

# ADVENTIST REVIEW

**MARCH 2018:** THE MAN WHO ATE CAT FOOD + WHY  
ARE WE HERE? + A MESSAGE FROM THE POOR WISE  
MAN + THE BIRTH OF SCATTERING + WHERE CHANGE  
IS LEADING + SEARCHING FOR MY MISSION

A large flock of birds, possibly terns, is captured in flight against a bright sky. The birds are scattered across the frame, with a dense concentration in the lower right corner where they appear to be landing or taking off from a field of tall, thin grass. The overall scene conveys a sense of movement and natural order.

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# TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:



- 1 Why Seventh-day Adventists are not Fundamentalists
- 2 New Criminal Code in Bolivia Could Curtail Religious Liberty
- 3 Philippines Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Sabbath Keeper
- 4 Volunteer Gravely Injured During Costa Rica Project
- 5 Voice of Prophecy Soloist Del Delker Passes to Her Rest

## VIDEO RESOURCES FROM ARTV



### ONE YEAR IN MISSION

In this series of short videos, follow a team of young Adventists on a mission to spread God's love to the city of New York.



### A HELPING HAND FOR THE JOURNEY

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BILL KNOTT



*Every scrap of personal and political opinion is wrapped in gospel language.*

## The Perils of “Jesus &”

I have been learning how to do this thing for more than 20 years now, slowly altering the patterns and imagery of my speech in hopes of being understood. And there are many translators out there who have quietly wondered to themselves if I will ever learn.

Gone are the subtle (and unnecessary) allusions to Chaucer, Yeats, and Donne, the recitations—lost on most—from my society of dead poets. All the cadences of language that stir my heart and make a line shine in my inner Hall of Fame at last collect like shavings on the workshop floor. In the end, the words whose feel and texture I so much prize get swept away in service to a greater good: that someone hear and love the gospel.

Each time I preach or teach where spoken English is a handicap, I’m reminded yet again how much we decorate—and thus, distort—the teachings of the Saviour. Unless advised, I’ll tend to speak as though my language is the dialect of heaven, with all its odd assemblage of terms, turns of speech, and untranslatable idioms. We put our phrasings in the Master’s mouth, as though He is best known through what turn out to be very personalized renderings of His Word.

I’ve come to know and inwardly regret the translator’s long pause as she searches for a suitable equivalent—soon matched by uncomprehending stares from those to whom I am supposedly “communicating.” “Could you say

that again?” she whispers, covering the mike. And back I go into the simpler, clearer language of the heart to find the thing that Jesus meant.

Learning—slowly, and with help—how to usefully communicate to Spanish-, French-, Romanian-, Dutch-, Korean- and Swahili-speaking believers has taught me, in the end, to ask myself, “Whose word are you communicating?” Is this message I intend to share in fact congruent with the gospel? Or has it subtly become, like some medieval jewel-encased sliver of the “true cross,” an artifact of my devotion rather than the living Word of God?

*“For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake,”* Paul wrote 2000 years ago (2 Cor. 4:5, NKJV).\* The goal of what believers say—in preaching, teaching, witnessing, and comforting—is saying something Jesus said as Jesus would have said it. The Carpenter still teaches us to pare down the yoke and sand it smooth, leaving our beloved shavings on the workshop floor.

All this is relevant in an age when “Jesus &” is all the rage, when every scrap of personal and political opinion is wrapped in gospel language. From some I hear that Jesus was the proto-socialist; from others, the ultimate libertarian. He is “for” every immigrant, or alternately portrayed as putting up a wall. His politics, so I hear, are just like those who speak His Word—

endorsing supply-side economics, or radically redistributing all wealth. He voted in the last election to “Make America Great Again,” or—so some say—to publicly repent of U.S. arrogance before the nations of the world.

But Jesus was no politician, as His interviews with real ones like Pilate, Herod, and Nicodemus make abundantly clear. Committed to a kingdom “not of this world,” He spoke the language of both personal and societal renewal, but always in that order. He wouldn’t tolerate the lies or swords of those who claimed to use them to protect Him and His kingdom, nor did He tolerate the waffling of one who asked, “What is truth?” in the presence of the Truth.

This is a useful moment for His church, and especially its pastors, teachers, evangelists and leaders, to recollect how Jesus so adroitly walked among the issues of His day. *“The fruit of that righteousness will be peace,”* Isaiah long ago advised us. *“Its effect will be quietness and confidence forever”* (Isa. 32:17).

Our greatest calling as believers is to speak words not our own, on behalf of a kingdom we do not own, for the sake of a Lord who has graciously concluded to own us—in all our weakness and wordiness. ♣

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

By God's grace I became a "Jesus at the cross" Adventist pastor.

FRED SPEYER, COOL, CALIFORNIA

## SISTER, DAUGHTER, MOTHER, WIFE

Anthony Medley's timely article, "She's Your Sister, Daughter, Mother, Wife" (January 2018), speaks to our unbalanced view of justice and mercy. We tend to want justice for others, but mercy for ourselves.

In his closing paragraph Medley reminds us that at the cross, Jesus took justice upon Himself so that He could plead for mercy on us. By God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, may we come ever closer to following our Perfect Example.

**James Coleman**  
Smithfield, North Carolina



obligation to share, whenever we can, what God is really like, and why there is so much suffering and evil.

I love being an Adventist, and I am so thankful to be a second-generation Adventist because my mother listened to the melodious voice of H.M.S. Richards on the *Voice of Prophecy*. This is how I know what God is really like: a loving, caring Father.

We are called Seventh-day Adventists because Jesus is returning soon and will end all the evil that Satan causes. We Adventists need to keep fresh in our minds the controversy between Christ and Satan. We can do this by two methods. First is the study of the Sabbath School lessons, which frequently deal with this battle between good and evil. Second, we can stay abreast by reading the "good old *Review*," which I would not be without.

**Connie Mitchell**  
Takoma Park, Maryland

## OUTSTANDING ISSUE

The January 2018 issue was outstanding. I've read the *Review* most of my life. My parents got it when I was a kid (I'm now 85), and I am so glad "real" life issues are being addressed more. I volunteered for a domestic violence agency some time ago and learned a lot. But human trafficking is rather new to me and much more horrific. I think the *Review* should continue to put more information out in terms of educating people in more detail of how to protect

children. Most of all, address why there is pornography found among us. Find a way to prevent men from going down this road. God bless all of you who write—there are so many I enjoy!

**Edna Mason**  
Merced, California

## FAITH ON FACEBOOK

I agree with Jimmy Phillips that we Adventists are blessed with "special biblical insight" regarding the controversy between God and Satan, as he wrote in "Faith on Facebook" (December 2017). We have an



## Our doctrines are important, but so many times we put the emphasis on the wrong syllable.

DIXIE STRONG, MOORE, SOUTH CAROLINA

### SOLA

Thanks for so many great articles month by month. What a powerful article Andy Nash wrote, “Sola” (November 2017).

I was a “sola” pastor, hopping around Scripture for the first 10 years of ministry. The Holy Spirit laid His hand on me, graciously prodding me to be a *sola scriptura* pastor. What a joyful experience as I began studying the four Gospels. By God’s grace I became a “Jesus at the cross” Adventist pastor. I began letting the light streaming from the cross of Jesus shine on every teaching of Scripture. This gave such rich, and sometimes modified, meaning to all lesser or equal teaching of Scripture.

Thank you again for such rich articles.

**Fred Speyer**

*Cool, California*

### HOW IS YOUR BIBLE MARKED?

This article was spot-on (November 2017). Our doctrines are important, but so many times we put the emphasis on the wrong syllable.

**Dixie Strong**

*Moore, South Carolina*

### MUSIC OF THE INCARNATION

Thanks for the articles refocusing on music, and emphasis on what

## IN A FEW WORDS...

### TWO GHANA CHURCHES ATTACKED BY ARMED ROBBERS

Praise God. He honors those who honor Him. He certainly watches over His children.

**Stephanie Johnson-Dingome, via Web**

### VIRTUOUS THINKING

Very insightful and inspiring article. We are created to be thinkers (Isa. 1:18). The Word of God should be our filter in what is truth.

**Robert Onsare, via Web**

### HOW GOD INTERVENED WHEN I SKIPPED SABBATH CLASSES IN RUSSIA

Wow. I’m going through the same situation. I am studying medicine in Georgia as well. I gain courage from you, sister. I’d rather obey God than humans!

**Sandrine Mg Cindy, via Web**

Christmas is all about (December 2017).

What a paradox to the secularized “holiday,” as it is called today. Christmas cards, music on the radio, television programs, shopping, gifts, rarely mention Jesus as the greatest gift of them all—the true theme of Christmas.

Jesus did not aspire for jewelry because He was the pearl

of great price. Jesus did not have a cell phone, but He talked to His Father daily. What a contrast for those who have changed the meaning of Christmas.

May the world never forget the “silent night” when it stopped to receive the Savior, born in a manger, who today is preparing mansions for us.

**Leo Ranzolin, Sr.**

*Estero, Florida*

## YOUR TURN

**We welcome your letters**, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: [letters@adventistreview.org](mailto:letters@adventistreview.org).

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A group of historians, researchers, and professors listen to the opening presentations of the “Situating Adventist History” conference, at Washington Adventist University, in Takoma Park, Maryland, United States, on Jan. 8.

PHOTO: MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

## WHY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ARE NOT FUNDAMENTALISTS

**ADVENTIST HISTORIANS CONFERENCE OPENS WITH ENLIGHTENING PRESENTATIONS.**

MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

**S**eventh-day Adventists are not fundamentalists,” said Andrews University church history professor Nicholas Miller, in the opening plenary of the Situating Adventist History conference on the campus of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Maryland, United States, on January 8, 2018. The Association of Seventh-day Adventist Historians event, sponsored by the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, and Washington Adventist University, brought dozens of Seventh-day Adventist historians,

researchers, and professors together for two days of presentations, Q&A sessions, and discussions.

Miller’s presentation, entitled “Adventism, Fundamentalism, and the Bible,” provided historical evidence that shows how Adventism, while a conservative movement, has for the most part been able to steer away from fundamentalist pitfalls, adopting a more balanced approach to various issues, including the inspiration of Scripture. It is something, said Miller, that is rooted in the ideas that influenced the early history of

the denomination, something that underlines the importance of researching Adventist history.

### WHY SHOULD ADVENTISTS CARE ABOUT HISTORY?

David Trim, General Conference director of Archives, Statistics, and Research, agreed. In his opening remarks he said that while research in Adventist history has skyrocketed in the past few decades, it is essential to provide context to many of those studies. “Adventist history is being transformed,” he said, “but

## While fundamentalists have usually defended the verbal inerrancy of Scripture, Seventh-day Adventists, for the most part, have not.

we need to contextualize, to put it in a wider context.”

