and our ties to all of creation. Sabbath is an echo back to Eden. Sabbath is God's way of telling us that He wants to have an intimate relationship with us; that we are more important to Him than all the other things He made.

## Sabbath Joys

Sabbath is a necessity, not only an obligation. Just as we need air, light, water, and food in order to survive, we need the Sabbath to truly live. It is also a day of worship when we kneel before God and recognize that He is Lord. "It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves" (Ps. 100:3). Sabbath puts us back in our proper place. In the six other days of the week there is time for personal goals. As we manage our time and activities, there is always the danger that we could begin to consider ourselves equal or even superior to God. We need the Sabbath for this weekly reminder that everything we do, can do, and even all our ability to plan comes from our Creator.

Sabbath is also a day of re-creation. When everything in life seems to be disintegrating, Sabbath calls us back to Eden. And once again the Lord turns and creates everything from nothing. Where we are weak, we can become strong. Chaos turns into order; fear becomes joy; uncertainty is replaced by certainty and trust; God's justice puts injustice and oppression into their corner; guilt is transformed into pardon.

This moment of redemption is

reflected in Israel's experience when God's strong arm brought them out of Egypt (Deut. 5:12-15), and we recognize the Sabbath as our delight (Isa. 58:13). We not only receive the blessings of this special day, but every Sabbath we renew our covenant with Him and publicly confirm that we want to be God's children.

Truly understanding the Sabbath changed my life many decades ago—and millions all around the world experience this delight every Sabbath. Can you imagine the incredible Sabbath celebrations in our new heavenly home—face to face with our Creator and Savior? ■



**Raúl Quiroga, Th.D.,**

was professor of Old Testament at River Plate Adventist University, Ar-

gentina, when he wrote this article. He has recently moved to Cochabamba, Bolivia, to serve at Bolivia Adventist University.

# *The* GOLDEN Clasp

## *The Sabbath Unites Us to God*

By  
ELLEN G. WHITE

**I** gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them" (Eze. 20:12, KJV).

As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest.

The observance of the Sabbath is the means ordained by God of preserving a knowledge of Himself and of distinguishing between His loyal subjects and the transgressors of His law.

### **Sabbath Points to the Creator and Sanctifier**

It [the Sabbath] belongs to Christ.... Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. For, speaking of Israel, He said, "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them"—make them holy. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God....

### **Delighting in Christ**

To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ's creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him. The Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption. While it calls to mind the lost peace of Eden, it tells of peace restored through the Savior. And every object in nature repeats His invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28, KJV).