Why? In an interview on the sidelines of the conference, Trim explained that to understand themselves, it is essential that Seventh-day Adventists be aware of the forces that shaped what they are today, and how some of those forces are still influencing the way they act and the decisions they make. “[Adventists] do not exist in a vacuum,” he said. “[They] are part of a specific set of geographical and historical circumstances that affect their plans and projects, even the way they see their mission.”

### FAR FROM FUNDAMENTALISM

In this regard, Miller’s presentation mentioned some of the ideas that provide background and influenced early Adventism. He specifically referred to three notions that, he believes, shaped the thinking of Adventist pioneers. “Pioneers did not believe absolute proof was needed to understand truth. They believed in the role of judgment for apprehending truth,” he said as a first point.

Miller also explained that unlike fundamentalists, Adventist pioneers, including church cofounder Ellen G. White, believed that apprehending truth was based on God’s Word, but that it was also possible to get important insights from “the book of nature,” and “in experiencing God’s working in human lives.” It is something, he said, that allowed Adventist pioneers to arrive at different conclusions from Christian fundamentalists on top-

ics such as eternal punishment, women speaking in church, and slavery, to name a few.

Finally, early Adventists were influenced by the notion of God’s moral government, which again, said Miller, highlights the need to approach Bible study without renouncing our minds.

“All of this makes Adventism a different religious stream than fundamentalism,” he said.

### CONSERVATIVE AND PRAGMATIC

Underlying this dynamic development of Adventist understanding, Miller discussed some historical Adventist tensions regarding the idea of inspiration. While fundamentalists have usually defended the verbal inerrancy of Scripture, Seventh-day Adventists, for the most part, have not. “Seventh-day Adventists take a high view of Scripture, but do not believe in its verbal inerrancy,” he said. The same applies to White’s writings. She herself did not support verbal inerrancy, said Miller.

After Ellen G. White’s death in 1915, her son William White tried to keep alive his mother’s view on inspiration, opposing movements supporting verbal inerrancy, said Miller. But the rise of liberal Christian thought encouraged Adventist leaders to side with fundamentalists on many topics over the next couple of decades, and the idea of verbal inerrancy infiltrated the church. “It is something that ended up shifting the church’s approach to race and women, for

instance, that to that point had been pragmatically progressive.”

Currently we live in an era of growing internationalism in Adventism, said Miller. “Against that backdrop, we have a conservative church, but not a fundamentalist one,” he said.

Alec Ryrie, a professor and author at Durham University, England, seemed to agree with Miller’s thesis. In discussing the place of Adventism in Protestant history, he said that Adventism has avoided the pitfalls that have sunk other movements.

“Historically, Protestant movements distrusted governments—they refused to get involved in politics, or they just ignored government altogether,” said Ryrie. “But Seventh-day Adventists chose a different way. They talked about voting and participating in government. And in the American Civil War, while opposing slavery, they spoke against both sides of the dispute.”

The same applies to apocalyptic thought. After Jesus did not return to earth in 1844, Adventists avoided either choosing other dates or moving away from apocalyptic thought. “Seventh-day Adventists chose a third option,” said Ryrie, who is not a church member himself. “They explained that the date was correct, but not the event.”

Ryrie believes that unlike other denominations, part of the Adventist success is that it has managed to hold on to apocalyptic thought without becoming unbalanced. “Adventism is essentially pragmatic,” he said. ▀





The Kellogg Company headquarters located in Battle Creek, Michigan

# U.S. COURT OF APPEALS RULES FOR PLAINTIFFS IN KELLOGG SABBATH ACCOMMODATION CASE

**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA HAILS “WATERSHED” RULING.**

**NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS**

On January 17, 2018, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit issued a decision in favor of Richard Tabura and Guadalupe Diaz, former employees of Kellogg USA, who were terminated in 2012 for violating the company’s policy mandating work on Saturdays (the day Tabura and Diaz observed as their Sabbath).

The plaintiffs later sued Kellogg for religious discrimination, charging that the company did not provide the religious accommodations mandated under Title VII. The Tenth Circuit validated that claim, saying that in order for an accommodation to be reasonable Kellogg would have to have provided employees the opportunity to avoid working on all Saturdays, not just some.

“The Seventh-day Adventist Church is pleased with this watershed decision upholding the critically important right of Americans to adhere to their religious

beliefs in the workplace,” said Todd McFarland, associate general counsel for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In its decision, the justices determined that Kellogg’s “neutral employment policy”—in which all employees desiring a day off were subject to the same requirements—may not rise to the level of reasonable accommodations where personal religious practices were concerned. As such, the Tenth Circuit reversed the prior district court decision, sending the case back to the district court for trial (D.C. No. 1:14-CV-00014-TC-PMW).

On March 22, 2017, two former Kellogg employees made their appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit after a lower court found insufficient evidence that the two Adventist plaintiffs were treated unfairly when they were fired for failing to work on Sabbath. The decision from the

court of appeals, located in Denver, Colorado, was issued on January 17.

The United States District Court for the District of Utah granted Kellogg’s motion for summary judgment on the claims for disparate treatment, reasonable accommodation, and retaliation on July 7, 2016. At that time the court also accordingly denied Richard Tabura and Guadalupe Diaz’s motion for summary judgment.

Tabura and Diaz were both fired in 2012 from their manufacturing jobs at a Kellogg USA, Inc. plant in Utah for missing work on Saturdays as they honored their religious belief to observe the Sabbath. In 2011 Kellogg increased production and implemented a new work scheduling program known as “continuous crewing.” This program created four separate rotating shifts in which employees were to work approximately two Saturdays a month—26 Saturdays a year. While both plaintiffs made attempts to use paid days off and work swaps with other employees they eventually were assessed too many absence points within a 12-month period and, after what Kellogg describes as “progressive-discipline measures” were exhausted, were terminated.

“The plaintiffs lost at the trial court level,” said McFarland. “The court said that Kellogg offering the use of their vacation time and swaps was enough. They didn’t have to actually eliminate the conflict; they just had to give them the opportunity to do it, and the fact that

there wasn't enough vacation time or enough people to swap with wasn't Kellogg's problem."

The case was first argued at the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals by Gene Schaerr of Schaerr Duncan. The case was handled at the district (trial) court by Alan Reinach of the Pacific Union Conference's Church-State Council along with Erik Strindberg and Matt Harrison of Strindberg & Scholnick.

Kellogg, a food manufacturing company, was founded as the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company in 1906 by Will Keith Kellogg and John Harvey Kellogg. John Harvey, at the time, was a Seventh-day Adventist and director of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, owned and operated by the Adventist Church. The sanitarium's operation was based on the church's health principles, which include a healthful diet, a regimen of exercise, proper rest, and abstinence from alcohol and tobacco. John Harvey eventually turned away from church beliefs, espousing what many believe was a form of pantheism.

For more than a century, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a leading voice defending the rights of all U.S. citizens—not just church members—to follow their conscience in the practice of their faith. Recently the Adventist Church led a friend of the court brief challenging the right of Abercrombie and Fitch to deny employment to a young Muslim woman for wearing a hijab. The Supreme Court in 2015 ruled 8 to 1 in favor of the plaintiff's claim that she should not have been denied a job for practicing her faith. ▀



Surgeons and staff prepare for a surgical procedure during the Pathway to Health mega clinic in Phoenix, Ariz.

NHIRLHEY STINFORT

## PATHWAY TO HEALTH MAKES CHRISTMAS MERRY FOR THOUSANDS

**MORE THAN 6,700 PATIENTS RECEIVED FREE CARE FROM 3,300 VOLUNTEERS IN PHOENIX.**

KRISTYN DOLINSKY AND PATHWAY TO HEALTH COMMUNICATION

It was early Christmas morning. The sun had not yet risen. It was brisk; there was a bite in the air, and the streets of downtown Phoenix, Arizona, were empty, except for a line of people bundled in coats and blankets, and sleeping in tents along one wall of the Phoenix Convention Center. Several held colorful flyers with the words "free medical care" on them. They were waiting for a free three-day mega mobile hospital operated by Your Best Pathway to Health, a humanitarian service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to open the doors at 7:00 a.m.

Since 2014, Your Best Pathway to Health has offered free medical and dental services to citizens around the U.S. within a mega clinic environment. The event in Phoenix December 25-27 was Pathway's sixth clinic. More than 3,300 volunteers, including health professionals, traveled to Arizona to spend their Christmas holiday serving residents of the Greater Phoenix area. Some drove several days, while others flew nationally and internationally. Services included medical, dental, vision, physical therapy, lifestyle education, financial, legal, child care, haircuts and even surgical specialties.

As Pathway to Health opened its doors on Christmas morning, the atmosphere in downtown changed. It was no longer quiet and somehow not as chilly. Volunteers with smiles and clipboards bustled about at the head of the long line of people, and two teenage volunteers stood off to the side with a violin and cello, filling the air with Christmas music. As people neared the front of the line, they were handed forms to fill out for registration and after visiting triage were guided to various lines inside the

convention center based upon their medical needs.

Volunteers wearing brightly colored leis greeted patients and led them from department to department, all the while listening and becoming friends with them. Patients who did not speak English were paired with a translator. Translation for more than 20 languages was provided.

It was even warmer on the main floor of the convention center, with twinkling Christmas lights, wreaths and garlands hanging from the curtains sectioning off each department. Volunteers organized their tables, eagerly awaiting patients. Toward the back of the floor, two full-sized RVs parked side by side were reserved for certain surgical procedures.

"We are doing more surgery this time around," said Lela Lewis, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.O.G., cofounder and CEO of Your Best Pathway to Health. "We find a big demand for surgery because it's free with no copay."

An energetic group of younger volunteers pushed around a cart full of wrapped gifts, handing them out to all the patients' children. More volunteers passed out bedding and complete sets of clothing donated by local Adventist churches. Christmas carols sung by other volunteers wafted across the entire room from stages set up in front of the waiting area near the dental and eye care services area.

Dental and vision represented a great need, as their services are not often covered by insurance plans. The dental department was comprised of 250 dentists, hygienists and their assistants at 168 stations. Services included extractions, root canals and fillings, treating swollen abscesses, cleanings and more.

"I am very thankful," patient Mark Williams of New River, Arizona, said.

"I had suffered for years, and dental care is expensive." Williams lost a temporary crown and had decay, as well as an exposed root.

Many patients had more than one area in which they needed care: broken ribs, decaying teeth, cancer, diabetes and more. But at department visits, patients received much more than healing for their physical ailments. They received hugs, prayers and simply time to talk with their doctors and nurses.

Some volunteers came hoping for this experience. Anna Hakes, assisting in the vision department while being home from college,



Volunteer dentists and staff work on an extraction during the Pathway to Health mega clinic in Phoenix, Ariz.

TERRY LOSS

saw it as "a great opportunity to help people." "What would be a better thing to do for Christmas?" she asked. She wants to become an ophthalmologist.

Across the main floor there were many bowed heads, volunteers praying with patients and volunteers praying together. Hairdresser Debbie Binder, whose department consisted of six barbers and six stylists, asked the patients who visited the mobile salon if they needed prayer.

Volunteers consistently demon-

strated this sort of compassion to patients. "I felt like Jesus was touching me," shared a patient who received a massage at the hydrotherapy department. This kind of whole person care, while it is not common, is the goal of Your Best Pathway to Health. "Patients got the greatest Christmas gift ever—the gift of love," said Lewis.

The effects of Pathway to Health last long after the clinic ends. Patients requiring follow-up were connected with local area clinics and nonprofit organizations that care for underserved residents. Pathway also offered information on how to live a healthier life, educating and empowering its patients on lifestyle choices and habits.

Upon receiving the medical care they needed, patients visited with volunteers from the Spiritual Wellness team, who offered more prayer, literature and, if the patient was interested, resources on local Seventh-day Adventist churches. Spiritual Wellness director Travis Maloney of Oconto, Wisconsin said that his team had many requests for Bible studies. "We will follow Pathway up with Health Information Centers to help people find better ways to live," said Ed Keyes, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Arizona. Attendees agree with him. As Phoenix resident Oscar Castro put it: "This is the thing that I really need right now, I need a light."

The total number of patients seen over three days was 6,770. The total value of medical procedures performed and services offered was \$40,608,800, which included 204 surgical procedures, 2019 prescriptions, and more than 1,700 dental procedures.

*Albert Dittes, Margaret Wilson, Anita Mckown, Michelle Harnisch and Jade Yang contributed to this article.*





Participants from various faiths place sand from Iwo Jima on and around the memorial marker.

PHOTO: HONOLULUCREATIVEMEDIA.COM

## MINISTRY OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS HONORED AT MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY

**ADVENTIST CHAPLAIN BEHIND THE INITIATIVE AT A MILITARY CEMETERY IN HAWAII.**

**RAJMUND DABROWSKI, ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE & ADVENTIST REVIEW**

The first time Chaplain (Colonel) Richard “Dick” Stenbakken, United States Army (retired), visited the National Memorial Cemetery in Honolulu, Hawaii, United States, was while stationed in Vietnam in November 1970.

“I was struck by the serene beauty and profoundly majestic silence of the grounds. It was a breath of fresh air for the soul,” he recalled. The neat rows of markers well reflected the crisp orderliness of the military members commemorated on these grounds.

Now, after a 47-year-old wait, Stenbakken’s dream of placing a

memorial at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific to honor past and present Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines chaplains became a reality in a special dedication ceremony on December 13, 2017.

### FIRST VISIT

Thinking back to the 1970 stroll in the Punchbowl Cemetery, Stenbakken described how “seeing those very fresh graves caused me to ponder how many of ‘my troops’ were here, or might yet be here. Not as visitors, like me, but as names etched in snow-white

marble, watered by the tears of family and friends. Those thoughts uniquely encouraged and deepened my commitment to minister as an Army chaplain.

“And, yes, there was the thought that my name could be on one of those white marble markers too. The thought was both chilling and energizing. Chilling because I still had 100 days to go in Vietnam, and life is never sure in a combat zone. Energizing, because I still had time to provide meaningful ministry to my troops.

“I cherish the reflections of that day and my experiences in Viet-



nam. They helped me focus on both the unspeakable beauty and the utter fragility of life. They helped me look eye to eye at my own mortality more deeply than ever before,” he said.

### THE DEDICATION CEREMONY

What began as a dream became a journey full of miracles. On a sunny Hawaiian day he saw the conclusion of two years of phone calls and piles of paperwork, making this memorial a reality. Stenbakken donned a World War II chaplain’s uniform for the dedication events.

Speaking at the dedication service, Stenbakken said that the placement of this memorial “honors every chaplain across the Pacific from all branches of the military and multiple faiths.” The ceremony was attended by a roster of chaplains from various faiths, including a Roman Catholic, a Methodist, an Anglican, a Unitarian, a Jewish rabbi, and Stenbakken, a Seventh-day Adventist.

“You would be hard pressed to have a more diversified group involved in the process,” said Stenbakken, who himself served 23 years on active duty as an Army chaplain before becoming director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Chaplain Paul Anderson, current director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM) for the North American Division church region was present at the event. ACM, along with others,



was also involved in the funding of the marker.

### A SET OF MIRACLES

Stenbakken noted that “the requirements for placing memorials at cemeteries are very stringent, so by the time the application and all supporting documents were gathered, the packet was 88 pages long. It took several months just to get the paperwork in place.”

The Punchbowl stone marker itself came to California by cargo ship from India. It was a special jet-black, sloped-surface, stone weighing 1,600 pounds on which three bronze 3-D plaques representing the Navy, Army, and Air Force chaplaincy offices were placed.

The miracles of the initiative included “nail-biting” moments as the stone came in by boat late, and there were problems getting the

shipment through Customs. After many hours of phone calls, air shipment through Los Angeles was secured 15 minutes before the air freight office closed. The stone flew overnight from Los Angeles to Honolulu; the engraving company picked it up and worked over the weekend to do the engraving and put the bronze seals in place. They then delivered it to the Punchbowl on Monday morning, and it was set in place in preparation for the ceremony.

“Getting the stone through Customs, through the California fires, to Hawaii, and having it done in time for the ceremony was nothing short of a series of miracles,” said Stenbakken. “It would have been very easy to give up, but after nearly 100 phone calls, and tons of coordination— and by the grace of God and answered prayer—it happened.”



From left to right: Leah Daniel, Claudia & Olives Villamizar, Randy Howard, local church pastor Fabian, Martin Perez (driver), Laura Simpson, Donna Staten, and Wilma Daniels (the woman in the colorful dress is a tour guide), were among those who went to Colombia. PHOTO: POTOMAC CONFERENCE NEWS

## LOCAL CHURCH IN THE US WORKS FOR A "COCAINE-FREE WORLD" IN COLOMBIA

**OUTREACH GROUP ATTEMPTS TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY AND PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP.**

BY: POTOMAC CONFERENCE NEWS

While visiting Colombia in 2005, a small boy ran up to Jimmy Munoz, associate pastor at Seabrook Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lanham, Maryland, United States. He offered to shine his tennis shoes.

learned that there are more than a half a million unschooled children in this impoverished country, making them prime targets for drug lords who want them to work on illegal farms. "From that day on, I have wanted to do something to help those who feel that they have no other option but to work in the production of illegal substances."

Last year Munoz and his family, nine Seabrook members, Olives and Claudia Villamizar, pastor of four Spanish churches in the Potomac Conference church region, and regional church president Bill Miller

flew to Colombia to help begin Munoz's dream of helping to create a cocaine-free world. The team taught leadership principles, conflict resolution workshops, and addiction treatment and prevention seminars.

At the locals' request, the

Seabrook church group also conducted evangelism meetings, where 12 people made their decision to be followers of Christ. Munoz said the group was there mainly to learn about effective poverty alleviation, fellowship with the local gospel and public workers, and to encourage them to continue moving forward in sharing the goodness of God. Three thousand five hundred dollars was donated to a local church, whose dream is to open a Christian school.

"The vision of this ministry, cocaine free world, is to promote entrepreneurship and to one day employ people in producing helpful items that have a high demand," said Munoz. "We are also working to attack emotional poverty by inspiring people to aim high and dream of starting industries that are greatly needed for community members to have honest and productive jobs."

While in Colombia this past year, Munoz met David, a member of an Adventist church who works as a tailor. David dreams of growing his business to employ family members and neighbors who don't have jobs.

"Through this ministry I want to make it impossible for drug lords to find illiterate people who are willing to work in their fields and to have those 500,000 children in school, learning to dream big—dream about the second coming of Jesus Christ, and how they can make the world a better place prior to the Advent," he said. ▀



David, a member of an Adventist church who works as a tailor in Colombia, hopes to help with the ministry of Cocaine Free World by growing his business to employ family members and neighbors who don't have jobs.

PHOTO: POTOMAC CONFERENCE NEWS

"Our Colombia friends felt bothered by the street boy and wanted to send him away with nothing," said Munoz. "I felt deeply touched by his plight. At his age I too was out on the streets in Colombia trying to work and make money to provide for my family."

Since this experience, Munoz



### PHILIPPINES SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF ADVENTIST STUDENT.

In what has been called “a landmark decision,” the Supreme Court of the Philippines ruled in favor of an Adventist student and his constitutional right of freely observing a day of rest according to his conscience. The ruling benefits petitioner Denmark Valmores, who filed a case against Mindanao State University College of Medicine staff. Valmores’ filing resulted from the respondents’ incessant denials to the petitioner’s religious rights of exemption from classwork and exams on Saturdays.



**LEARNING TO LOVE JESUS ON YOUTUBE.** The Adventist Discovery Centre in the United Kingdom has partnered with the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Wales to launch the Welsh Mission’s Let’s Explore children’s Bible study programme. The new program includes a colorful 15-lesson course aimed at 7- to 12-year-olds and YouTube broadcasts, and its goal is to help them to discover and develop a friendship with Jesus. So far, the program has been embraced by 11 churches and 108 students with an age range of 5 to 14 years.



**LOMA LINDA LAUNCHES PH.D. IN NUTRITION.** Loma Linda University School of Public Health will offer a Ph.D. degree in nutrition with an advanced research focus on plant-based nutrition, making it the only doctoral program in nutrition in southern California. The new degree program at the Seventh-day Adventist school based in Loma Linda, California, United States, will feature a research-based curriculum and will start this fall. Prospective students are encouraged to apply for admission early.



**A YEAR FULL OF COMMUNITY WORK IN BANGLADESH.** Adventist leaders in Bangladesh led a series of community-related events and initiatives throughout 2017. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and other nonprofit groups have diligently responded to the plight of the more than 600,000 Royhinga refugees who have entered the country. Adventists have also continued to assist those affected by the devastating flooding recently experienced in the country. In addition, leaders organized a two-day health expo and an End It Now event.



### FLORIDA HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN DEBUTS RENOVATED CANCER UNIT.

Florida Hospital for Children has officially opened its renovated hematology and oncology unit, which features larger patient rooms, state-of-the-art equipment, and a family lounge. The unit was redesigned with 12 state-of-the-art rooms, which include sleeping and storage spaces for each family. The redesign, which took into account the feedback from the families, also includes a common family area where parents can relax and support each other, a new playroom, and nurse workstations.



**JAPANESE ADVENTISTS PREPARE FOR THE 2020 OLYMPICS.** Adventist leaders in Japan are making plans to intentionally interact with the Olympics when they are hosted in Tokyo in 2020. At its recent annual leadership meeting, the Japan Union Conference discussed the need to begin planning for various outreach methods by which to share the gospel. Japan has a population of about 120 million and fewer than one percent is Christian. Out of the 1 percent Christian, only about 15,000 are Adventists.



**FORMER ANDREWS UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT PASSES AWAY.** Joseph Grady Smoot passed away on Friday, January 5, 2018, at the age of 85. Smoot served as president of Andrews University, a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, from 1976 to 1983. Among other accomplishments at Andrews University, Smoot instituted doctoral programs of study, developed a world system of affiliated higher education, and led the university to full accreditation of the Doctor of Philosophy degree.