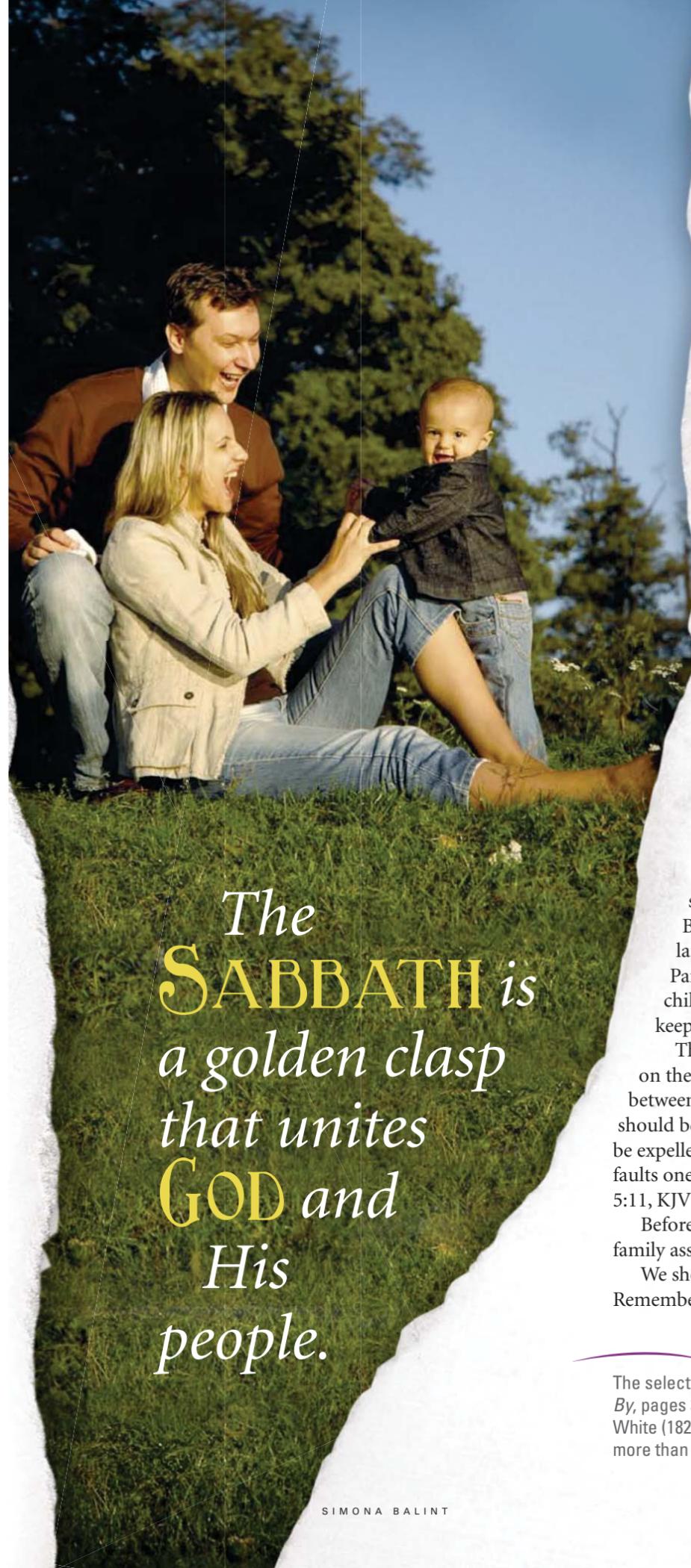
The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites God and His people....

### **Important to Remember**

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said, "Remember." He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8, KJV).

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment....

When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. During the week our energies will not be so



*The  
**SABBATH** is  
a golden clasp  
that unites  
**GOD** and  
His  
people.*

SIMONA BALINT

exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service....

#### **Preparing for This Special Day**

On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done....

The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment.

Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight.

Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another" (James 5:11, KJV).

Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's Word, to sing and pray.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. ■

The selection is drawn from the devotional book *The Faith I Live By*, pages 33, 34. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

# An Unusual Partnership

*Adventists receive an education and witness to others.*

By CHEK YAT and SALLY LAM-PHOON

Private secular education has seen a boom in China within the past decade. But schools that teach the Bible in their curriculum face a number of challenges. The registration process for Christian schools is highly complex, and is handled by the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TPSM), which monitors all religious activity in China.

Differing opinions about how to educate Chinese young people have led to a number of disagreements, some of which have caught the attention of the media.

Adventist education has always been a priority for our church members. Given the situation in China, our

MARK FORMAN/DIGITALLY MODIFIED



church members began operating home schools for their members' children in the northeast region of the country for the past 10 years. When this proved no longer viable, our members prayed for insight as to how they could still offer an Adventist education for their young people.

### Community Contact

In 2008 church leaders developed a close relationship with the principal of a vocational school in one city. As they shared their vision for providing Adventist education for their youth, this leader offered to collaborate with the church to accommodate their needs.

"We were elated about this new possibility and decided to give it a try," said Enn Chun Wong.\* "Anything is better than nothing."

This vocational school offers such majors as auto mechanics, tailoring, nutrition, catering, tourism, computerized accounting, computer science, hydroelectronics, welding, and hair-dressing. It requires that all students choose one major. However, our group of Adventist students had to choose two majors to ensure that all the male and female students could be kept together, and thereby cut down on the negative influence other students could have on them. Furthermore, arranging for the group to complete all their vocational subjects in the morning gave them extra time for Bible classes in the church later in the afternoon.

The first group of 40 students stayed at the church, where assigned teachers helped them with

their spiritual instruction. Their program started with morning worship and prayer at 4:30 a.m. After breakfast a school bus transported them to the vocational school for classes. Teachers from the church accompanied the group to school to help them bridge the gap between their secular classes and their religious education. In the afternoon they were brought back to the church for Bible classes.

"We reminded them constantly of the witness they needed to bear for Jesus Christ at school. Their behavior testifies to others about the power of Christianity," said one of the teachers.