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- » THE STORY OF FLORIDA HOSPITAL
- » IF TIME SHOULD LAST

# DISCOVER

## SCATTERING AND GATHERING

**T**omorrow, when eyes from earth's here and now look backward through historians' telescopes, they will recoil at some of the horrors that compel their vision—wretched Nassars and Weinsteins in sport and entertainment, brutal Taliban, ISIL and Al-Shabaab in holy war, murderous Harvey and Maria signatures affixed to our natural disasters. Beyond these, tectonic political shifts and sustained people disruptions on the scale of millions across the globe: change and outrage too frightening for credence or stability!

As recounted in the following pages, Seventh-day Adventist history has documented its own times and events of growth and gathering, dispersion and scattering. The church's fluctuating fortunes in Battle Creek, Michigan, or South Lancaster and Boston, Massachusetts, may be for some the ultimate disaster conceivable. For others it is testimony to the adage that in our world the thing that is most constant is change. The illuminating truth that has given and still offers firm anchorage in times of radical change is the knowledge that whether they be times of dismayingly disruption or disconcerting destabilization, "through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions," God All-Merciful has been and will ever be the Constant, "silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will" (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 173). That will guarantees His children that one day soon we shall hear His summoning voice say, "Come, . . . inherit the kingdom prepared" (Matt. 25:34, NKJV).

—Editors



MERLIN D. BURT

*Adventist roots run deep in this Midwestern city.*

**D**uring the 1850s, new and up-and-coming Battle Creek, Michigan, became a location of growing importance for the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

Sabbathkeeping Adventist faith came to the city in 1852 when Joseph Bates was directed by the postmaster to “the most honest man in town,” a Millerite peddler named David Hewitt.<sup>7</sup> A local church was organized not long afterward. In November 1855 James and Ellen White and others connected with the Review and Herald publishing operation moved to Battle Creek.

#### **A GREAT PLACE TO GROW**

From 1855 to 1903 church organization, world mission, and doctrinal understanding saw rapid development. In 1860 the church adopted the name Seventh-day Adventist primarily so that the publishing work could be incorporated.

In 1859 a new plan of giving, Systematic Benevolence, brought additional support for ministerial and evangelistic effort, requiring further organization to manage the collection and distribution of

resources. This, together with a need for official denominational representation for Adventist conscientious objectors who were being drafted for the U.S. Civil War, led first to the formation of local conferences, then to the organization of the General Conference in May 1863.

In early June of the same year, Ellen White had her most comprehensive vision on health while in Otsego, Michigan. She was shown the link between health and spiritual experience. This led her and many others to adopt a vegetarian diet and give greater consideration to good health that included the therapeutic use of water, rest, and other natural remedies. An additional vision in 1865, in Rochester, New York, instructed Adventists to have their own institution of healing. This led to the establishment of the Western Health Reform Institute in 1866, later renamed Battle Creek Sanitarium.

The sanitarium became a world-renowned institution under the leadership of John Harvey Kellogg. Other sanitariums were established by Adventist doctors in other locations.

The third major ministry of the

## **BEGINNING IN**

# **Battle Creek**





Seventh-day Adventist Church planted in Battle Creek was education. Goodloe Harper Bell began a private school in Battle Creek during the late 1860s. It slowly grew until 1872, when it was adopted as a General Conference project. This led to the incorporation of an Educational Society that established Battle Creek College in March 1874.

In 1874, John Nevins Andrews became the first official missionary sent from the United States to Europe. From both Battle Creek Sanitarium and Battle Creek College, medical and ministerial missionaries were trained and sent in growing numbers to various parts of the world.

### GROWING PAINS

An auspicious development during this time was the biblical understanding regarding church giving: tithing, returning 10 percent of one's income, replaced Systematic Benevolence in 1879, greatly expanding the financial foundation of the church, and improving funding for its increasingly worldwide missionary work.

The General Conference structure, while having good representation at periodic sessions, did not have corresponding administrative representation. This led to a centralization of authority and decision-making in Battle Creek.

By the 1890s the sanitarium was a major operation, as were the Review and Herald Publishing Association and Battle Creek College. The largest church building in the denomination, the Dime Tabernacle, seated up to 4,000 people.

Ellen White counseled over the years that there should be a decentralization, and this finally took effect between 1901 and 1903.

The General Conference was reorganized in 1901, creating a union conference structure that gave greater autonomy to other regions of the world church. Also, membership in the General Conference Committee was expanded to provide guidance and influence from beyond Battle Creek.

Two major fires that destroyed first the Battle Creek Sanitarium on February 18, 1902, and the Review and Herald Publishing House on December 30, 1902, brought the realization that decentralization should not only be organizational, but also geographical. The General Conference organization moved from Battle Creek to Takoma Park in 1903. The publishing house relocated to Takoma Park on a more modest scale.

The educational center of the church also shifted away from Battle Creek. Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) was opened in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in 1901. The new school also transferred ministerial education away from Battle Creek. Andrews University continues as one of the flagship schools for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.


Battle Creek Sanitarium was rebuilt in 1903 on a larger scale. It continued as an Adventist institution until 1908, when John Harvey Kellogg, after being estranged from the church, dropped most church representatives from the sanitarium association and made it a nondenominational institution. Between 1905 and 1909 a new health-care institution was developed in Loma Linda, California, that continues today as Loma Linda University Health.

Thus, during the first decade of the twentieth century, the church headquarters and three of the major ministries established or built up in Battle Creek—publishing, health, and education—all moved to new locations. The Dime Tabernacle was destroyed by fire in 1922. A more modest but still attractive “Tabernacle” was built in its place.

### ADVENTISTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Adventists continue to operate in Battle Creek. Besides local churches, there is also an academy, and for a number of years a hospital also operated near the site of the original sanitarium.

The establishment of the Adventist Historic Village (AHV) in 2000 brought a new Adventist ministry to Battle Creek. With several historic Adventist buildings restored and reconstructed, its purpose is to tell the story of God's leading in the beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Battle Creek, and an understanding of the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White.

Though God's work through the Seventh-day Adventist Church is worldwide, with many centers of ministry, it is valuable to remember the role that Battle Creek played in establishing how the church does outreach. Important lessons can be learned both from the mistakes as well as the wonderful successes. 

\*1850 United States Federal Census, Battle Creek, Calhoun County, Michigan; David Hewitt, in *Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings*, Sept. 3, 1845, p. 443.

**Merlin D. Burt**, professor of Church History at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, is also director of the Center for Adventist Research and the Ellen G. White Estate branch office at Andrews University.

JOAN FRANCIS

*Adventists in New England invent and reinvent themselves.*

Seventh-day Adventism in New England was an outgrowth of the nineteenth-century Millerite movement inspired by the ministry of Baptist lay preacher William Miller. By the time delegates from a number of states met to organize a General Conference of the movement in Battle Creek, Michigan in May 1863, Adventist believers had begun focusing on a community in the heart of New England as a place to gather and build. The congregation they founded in 1864, now the South Lancaster Village church, welcomed Hannah More, longtime missionary to Africa, as its first baptized member in 1866. Four years later, the New England Conference was also formed in South Lancaster, a village about 15 miles north of Worcester.

#### A GROWING WORK

The work among former Millerites and those of other Christian denominations grew quickly, and South Lancaster increasingly became a center for Seventh-day Adventism. A school, South Lancaster Academy (SLA), established in 1882, subsequently

evolved into two schools, SLA and Atlantic Union College (AUC).<sup>1</sup> Other institutions that came to locate in South Lancaster included an elementary school, the Southern New England Conference, and the Atlantic Union Conference, administering the church's work in the six-state region and New York.

Nineteenth-century growth among Adventists also benefited from the work of the Vigilant Missionary Society, women of South Lancaster who distributed literature, wrote letters of encouragement, and regularly visited and supported both the physically and spiritually needy.<sup>2</sup>

#### EDUCATION'S ROLE

Education contributed significantly to the growth of Adventism in South Lancaster. SLA continued to serve Adventists even as it grew to four-year AUC. For more than 40 years, academy and college students shared dormitory space, until the New England Accreditation of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) alerted the AUC board, in the 1950s, that renewed accreditation depended on separation of college

## The Enduring Light in

# Massachusetts





and academy. The Atlantic Union Conference asked the Southern New England Conference to take over secondary education in the area, and the conference, at a rural site in New Braintree, Massachusetts, constructed Pioneer Valley Academy (PVA), which opened in 1965 with a total of 233 students.

In 1914 the Everett church school, originally operated by the Malden and Everett churches, began, with 13 students, in the basement of the Universalist church in Everett. By 1916 the school needed to relocate. In 1920 attendance had grown to 59, with practically all the churches in the Greater Boston area taking an active interest in its success. The expanding school was rebranded as the Greater Boston Intermediate School.

Migrating to the Boston Temple church in 1924, the school had to move again when the church building was sold in 1940. A few years later the Boston Temple Junior Academy, as it had become known, became a senior academy, Greater Boston Academy (GBA). In 1965 GBA moved to the grounds of the regional Adventist hospital. When the hospital closed in 1999, the academy relocated to the campus of the nearby Edgewood Adventist Elementary School.

## HEALTH HELPS GROWTH

On April 28, 1899, on behalf of the Adventist Church, eight men obtained a charter to set up an organization for the express purpose of establishing a sanitarium in South Lancaster. Originally known as the New England Sanitarium and Benevolent Association, it was the eastern branch of Adventism's celebrated Battle Creek Sanitarium and administered the same wholesome natural remedies that had made Battle Creek famous.

People flocked to Adventist sanitariums for their unique hydrotherapy and dietary treatments, and other health practices. By 1901 more than 600 patients from 26 states, Canada, and overseas had come to the sanitarium. First constructed beside the college in South Lancaster, it was later disassembled piece by piece, transported by rail, and reassembled beside Spot Pond in Stoneham, Massachusetts as the church's premier medical facility in the region. By October 1902 it was fully operational at its new site.

Ellen White visited soon after and wrote that its move to a quiet country location was in accordance with the divine blueprint, "far enough removed from the busy city [of Boston] so that the patients may have the most favorable conditions for recovery of health."<sup>3</sup> To avoid a repeat of the Battle Creek loss,<sup>4</sup>

the sanitarium was placed directly under the control of the New England Conference. Later known as the New England Memorial Hospital (NEMH), the institution, for decades, boosted the reputation and impact of Adventism in New England.

## CHALLENGES

At the close of the 1982-1983 academic year the Southern New England Conference's boarding high school, PVA, had amassed \$150,000 in unpaid bills. A conference constituency session voted to close the school and sell the property just as apple trees planted on the property were coming to maturity. Proceeds from the sale (\$2.5 million) were put into a secondary education trust fund, with the interest to fund scholarships for Adventist-constituent youth to attend any Adventist academy in the region.