### Blessed to Be a Blessing

The group soon gained a reputation of being model students, excelling in academics and being well disciplined in their social skills. Students in the other classes often gave their teachers problems, being rowdy and undisciplined, sleeping during their lessons, and refusing to do their lessons.

The principal remarked, "Our school surely needs more exemplary students like the Adventists; we want more of them so that they can influence the rest of the students."

When the school year ended in 2008, the school encouraged the church to recruit a second batch of 40 students, making a total of 80. This created a welcome problem—church facilities were too limited to accommodate 80 students. But when the school learned about their dilemma, the principal offered the church use of an abandoned school building. By the middle of April 2009, renovations to this building had been completed, with beds, water, and electricity.

Since this building, used as a dormitory, is some distance from the vocational school, the school consented to provide shuttle bus service for this group of 80 students on a daily basis.

Adventist parents are now eager to send their children to this vocational

school as they observe the changes among those who have been under this experimental program. After a year of training, these young people have achieved independence of thought and purpose. They do their own laundry, cook, and clean, and serve others by sharing the Bible with them. Many have been appointed as cell group leaders in the church where they worship.

Parents are amazed at the changes they see when their children return home for the summer. One parent remarked, "My son has changed and matured so much. Since coming home, he has been such a blessing in being so caring and helpful, taking the initiative to help me with the housework. It must be what he was taught in school!"

While it appears that this creative way of offering Adventist education is working and that Adventist parents are willingly enrolling their children in this school, the question about what happens beyond the two-year vocational training remains. What else can be done for these students to provide them with a more complete tertiary education, particularly one that prepares them to serve the masses in China through a vocation, as well as prepare a people for God's eternal kingdom?

Your prayers are solicited as local leaders continue to dialogue and come up with more innovative approaches to nurture our young people in China through a strong foundation of Adventist education. ■

\*Not his real name.



**Chek Yat Phoon** is director of education, and his wife, **Sally Lam-Phoon**, is director of children's, family, and women's ministries for the Northern Asia-Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

# Our Counselor, and More

Why is the Spirit called “Counselor” in the Gospel of John?

The Greek term *parakletos*, translated “counselor” in some Bible versions, does not have an exact English equivalent.

It was used in Greek literature to refer to a person called to someone’s aid, or who appeared on another’s behalf as a counselor,

intercessor, mediator, helper, or as an advocate in a court of law. When Jesus applies it to the Holy Spirit, it reveals something about the nature and functions of the Spirit. Since the term is used exclusively in the writings of John, I will examine those passages.

**1. Jesus and the Counselor:** In John, as well as in the rest of the New Testament, Jesus and the Spirit are very closely connected. But they are not the same person. In John Jesus identifies the *parakletos* with the Spirit (16:15), the Holy Spirit (14:26), and the Spirit of truth (14:17; 15:26; 16:13). In other words, He used new terminology to refer to the Holy Spirit. When Jesus says “another Counselor” (14:16, HCSB; cf. <sup>1</sup> John 2:1),<sup>1</sup> implying that He is also a counselor, He is clearly making a distinction between Himself and the Spirit. The difference between the two is also accentuated by the fact that the Spirit (*parakletos*) will be sent by the Father at the request of the Son (14:16, 26). Finally, the difference between the two is indicated by the fact that the coming of the Spirit will take place after Jesus returns to the Father (16:7). The Spirit (*parakletos*) will remain with His people forever (14:16). So unlike Jesus, the Spirit will not return to the Father while God’s people are still in the world. He will take the place of Jesus on earth.

**2. Functions of the Counselor:** Three main functions are assigned to the Spirit (*parakletos*). He is a *teacher*: He “will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (14:26, NIV).<sup>2</sup> The Spirit will build up the church on the basis of the teachings of Jesus by reminding the disciples of His teachings and revealing their depths of meaning. He will also reveal to them the eschatological content of the message of Jesus (16:13). It is only in that sense that the Spirit “will guide you into all the truth” (16:13, NIV).

Second, and closely related to the previous one, the Spirit will *glorify* Jesus. Jesus is glorified when the Spirit

takes what belongs to Jesus and reveals it to us (16:14). He glorifies Himself, not by providing for us new things, but by telling us that what we receive is all from Jesus.