Further challenges emerged with the church's primary medical facility. The 1999 bankruptcy and closure of Boston Regional Medical Center (formerly NEMH) deeply impacted employees, the city of Stoneham, and Greater Boston Academy, on whose grounds the academy operated.

Twelve years later AUC, Adventism's only four-year college in New England, lost its accreditation, leaving students unable to obtain government-backed guaranteed student loans to finance their education. Most students transferred to other schools, but many faculty and staff were left to fend for themselves. Not everyone lost faith, and the school has since been reopened.

## THE LIGHT ENDURES

The loss of key institutions has not extinguished the light of gospel witness in New England. Immigrant congregations have emerged in the heartland of the Millerite movement. Adventist membership in New England is now at an all-time high. Church leaders are rising to the challenge of reimagining how witness, church planting and growth can be supported in the years ahead. 

<sup>1</sup> Myron F. Wehtje, *And There Was Light: A History of South Lancaster Academy, Lancaster Junior College and Atlantic Union College* (South Lancaster, Mass: Atlantic Press, 1982), pp. 1-13.

<sup>2</sup> Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Last Day Events* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn. 1992), p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> Battle Creek Sanitarium was lost to the church when it was taken over by John Harvey Kellogg and his associates in 1908.

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Joan Francis, chair of the History Department at Washington Adventist University, also taught history at Atlantic Union College.

WILLIAM ELLIS

*World changes and church moves*

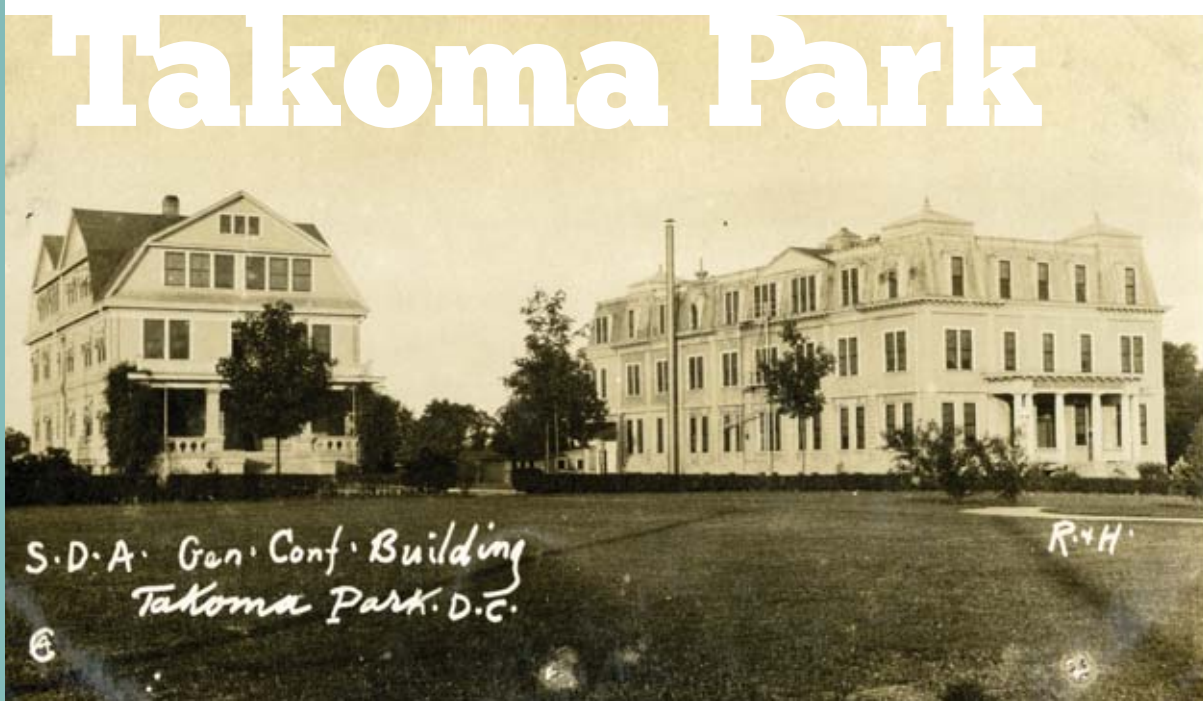
**T**akoma Park, the Azalea City, has been the host and hub of key Seventh-day Adventist institutions for more than a century. These include the church's world headquarters and several academic and health institutions. Relationships between city and institutions have not been static.

**EARLY YEARS**

First incorporated in 1890, Takoma Park, Maryland, was a region of the District of Columbia and the state of Maryland until 1949, when some of it became a Maryland municipality while the rest continued as a neighborhood in the national capital.<sup>1</sup> Entrepreneur Benjamin Franklin Gilbert developed the community by creating housing for the growing federal bureaucracy. At the turn of the century the community's rural air appealed to people employed in the city who loved the gentle hills, gurgling streams,

and woodlands of less-urban places.<sup>2</sup> For attractions such as these, Takoma Park was selected as the location for the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.<sup>3</sup>

In the main it has worked out well. The initial four Adventist institutions established in Takoma Park beginning in 1904 included the General Conference, the Washington Training Institute (now Washington Adventist University), the Washington Sanitarium and Hospital (now Washington Adventist Hospital), and a secondary school included as part of the Washington Training Institute (now Takoma Academy), as well as a church.<sup>4</sup> Throughout much of the twentieth century, relationships of these institutions to the rising Takoma Park community have been pleasant, as community values were generally in accord with Seventh-day Adventist values on healthful living.<sup>5</sup>

**THE ADVENTIST PRESENCE IN****Takoma Park**

S.D.A. Gen. Conf. Building  
Takoma Park, D.C.

R.H.

## MAJOR CHANGES

Beginning in the late 1950s and early 1960s, five significant changes in the community particularly impacted its Seventh-day Adventist institutions. First, in the late 1950s, the diversity of the District of Columbia and Maryland Takoma Park community increased, largely as the result of school desegregation driven by the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision of 1954. Community diversity was also significantly impacted by the displacement of a massive number of African Americans to make way for the Southwest Freeway in another quarter of Washington. The community's existing White residents and newly arrived Black residents on both sides of the boundary came together in Neighbors, Inc., a community-based organization determined to create and sustain racially integrated neighborhoods.<sup>6</sup>

Second, beginning in the 1960s, a complex of social reform movements made Takoma Park attractive to counterculture “hippies” and the communes they inhabited. Groups of predominantly young White social reformers secured large houses in Takoma Park at favorable prices, as they sought alternative and often controversial ways of living together that varied decidedly from traditional Adventist values. Third, in the 1970s, the increase in gasoline prices brought “yuppies”—young urban professionals—to Takoma Park, who ordinarily would have lived further out in the Washington, D.C., suburbs. This further changed community composition away from Seventh-day Adventist norms.

Fourth, also beginning in this period, many came to find refuge in Takoma Park from non-European war zones. Fifth, in addition to these demographic changes in race, ethnicity, culture, and values, the community became an Eastern focal point for progressive, even radical, politics. Initiated by the successful objection to a freeway that would have eviscerated the community in connecting the Washington Beltway with downtown Washington, the Takoma Park community became radical in a way not resonant with Adventist norms.<sup>7</sup>

## WHERE WE ARE NOW

Washington Adventist Hospital now serves a great many more people of color, and of the medically indigent, than before. Once Caucasian, Washington Adventist University is now more than 80 percent populated by people of color.<sup>8</sup>

# Adventists choose to remain in the community as a matter of loyalty.

Takoma Academy is now home to 79 percent students of color.<sup>9</sup> As Adventists moved their world headquarters in 1989, Takoma Park was a changing urbanized landscape. Once a calm, socially conservative community, predominantly European American, Takoma Park has become a vigorous, radical community, a nuclear free zone, a sanctuary city for undocumented residents, and a place where 16-year-olds and undocumented residents may vote in local elections.

Healthy tensions sometimes appear in the give-and-take between the community and its Adventist institutions as Adventists continue to love and live in a changing community that is still very much their own.

Adventist movement continues, with Washington Adventist Hospital scheduled to open its new site in nearby Silver Spring in 2019. But university, academy, elementary schools, and churches remain in the community to bear their incarnational witness of the gospel to a new set of neighbors through life-affirming values that will never be out of date. ♣

<sup>1</sup> Historic Takoma, Inc., *Takoma Park—Images of America* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), pp. 7, 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), pp. 394, 395.

<sup>4</sup> Two other Seventh-day Adventist schools, the John Nevins Andrews School (kindergarten through eighth grade) and the Sligo Adventist School (prekindergarten through eighth grade), and a second church, Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, were subsequently established in Takoma Park.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*; informal conversations over the years with longtime Takoma Park residents also inform my commentary on how their society has changed.

<sup>8</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, [https://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/col\\_info\\_popup.asp?ID=162210](https://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/col_info_popup.asp?ID=162210), accessed Jan. 10, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> NICHE, <https://www.niche.com/k12/takoma-academy-takoma-park-md/students/>, accessed Jan. 10, 2018.

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MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL

*Locations change,  
but the mission  
remains the same.*

The first Seventh-day Adventist to visit Asia was the indefatigable Abram La Rue (1822-1903). He left as a self-supporting missionary from San Francisco, California, traveling through the Sandwich Islands (today the state of Hawaii), finally arriving on May 3, 1888, aboard the ship *Velocity*. He worked across various parts of Asia over the next 15 years, traveling to, among other places, Singapore.<sup>1</sup>

Adventism took deeper root thanks to the literature evangelistic ministry of H. B. Meyers, an early convert in India, who sold books throughout Malaysia around 1900. Such efforts were followed up in 1902 by Edward H. Gates (1855-1940), the intrepid missionary boat cap-

tain who baptized the first Adventist in Singapore, a British soldier, thanks to contact made by La Rue.

By 1904 Griffiths Francis Jones (1864-1940) and his family, along with Robert Caldwell (1879-1966), a colporteur, were instrumental in organizing the work of the church.<sup>2</sup> After a series of six moves during their first 18 months, they eventually settled into a two-story home called Villa Hatsu. The mission was organized in 1906 into the Malaysian Mission.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that Singapore was a large port city and center of commerce made it a natural location as a center for Adventism across Asia. Church membership grew from 50 in 1909 to 332 by 1932. Part of this new growth involved

## ADVENTIST GROWTH AND CHANGE IN

# Asia





a new school (begun in 1905), that matured by 1915 into the Singapore Training Institute.

In 1919 the Malaysian Publishing House was begun to help facilitate evangelistic literature. World War II closed the publishing house, and in large part curtailed the work of the denomination. But the publishing house reopened in 1950 with equipment from the Signs of the Times Publishing House in China (subsequently shut down because of the revolution in China). The training school expanded into Southeast Asia Union College.