Third, the role of the Spirit is to witness on behalf of Jesus and His people against the world. The coming of the Spirit testifies to the fact that believers belong to God, thus radicalizing the distinction between them and the world. Together with believers, the Spirit also testifies on behalf of Jesus by calling people to come to Jesus as the exalted one (15:25, 26). His testimony against the world addresses its rejection of Jesus, the sin that characterizes it, and the judgment of God against evil (16:8-11).

**3. Nature of the Spirit:** By calling the Spirit “another Counselor” Jesus has established once and for all that the Spirit is a person like Him. Although the Greek noun “spirit” (*pneuma*) is neuter (and some refer to the Spirit as “it”), the noun “counselor” (*parakletos*) is masculine and personal. The Spirit is not an “it,” but a personal divine being. His divinity is addressed by Jesus when He says that the Spirit “proceeds from the Father” (15:26). The verb “proceeds from” (*ekperuomai*) points to the place of origin of the Spirit. His natural place of existence is within the mystery of the Godhead, and it is God who sends Him. By identifying the Spirit as a *parakletos*, Jesus has provided for us a way of thinking about the Spirit as a person.

We can visualize Him as a counselor, as a person who helps us in time of need (comforter), and who accompanies us during our pilgrimage, sustaining, transforming, and revealing to us what belongs to Jesus. The Spirit speaks for us and to us; He is the *parakletos*. ■

<sup>1</sup> Texts credited to HCSB are taken from the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup> Scripture quotations credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



Now retired, **Angel Manuel Rodríguez** has served the church for several decades, most recently as director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.

# End-time Faith

By MARK A. FINLEY



One evening after a Bible Study seminar in Chicago a middle-aged woman with a distressed look on her face asked if we could talk. She explained that she was battling breast cancer, and she had a few questions. With all sincerity she asked, “Pastor, if I’m not healed, does that mean I don’t have enough faith? If I had more faith, would I be immediately healed?”

Then she said, “Pastor, some of my friends say that my problem isn’t really cancer—it’s a lack of faith. Is this true?”

In this month’s lesson we will explore together what faith is, how to exercise it, and how to increase it.

## 1 Read Proverbs 3:5, 6. How is faith defined in this text? Where does genuine faith find its focus?

Faith is trusting God as a well-known friend. It believes that He will not do us harm and that His intentions for us are only good (see Jer. 29:11). It does not demand answers from God, but seeks to discover what will bring glory to Him in each aspect of our lives. It does not focus on what we want—it focuses on what He wants (see Matt. 26:39).

## 2 Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-9. The apostle Paul earnestly prayed for deliverance from a physical affliction. Many Bible scholars believe the problem was with his eyesight. How did God answer Paul’s prayer? What does that tell us about faith?

## 3 David was no stranger to affliction. How did David’s faith enable him to relate to the affliction he experienced? Read Psalm 119:67, 68. What did he declare about God while he was experiencing affliction? What this tell us about faith?

The trials in our lives can make us either bitter or better. Affliction can either draw us closer to the heart of God or drive us further from Him; it all depends on our view of God. If we trust Him and believe that He is good, and does good, we will have faith in His overruling providence, even in life’s most difficult moments.

## 4 Read 1 Corinthians 10:13, Philippians 4:19, and Psalm 46:1. What promises does God give us that we can grasp by faith in life’s tough times? As you read these passages, reflect on what God is saying to you at this moment in your life.

## 5 If our faith seems weak at times, how can we increase it? Read Romans 10:17.

Our faith is strengthened and built up as we read God’s Word. The same Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible will inspire us as we read it. The more we know God, the more we will trust Him. God’s Word is powerful (see Heb. 4:12); it builds and strengthens our faith.

## 6 Is it possible to read the Bible and get very little out of it? Why? Does Hebrews 4:2 surprise you?

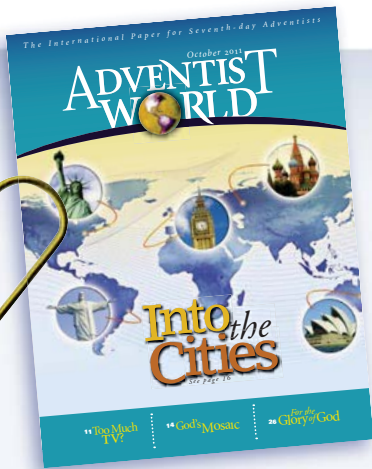
Hebrews describes a group of people who heard God’s Word, but it did not profit them at all. Why not? Obviously, they listened with their ears, but never internalized the things they heard. They did not carefully meditate upon the truths they were hearing and by faith apply them to their lives. What does this say to you about your own Bible study?

## 7 Read Romans 15:4. As we read the experiences of Bible characters, what happens in our own lives?

The study of God’s Word gives us a new vision of life. It deepens our trust in God, increases our faith, and fills us with hope. As we learn to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7), our trust in God will increase. Indeed, John described God’s end time people as having the “faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).

In His darkest hour on the cross, Jesus placed His life in the arms of His loving Father. He trusted God with what He didn’t understand, and we can too.

This is the authentic, biblical faith I shared with a troubled woman in Chicago many years ago. ■



# Letters

## Into the Cities

Thank you so much for the extensive coverage of the new initiative “Into the Cities” (October 2011)!

Here is my question: Why do we speak only of how many (or how few) Seventh-day Adventists live in a given city (e.g., bottom of p. 17)? Don’t we count other Christians living in those cities? Should only Adventists preach the gospel in these cities?

The *Working Policy* of our church states: “We recognize every activity/organization that lifts up Christ before humanity as part of the divine plans to evangelize the world. We highly respect the Christian men and women in other denominations who seek to win people for Christ” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: *Working Policy*, 1926, Section O 75).

If we believe that, why do we write as if other Christians play no role in the evangelization of the cities? Why don’t we encourage cooperation with them? This would not mean giving up our particular Adventist convictions!

ANDRÉ LIEBIG  
Germany

“The **unity** the church needs is on Jesus Christ and His truth.”

KEN LEMKY, Creston, British Columbia, Canada

*While we share many doctrines with Christians of other denominations, the special messages given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church require us to take our message to those places where the gospel of Christ may have already been preached.—EDITORS*

## God’s Mosaic

I’m writing about the article by Cheryl Doss entitled “God’s Mosaic” (October 2011).

The subject of cultural diversity is one on which the church needs education. There is that which is harmless and innocent and that which is harmful and unacceptable. All cultures contain these two groups. Not all diversity

is from God, or accepted by Him. We have to know how to tell the difference.

The unity the church needs is on Jesus Christ and His truth.

Only this will produce biblical, God-approved unity among His children, whatever their earthly culture. There are no successful shortcuts, detours, substitutions, or alternate methodologies that will accomplish this goal. Our choice is to go forward in harmony with all Jesus teaches, or spin blindly, making endless circles in our own imaginations and devisings.

KEN LEMKY  
Creston, British Columbia,  
Canada



## Waiting

I am responding to Frank Hasel’s article “Waiting” (October 2011). It is not my temperament to wait, especially with any patience. Hasel is right to state that we all wait at least one (or two) times in our daily lives—why not make them God moments?

To reduce my impatience I’ve taken “minivacations” in my head while sitting at long traffic lights; on the sofa waiting for others; and in those pesky produce lines at the market. I think I’ll make them God moments instead!

REBECCA WHITED  
Escondido, California,  
United States

## Rediscovering True Worship

I am completely cheered by editor Bill Knott’s interview with General Conference president Ted Wilson, “Rediscovering True Worship” (August 2011). The commitment of the leadership to revival and reformation started in 2010 at the Autumn Council and continues still.

I have been blessed and strengthened through the messages and resources at [www.revivalandreformation.org](http://www.revivalandreformation.org). The Holy Spirit wants to ignite our hearts individually and corporately. It is time.

CATHY LAW  
Via E-mail





### Observing the Day of Delight

It really touched my heart as I read the article "Day of Delight" by Ted N. C. Wilson (July 2011). I learned how to fellow-

ship with my Adventist

friends and observe God's holy day. My sincere thanks to *Adventist World* for "The Place of Prayer." I hope God will answer those prayers.

LALRODINGA

Falam, Chin State, Myanmar

### Thank You

Thanks for *Adventist World* every month. You always keep my spirit going!

LOVEMORE KASHAWO

Harare, Zimbabwe

I read every issue of *Adventist World* with great interest and enjoyment. I am very thankful that we also receive the German translation of the magazine here in Austria. Thanks so much to all who work on all the translations. This is truly a major piece of work. May God bless all the members of the translation team that they may continue their important contribution for the church.