### STEADY GROWTH

As growth continued, the church in Singapore became increasingly a center of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across Asia. In 1930 the work of the denomination was divided into the China Division and the Far Eastern Division, comprising Japan, Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indochina. It was located in Baguio, Philippines, with the understanding that this was a temporary headquarters. "It was finally voted," reported C. L. Torrey, "that the headquarters be located in the tropical but beautiful city of Singapore. It may be of general interest to mention here that Singapore is situated approximately 50 miles from the equator, but the daily 30-minute shower and the prevailing breezes make the city a lovely place in which to live."<sup>4</sup> In 1936 the Far Eastern Division moved to nine acres of property, located "in a very desirable location, at an attractive price, and at a substantial savings to the mission."<sup>5</sup>

A significant aspect of the developing work concerned medical outreach. As early as May 1905 E. C. and M. Davey came from Australia to begin a medical clinic. A small treatment room was set up at the mission home. These early efforts ended in 1915, but were restarted in 1936. Workers were miraculously given permission to move into the closed campus of the Malayan Signs Press during World War II.

On May 15, 1948, the medical work was organized into the 48-bed Youngberg Adventist Hospital, located on a 1.8 acre (.7 hectares) site just a block away from the church headquarters. Named after Gustavus B. Youngberg (1888-1944), a veteran missionary to Borneo who died in an internment camp during World War II, it was the premier medical facility in Singapore during the 1950s and 1960s.

# The fact that Singapore was a large port city and center of commerce made it a natural location.

In 1996, citing eminent domain, the government purchased and amply compensated the church for the property.<sup>6</sup> Some facilities, such as the college, were forced to close; others relocated. The hospital transitioned into a wellness center.

### GROWING STILL

In 1997 the Far Eastern Division was divided in two. The Northern Asia-Pacific Division was located in Korea; and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division was established in the Philippines.

Today the denomination continues to maintain a significant presence in Singapore, which continues to be the headquarters for the Southeast Asia Union Mission. The territory includes 356 churches and 94,771 members spread across the countries of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a popular biographical overview of Abram LaRue's life, see Eileen E. Lantry, *Dark Night, Brilliant Star* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2012); May Carr Hanley and Ruth Wheeler, *Pastor La Rue: The Pioneer* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1937).

<sup>2</sup> *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, rev. ed. (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1996), vol. 11, pp. 614, 615.

<sup>3</sup> Wu Chook Ying, "Singapore-Malaysia," in *Light Dawns Over Asia*, ed. Gil G. Fernandez (Silang, Cavite, Philippines: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies Publications, 1990), p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> C. L. Torrey, "Far Eastern Division Headquarters," *The China Division Reporter*, November 1937, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> "Singapore Government to Acquire Adventist Properties," *Adventist Review*, Mar. 28, 1996, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> [www.adventistyearbook.org/ViewAdmField.aspx?AdmFieldID=SEAUM](http://www.adventistyearbook.org/ViewAdmField.aspx?AdmFieldID=SEAUM), accessed Dec. 13, 2017.

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ROBYN EDGERTON

*A Vision of Trust*

Lydia Parmele wasn't afraid to dream big. After being trained in the early 1900s as a physician in Battle Creek, Michigan, she set out with her husband, Rufus, and a small group of Adventists to share the unique ideas of whole-person care with the little town of Orlando, Florida. One small problem: all they had was \$4.83.

As it turns out, that small amount, coupled with their faith in God, was enough. Soon they grew their treasury to \$9,000, purchased a farmhouse, and, by 1908, opened their doors to care for the community.

#### **BIGGER THAN THE DREAM**

But this story, like all God-led stories, is much bigger than that of one person. It's bigger, too, than anything those early health pioneers could have ever imagined. More than a century later, the story is still being written.

From those humble beginnings Adventist Health System has grown to be one of the largest health-care providers in the United States. And its facilities in Florida, operating under the name Florida Hospital, now stand as one of the nation's most respected regional health-care systems, a reminder of God's amazing providence.

From that single farmhouse Florida Hospital has grown to 26 hospital campuses operating under two divisions. It has a total of 5,212 beds, 40,000 employees, six skilled nursing facilities, and 10 home health and hospice agencies. As the psalmist said: "The Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Ps. 118:23).

#### **GOOD PEOPLE, GOD'S BLESSINGS**

The success of the Florida Hospital system can be attributed to

## THE STORY OF

# Florida Hospital



a number of factors, but three stand out for Adventist Health System president/CEO Terry Shaw.

“When people ask why our Florida Divisions continue to perform so well, I tell them it is the combination of good people, good plans, and God’s rich blessings,” says Shaw. “Adventist Health System is blessed with dedicated leadership who live out our mission statement: Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ.”

The modern story of Florida Hospital begins in 1961, when Orlando was a quiet but growing town. The Orlando sanitarium had only 193 beds. Like the medical pioneers before him, Don Welch, a newly recruited hospital administrator, had a dream to reach even more people with Christ’s healing ministry. Seeing the community’s needs, he increased the medical staff, acquired the latest medical equipment, and developed additional services. To provide close-to-home care for people in the expanding outskirts of town, Welch and his team purchased a cow pasture just north of Orlando, where the first satellite facility, Florida Hospital Altamonte, was born.

In 1979 Mardian Blair became administrator and continued expanding services to provide care for the community, including a greatly needed new patient tower and medical office building.

When Tom Werner became administrator in 1984, he focused on fostering relationships with the community, and continued developing the services necessary to meet their health-care needs.

Florida Hospital was respected for its stewardship, which allowed the organization to provide patients with the most advanced medical treatments, and become a regional leader in open heart surgery and cancer care. The focus on caring for the whole person, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, was unique.

As Florida Hospital grew in size and reputation, local community hospitals turned to Werner and his team to become part of a larger, more viable system. The first was an East Orlando osteopathic hospital looking to partner with a strong network. Waterman Medical Center in nearby Eustis followed suit.

Similarly, when an East Florida-based health system needed to rebuild a facility, they turned to Florida Hospital and Adventist Health System as a partner. The relentless focus on mission and

stewardship created a foundation of success in Volusia County, leading five more facilities to join the Florida Hospital system, extending it into Flagler County.


Florida Hospital partnered with the Walt Disney Company to build Florida Hospital Celebration Health, which would provide health and wellness to the new Osceola County community, and be a destination for health-care innovation and education. This investment tested the organization’s operations and financial discipline to apply the CREATION Health principles (choice, rest, environment, activity, trust in God, interpersonal relationships, outlook, and nutrition). The best way to do this was to build a new facility.

### EXPANDING INFLUENCE

In 2000 Winter Park Memorial Hospital joined the system at a time when its owners needed an organization to acquire the assets, invest in, and ensure the viability of the hospital. Around this time Don Jernigan was appointed to lead Florida Hospital.

A good example of the strength of the system’s trust (having good people) and financial stewardship (having good plans) is how Florida Hospital has grown into the Tampa Bay region, forming Adventist Health System’s West Florida Division. Under Lars Houmann’s leadership, Adventist Health System grew its Florida footprint well past the traditional Central Florida marketplace.

About the middle of the decade, University Community Health in Tampa invited Florida Hospital to partner with them to improve operations, viability, and services to the community. Building on that joint venture, Florida Hospital acquired additional facilities in Tampa, Land O Lakes, and Tarpon Springs. Today the West Florida Division of Adventist Health System comprises a growing network of services delivered by nine hospitals, including the facilities in the aforementioned cities, plus the campuses in Sebring, Lake Placid, and Wauchula.

The Central and West Florida divisions of Adventist Health System continue to thrive on good people, good plans, and rich blessings from God while consistently realizing our mission: Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ. 

**Robyn Edgerton** is the director of mission strategy for the Adventist Health System.

# IF TIME SHOULD LAST

*Adventism's look when I am 80*



**ERIC ANDERSON**

Let me begin with a confession. I am probably the wrong person to venture predictions about the future. The embarrassing truth is that I have a poor track record.

For example, I contributed to a 1981 essay that declared that the denomination was on the verge of a schism. But despite a great deal of controversy, “the Desmond Ford crisis” (to use familiar Adventist shorthand) did not create a new church, another splinter group calling itself something like the True and Reformed Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I recently stumbled across another false prophecy of mine. In old lecture notes for my denominational history course I found a list of likely problems in the future of Adventism, the sort of thing we usually talked about on the last day of class.

One issue *not* on my list was women’s ordination. I told students in 1993 that ordination regardless of gender was “inevitable.”

## **TREND-SPOTTING**

In my profession we study change, eagerly explaining how things change and what caused a specific upheaval or revolution. Historians are especially interested in moments of reversal or radical new directions, when “present trends” did not continue. Yet, we did not see—or predict—several major events of my lifetime, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of South African apartheid, or the dramatic growth of Islam’s influence.

Similar seismic shifts have shaken the religious world. I think of how the American religious environment has changed since I was baptized in 1960. Did any farsighted Adventist editor, scholar, or evangelist predict the rapid decline in members and cultural influence for such mainstream Protestants as Episcopalians and Presbyterians? What about the drastic changes in Catholicism since the

Second Vatican Council and the concomitant side effects, including a steep decline in the number of men entering the priesthood or monastic orders? Who confidently expected reopened Christian churches, even evangelism, in Russia and China?

Within Adventism, too, are many apparent shifts from standards, taken-for-granted customs, and centers of strength. Ingathering in the United States? Sabbath School attendance? One-time “Meccas” or “Jerusalem” now replaced or overshadowed—Skodsborg Sanitarium in Denmark, the Singapore complex of institutions, Madison College, Battle Creek?

At the same time, a denomination numbering 20 million members has grown in unexpected directions, creating new and remarkably powerful institutions and influential concentrations of believers from Korea to Brazil to Rwanda. We seem to both wax and wane all at once.

I have been thinking a lot about the changes I may see in the next dozen years as I move toward the milestone of “fourscore years.” In speculating about what these changes might be, I am quite sure that some things will not change. I am confident that Adventists will continue to preach “the blessed hope,” proclaiming not only a risen Christ but also a returning Christ. Our largest local congregations will still be known for Adventism’s commitment to health and innovative forms of medical ministry. And growing or not, the Sabbath will still be the experiential core of what it means to be an Adventist.

Adventists are cautious about looking down the road a dozen years, fervently hoping that this battered old planet may be refurbished before 2029. We often preface any projection with the well-worn phrase “if time should last.” So, acknowledging fallibility—historians’ and mine—here are some possibilities (if time should last).



## **The next General Conference president will be “non-Western.”**

This means (and here the compass spins) not from the United States, Canada, Europe, or “down under.” This will happen sooner rather than later, and will be primarily the result of the shifting demographic makeup of the denomination, not any specific theological or political controversy.

## **In the next dozen years we will see strong challenges to religious liberty around the world.**

Such challenges will probably involve the right to “proselytize,” alleged “blasphemy,” state regulation of church institutions, and the freedom of groups and individuals to dissent from majority opinion. Religious liberty conflicts are unlikely, however, to only present a binary choice between first- and seventh-day worship. The warnings in the book of Revelation about overreaching governments, claiming God’s prerogatives, will remain relevant in 2029.