Thanks also to the editors and all the authors for the fresh and spiritually challenging articles and stories. The church as a whole is being blessed!

ANJA KALUZA

Lustenau, Austria

**Letters Policy:** Please send to: [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org). Letters must be clearly written, 100-word maximum. Include the name of the article and the date of publication with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

# 50

## WORDS OR LESS

# My Favorite... Bible Character

■ My favorite Bible character is Peter. He's often criticized for "speaking first and thinking later." But I admire him because when he had the opportunity to walk on water, he got out of the boat to be closer to Jesus (see Matthew 14:27-31).

—SERGIO, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

■ Although we don't even know her name, my favorite Bible character is the little Israelite girl in 2 Kings 5 who told her master about God's healing power through the prophet Elisha. We should all be as fearless when it comes to sharing our faith.

—CORA, SAN FRANCISCO, California, United States

■ I have many favorites, but how could I not list David? He lived life with passion. Not everything he did was admirable or worthy as our example. But because he was spiritually grounded, God called him a man "after his own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14).

—HEE MUN, Jeju-do, Korea

Next time, tell us in 50 words or less about your favorite book of the Bible. Send it to [letters@AdventistWorld.org](mailto:letters@AdventistWorld.org). Put "50 Words or Less" in the subject line.

# 7 billion

## The world population



There is approximately one Adventist for every 407 people in the world. In some countries the ratio is much less; in many countries a lot more.

**Source:** General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics



The world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the highest membership are:

- Inter-American Division
- East-Central Africa Division
- Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division
- South American Division
- Southern Asia Division

## Where in the World is This?



**ANSWER:** In Gaspar Alto, in southern Brazil, this is a photo of one of the very first Seventh-day Adventist churches in Brazil. The photo was recently given to Sérgio Lessa by a church elder in Blumenau, Santa Catarina.

“Everyone in life faces **challenges** of one kind or another, but to hide behind the **difficulty** only keeps us from realizing the measure of God’s grace that can make us what He wants us to be and do.”

—LARRY R. VALOROZO, during a Bible study in Bologna, Italy

## Prayer & PRAISE

I am kindly requesting that you help me in praying that I get a job to take care of my family. I am looking for an investor for a timber industry.

SETH, *Sierra Leone*

Please pray for my son. When he was 8, he lost most of his hearing after an illness. He is now 20 and very angry with God. Pray for his reconciliation with God, and that he will do something useful with his life.

HELEN, *United States*

Please pray for a young woman who is part of an outreach program for local Aboriginal people. She is in the hospital on life support—the reason for the illness isn’t known, and she seemed in good health.

ROD, *Australia*

I need spiritual revival in my life. May God shield me from sin. I am also praying for employment, a place to study, and unity in my family.

VERA, *Nigeria*

Please pray for God to find a way for us to pay for our school’s new classroom and gym project.

RON AND HOLLY, *United States*

**Prayer & Praise:** Send prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer) to [prayer@adventistworld.org](mailto:prayer@adventistworld.org). Keep entries short and concise, 50-words or less. Items will be edited for space and clarity. Not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country’s name. 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.



# A One-Day Church

## Montadas, Brazil

More than 600 communities in Brazil are without any Seventh-day Adventist presence. But thanks to the dedication of Adventist churches throughout the country, that is rapidly changing. And the One-Day Church is part of the solution.

Adventist congregations throughout Brazil are sponsoring families to go to unentered towns as church-planting missionaries.

One of those communities, Montadas, has been adopted by the Women's Ministries Department of the North Brazil Union. One year ago it sponsored

Patricio and Cristina Silva, a lay couple, to move to Montadas and begin making friends. The Silvas quickly discovered that no one in Montadas had ever even heard the name Seventh-day Adventist!

The Silvas began a small prayer meeting and offered Bible studies to their new friends. Interest grew, but the need for a church building became obvious.

On August 10, 2011, a team of builders from Maranatha Volunteers International put up a steel One-Day Church frame. Church members and volunteers from women's ministries immediately began adding walls, ceilings, pews, even an addition for children's Sabbath school rooms.

The new Montadas church was dedicated free of debt on October 25, 2011. Already the church has 53 members, and more than 50 people have requested baptism.