## **The North American Division will be both less important and more autonomous.**

As American financial and political influence over the rest of the church fades somewhat, we should expect to see more conversations about “home missions” in the “homeland of missions.” Short-term missions will continue to get more attention than the promotion of lifelong mission service.

Other world divisions may also propose new configurations of administration, though the denomination will simultaneously reject congregationalism. Our central organization works too well to be discarded.

## Regardless of the outcome of the debate on women's ordination, we will see expanded roles for women in the next 12 years.

Even if most female pastors are “commissioned” rather than “ordained,” there will be more of them. Women will continue to serve in such high-profile roles as university presidents, church administrators, pastors of large congregations (in certain areas), and widely read authors.

Adventists from traditional societies will be subtly shaped by women who, for example, teach seminarians how to preach, train physicians, or write significant defenses of Adventist teachings.

Conflict over Adventist teaching and practice relating to human sexuality will be much harder to resolve.

The General Conference president and the president of the North American Division appear to hold different positions on whether world divisions should be allowed to decide on their own about women's ordination. But both are likely to be in full agreement with the recent evangelical Nashville Statement, which affirms that “God designed marriage to be the covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman,” and denies that “marriage is a mere human contract.”

Neither leader would support the “progressive” alternative issued by Christians United, which repudiates the idea that the “present multiplicity of sexual orientations and gender identities” has anything to do with the “fallenness of human relationships.”

I do not expect the church to endorse radical change. However, as it defends the traditional Christian understanding of sexuality, the denomination will have to avoid anything that suggests ostracizing homosexuals, or risk losing the support of many young people.

## In a church with many national, racial, ethnic, and tribal fault lines, American models of progress may become less relevant.

Discussions of church unity will necessarily move beyond the paradigms created by the historical experience of Black Americans. Compensatory programs for “minorities,” for example, are bound to change as old majorities disappear. “Diversity” may become an unworkable concept if it assumes that racism or poisonous ethnocentrism is restricted to people of European descent. Racial categories themselves will become more vague in the face of global migrations and an increasing number of people who are multiracial or multiethnic.



### ONE MORE THING

I am tempted to offer one more prediction, this one more daring and even more uncertain than the others. In the part of Seventh-day Adventism I know best, I see hints of an impending realignment. Maybe I'm imagining it, but some of our old words and categories seem to be losing their clarity and usefulness.

We once thought we knew what the words "conservative" and "liberal" meant in the Adventist context. We were pretty sure that there were sharp differences between these two groups, and we could predict how a "conservative Adventist" would react and what a "liberal Adventist" would assume. But I suspect the words may be losing their meaning, or at least their sharp edges. Recent events at Pacific Union College (PUC), where I serve, have unsettled my confidence in the old labels.

A few months ago readers of *Adventist Review* may have noticed a surprising news story about PUC's decision *not* to sell some of our land, which is a heritage that goes back to the beginning of the school. Now, of course, it's good news when any Adventist institution refuses to go down that familiar, invariably disappointing road of selling assets to pay off debts or, even worse, to shore up one year's budget. But that is not the most interesting part of the story.

Our campus has had a lively discussion about this land, which includes 1,800 acres of forest and farmland. How does this land contribute to our educational mission, we asked, and our old commitment that here on Howell Mountain "nature and revelation unite in education"? Does our rural location provide today's students with something they need?

At this point I expected to see the appearance of those well-known personages Brother Liberal and Sister Conservative, and witness a conversation that falls into certain familiar patterns. One side would talk about the "blueprint" and "mission drift," and the other would warn about the irrelevance of old ways of doing things and the desperate need for radical innovation. But nothing of the kind happened.

Without reference to other controversies, people labeled "liberal" and people said to be "conservative" came to a strong consensus. They found that PUC's founding ideals retained great power in the twenty-first century. They discovered (or rediscovered) that the college's location and unique land heritage appealed to today's students, and to our non-Adventist neighbors.

Soon the campus was abuzz with schemes for organic gardening, enhanced opportunities for student labor, forest preservation, and new classes. The beginning-of-the-year colloquium, involving all faculty and staff, focused on "nature deficit disorder," and the need for nature education as balance to the distortions of an increasingly "virtual" world.

It's too soon to say what this ferment will produce. But I am encouraged by the hint that the old categories may be losing their power, at least some of the time. If we look around in other locations and other conversations, we may observe similar changes.

I think of a good friend who is a theologian. When the conversation turns to technical issues of theology, such as the role of history in explicating the New Testament, or how "the facts of natural history" should inform our reading of Genesis, he is distinctly "liberal," unlikely to be hired at the seminary. Yet he is passionate and eloquent in his defense of the Sabbath. He believes that the Adventist practice of the Sabbath is eroding, sometimes even in "conservative" contexts. And no one is more eloquent in explaining the theological underpinning for the biblical Sabbath. I could see him leading a successful crusade to preserve this pillar of Seventh-day Adventism, not necessarily a known liberal position.

It's possible, in short, that our denomination will find new language, by the year 2029, that enhances our articulation of the teachings of our faith—new language for our unfailing commitment to "revival and reformation," however long time may last.

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**Eric Anderson** taught history at Pacific Union College, served as president of Southwestern Adventist University, and now lives with his wife Loretta in Angwin, California.



# THE MAN WHO ATE CAT FOOD

In college I wrote a short story, based on a newspaper account of a man who walked into a welfare office while eating cat food out of a can, called “The Man

Who Ate Cat Food.” Though I knew nothing more about the man other than his eating cat food out of a can in the welfare office, my imagination took over, and the story went as follows.

Deemed insane by a psychiatrist, Frank had been locked away in a mental institution, where he believed he belonged. After all, the psychiatrist, the expert, had declared him insane. But Frank later read a newspaper story: that same psychiatrist had, turns out, committed suicide by gassing himself. *This guy gasses himself*, Frank thought, *and I’m the crazy one?* He then

escapes, no longer believing that he belonged in the mental institution.

Who, what, and how are the mores, the values, right and wrong, sanity or insanity, determined in our society? Don’t say laws; laws merely reflect what’s already there. In Nazi Germany the law banned Jews from owning pets; in the Jim Crow South, the law forbade Blacks from sitting in the same railroad cars as Whites. The law simply reveals the hearts of those who make them.


What’s scary isn’t that values and mores change, but that Christians change with them, which could be good or bad, depending upon what changes and what they change into. Unfortunately, the Christian church hasn’t had the best track

record transcending some of the more sordid cultural biases of whatever time and place they inhabit.

Yet amid all the shifting and shucking, we have been given eternal and transcendent moral absolutes, the Ten Commandments, an expression of the character of the Creator Himself. Not only that, we have that Creator (John 1:1-3) fleshing out those commands for us with even more clarity and precision—lusting as adultery (Matt. 5:28), anger as murder (verses 21, 22), those kinds of things—than were originally etched in stone.

However much we understand this text in the context of the “mark of the beast” and end-time events, how are God’s faithful people depicted? “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12, NKJV).<sup>\*</sup> Imagine if all Christians through the ages, not just in the end-times, had indeed kept the commandments of God as Jesus showed us to, as an expression of their faith in Him? Think of all the sordid and nasty cultural biases they would have transcended, even opposed, instead of being swept up in them.

In my short story a woman was sitting in the welfare office when the man came in, sat down, and started eating cat food out of a can. The woman freaked. Only a crazy person would do that, right? It was Frank, newly escaped from the mental hospital. So maybe he was insane after all?

Some things are hard to tell. Others, at least for Christians, shouldn’t be so fuzzy, not with the divine law from above etched in our hearts here below. 

<sup>\*</sup> \*Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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WHO, WHAT, AND HOW ARE THE MORES, THE VALUES, RIGHT AND WRONG, SANITY OR INSANITY, DETERMINED IN OUR SOCIETY?



**ALSO IN THIS SECTION:**

- » SEARCHING FOR MY MISSION
- » SPIRITUAL CHANGE AND GROWING UNDERSTANDING
- » A MESSAGE FROM THE POOR WISE MAN

**2018**

TOTAL WORLD POPULATION: 7.8 BILLION

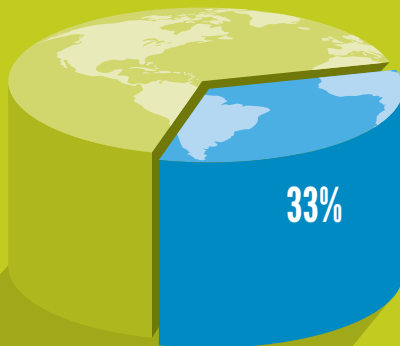
CHRISTIAN POPULATION: 2.6 BILLION



**1918**

TOTAL WORLD POPULATION: 1.8 BILLION

CHRISTIAN POPULATION: 0.6 BILLION



GORDEN AND CHERYL DOSS

**O**n November 11, 1918, World War I ground to a halt. The 2018 centennial of the ceasefire that ended that global conflict provides a historical perspective for some thoughtful reflection. During the past 100 years, how has the world changed? How has the Adventist Church changed? And what are the implications for Adventist mission?

### WORLD RELIGION BY THE NUMBERS

In 1918, about 1.8 billion people inhabited Planet Earth. By 2018 that number has exploded to an estimated 7.8 billion.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the world population has more than quadrupled since World War I ended. This most basic metric of the challenge of world missions is hard to grasp fully.

During the twentieth century the number of people who self-identify as Christians has remained constant at one third of the population. Christianity, in its many forms, remains the largest of the world religions, followed by Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The total number of Christians has grown from about 0.6 billion to 2.6 billion. On the other hand, the two thirds of the population that does not claim to be Christian, that stands in the greatest need of the good news, has grown from about 1.2 billion to 5.2 billion.

The growth of the Christian faith has shifted its numeric center of gravity away from its longtime center in Europe and North America. In 1910 European and North American Christianity accounted for 81 percent of the total. By 2010 only 38 percent of Christians lived on those two continents.<sup>2</sup> Christianity has become a truly global religion. As World War I ended, the privilege and responsibility for Christian global mission rested primarily on the church of Europe and North America. Today the task of missions is distributed and decentralized to many new centers on all of the continents.

### SHIFTS IN ADVENTIST MISSION

In 1918 the Adventist Church had only 171,914 members, 78 percent of whom lived in Europe and North America.<sup>3</sup> By 2018 the membership has grown to more than 20 million, with only 8.1 percent located in Europe and North America. This amazing growth is cause for Adventists to praise the Lord. But even as we give thanks, the unfinished task of world mission looms large because the membership is unevenly distributed, and large

# WHERE CHANGE IS LEADING

*Implications of  
global change for  
Adventist Mission*

people groups remain mostly unevangelized.

On the basis of membership concentration Adventist membership can be divided into two large clusters. The “big seven divisions” cluster includes the North American, Inter-American, and South American divisions; the West-Central Africa, East-Central Africa, and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean divisions; and the South Pacific Division. These seven divisions account for 77 percent of Adventist membership but only 26 percent of world population. Each of these divisions faces major, unique mission challenges, but their territories are comparatively well evangelized, and they are comparatively well equipped for the unfinished task within their own territories. Furthermore, they also have the missional capacity to reach beyond their own territories.