"Come back in a year," the Silvas say, "and the church will have grown so fast that we will be ready to become two congregations!"



*The One-Day Church program is a collaborative effort between the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI), and Maranatha Volunteers International. These stories come to you each*

*month from Maranatha's assistant to the president and official storyteller, Dick Duerksen.*

# ADVENTIST WORLD

*"Behold, I come quickly..."*

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

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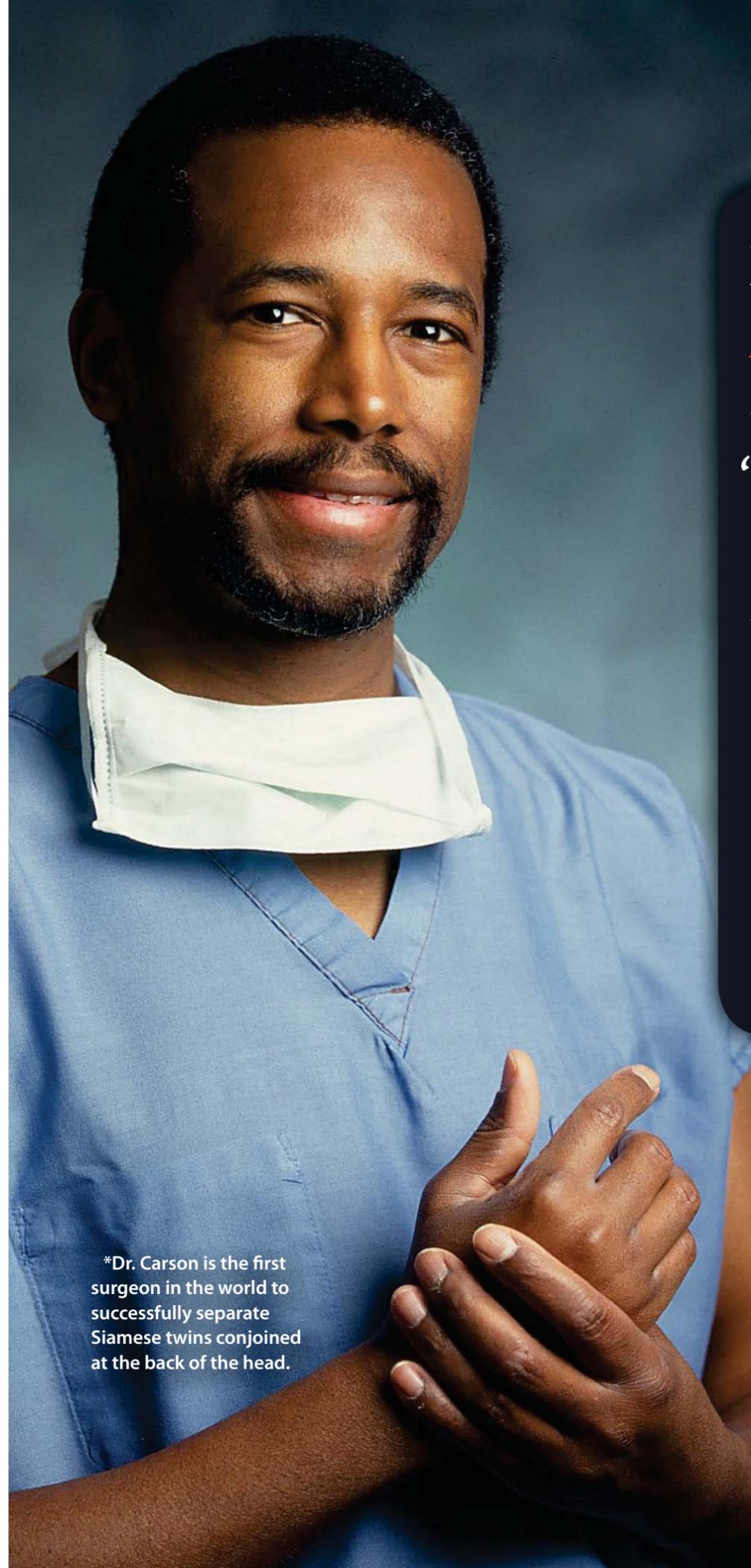
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\*Dr. Carson is the first  
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