The “diverse six divisions plus” cluster includes the Trans-European, Inter-European, Euro-Asian, Southern Asia, Northern Asia-Pacific, and Southern Asia-Pacific divisions, plus the Middle East-North Africa Union (MENA) and the Israel Field. These territories account for only 23 percent of Adventist members, but a huge 74 percent of world population. They are so diverse that placing them in the same grouping may not seem logical. What they have in common is the missional challenge they each face.

The “diverse six divisions plus” group has a greater missional challenge compared with the “big seven divisions” for three main reasons: (1) while the “big seven divisions” have a member-to-population ratio of 1:344, the “diverse six divisions plus” ratio is 1:1,200 and the ratio in MENA, by itself, is 1:420,400; (2) the centers of global Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism and the 10/40 window are located there; (3) the nominally Christian populations of Europe have become quite secularized and not attracted to organized religion. In other words, the “diverse six divisions Plus” group has comparatively fewer members and fewer resources to witness to vast unreached people groups that have historically been least responsive to the Adventist message.

#### **FOUR IMPLICATIONS FOR TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MISSION**

What do these and other major changes occurring since the ceasefire that ended World War I imply for Adventist mission in the twenty-first century?

First, the privilege and responsibility for world

**TOTAL  
ADVENTIST  
MEMBERSHIP:  
20 MILLION**



**MEMBERS LIVING  
IN EUROPE AND  
NORTH AMERICA**

**TOTAL  
ADVENTIST  
MEMBERSHIP:  
171,914**

**78%**

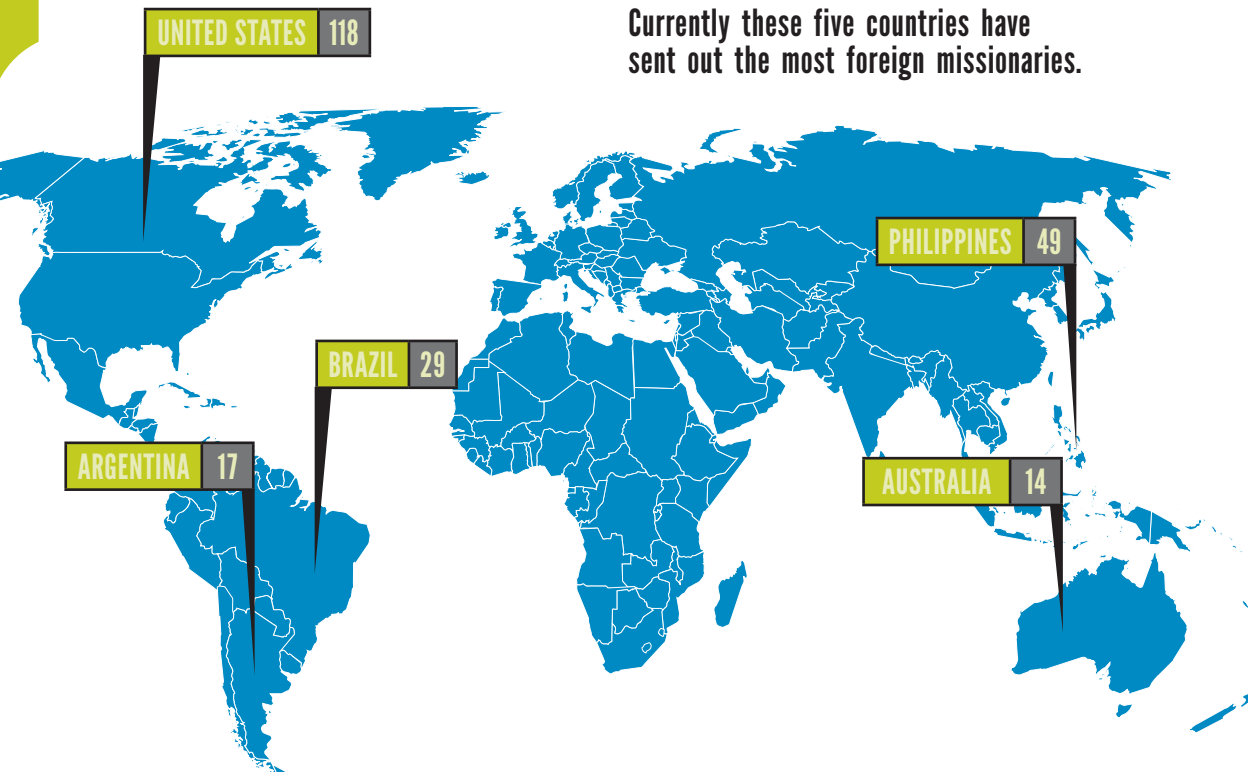
**8.1%**

**1918**

**2018**



Currently these five countries have sent out the most foreign missionaries.



mission has shifted from resting primarily on the church in North America and Europe to the church in the whole world. More specifically, the “big seven divisions” cluster, with about three quarters of the Adventist membership need to embrace a calling to support mission alongside their “diverse six divisions plus” spiritual siblings. A century ago, the church of North America and Europe, with an Adventist membership that now seems microscopic, stretched itself out to the entire world field. Today the Adventist Church has amazing missional capacity in many countries that waits to be fully unleashed among the least evangelized people groups of the world.

Second, the church has the opportunity to enhance intercultural competence at every level. At the local church level, some monocultural congregations remain, but their number is declining. Most congregations include a significant number of members from multiple cultures who have differing, and sometimes conflicting, convictions about the “right way” to be a “good Adventist.” Many believe preaching, singing, Communion services, diet, dress, and behavior must be a certain way. They see change in any of these as akin to spiritual compromise. Interestingly, the cultural

blending that sometimes occurs produces a diversity that can make it difficult to witness in communities with dominant traditional cultures.

The church is also multicultural at the administrative level. The basic paradigm for leadership, finances, and organizational style continues to have an American flavor; but the paradigm is reshaped in different ways in the church’s many administrative offices. Church offices that were once culturally homogenous are now very diverse. Cultural concepts of time keeping, money management, gender relationships, and conflict resolution differ between people who work together closely.

The multicultural character of the church at every level shows how urgent it is that everyone develop intercultural competence. One important step in this direction is to normalize or validate cultural conflict. All human relationships experience conflict, and differing cultural perspective is one factor that produces conflict.

The challenge is not to strive to deny it, bury it, or exacerbate it, but rather to negotiate conflict in a Christlike way. Conflict of all kinds, when well managed, can produce enhanced relationships. A well-functioning multicultural church, engaged in mission to a multicultural world, has great

potential for missional effectiveness. In a world torn apart by cultural and religious conflict, the church as the body of Christ can be a living, breathing model of harmony.

Third, the church has the opportunity to enhance missiological understanding at the local level. In this complex era, being full of zeal to “just get out there and do something” is not enough. Almost every local church has, within the range of its missional responsibility, Christians of other denominations, adherents of the non-Christian religions, animistic practitioners, secularists, and atheists. Many different approaches are needed. The same principles that guide a cross-cultural missionary among, for example, Buddhists in Asia, need to be understood by local church pastors, leaders, and members who reach out to Buddhists who live in the West.

Fourth, the church has the opportunity to give special priority to mission among the non-Christian world religions—Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism being the three largest. Migration has carried these people groups out of their traditional centers to almost every nation. Customary Adventist methods that have worked well among fellow Christians and traditional tribal peoples do not work well among people established in another world religion. Muslims do not respond well to methods that attract Methodists. Priority must be given to developing appropriate methodologies and materials and allocating increasing numbers of missionaries and moneys to meet the immense challenge of reaching the two thirds of the world’s peoples who do not have a Christian background.

#### **A COMPELLING FIFTH: LONGTERM MISSIONARIES**

A highly significant fifth implication for twenty first century mission relates to the question of long-term missionaries. Their role needs to be better understood and reaffirmed. The church must exploit its opportunity to fully engage the missional capacity of its growing, gifted, and committed membership in effective and strategic ways.

Starting in the 1980s, the General Conference missionary workforce has changed from being mostly North American to being multicultural. Only about 30 percent now come from North America, and that group is multiethnic. Altogether, currently serving missionaries come from about 70 nations and serve in some 97 nations.

However, the magnitude of the unfinished task of mission cries out for many more missionaries

than we now have. Among many large people groups, the church lacks indigenous believers to evangelize them adequately. Cross-cultural missionaries are needed to evangelize many, many millions of unreached peoples, especially in the “diverse six plus” divisions.

A wide variety of volunteers and short-term missionaries, serving from a few weeks to a year or two, has added a positive dimension to Adventist mission. One limitation is that their service is usually given among the best-evangelized people groups, where the church is already strong.

However, volunteers can provide effective service among less-evangelized people groups when their work is well coordinated by long-term missionaries and local churches. Good synergy, strategy, and coordination between officially sent missionaries and those in Adventist supporting ministries can also enhance global mission.

#### **THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MISSION MANDATE**

At the end of World War I the Adventist Church had come far in its mission thinking: from the “shut door” period (1844-1851), to sending the first official missionary in 1874, to a complete reorganization of the church for mission in the early part of the twentieth-century. By 1918 the church had embraced Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations. During the past 100 years God has greatly blessed Adventist mission; but the number yet to be evangelized is greater than ever, especially among non-Christian world religions.

Jesus promised that “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt 24:14). Humanly speaking, the task is impossible, but Christ’s words are a promise and a prophecy. The God who used 12 apostles to reach their world, who grew a tiny group of Adventists into a global church, will empower His last-day church as we commit ourselves to the task of taking the gospel to all peoples everywhere. 🌱

<sup>1</sup> Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Adventist statistics from *General Conference Annual Statistical Reports*.

<sup>4</sup> *Foreign Missionary Program of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*. 2017. Unpublished paper. General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, 2017, p. 9.

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PETER N. LANDLESS ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

## SUGAR AND SWEETENERS

*Are they all safe to use?*

**Q:** Please explain some of the issues about sugar, fructose, and artificial sweeteners.

**A:** We were made with a natural affinity for sweet-tasting foods, and sugars are part of the natural composition of milk, honey, and higher plants (fruits, vegetables, and flowers as nectar). Table sugar is made from sugarcane and sugar beets. High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), the most abundant sweetener in the American's diet, has fructose, glucose, and sucrose just like sugar and honey, but is made from cornstarch and has up to 90 percent fructose in the final product.

HFCSs are cheaper than sugar and easier to use in food processing. The 55 percent fructose variety is in most soft drinks. A 12-ounce can of regular cola has about 39 grams, or 9 teaspoons, of "sugar." A recent study reported that one or two sugary drinks a day raised the risk of type 2 diabetes by 26 percent, compared to just one a month.

Sugar-containing foods in their natural form, such as whole fruits, are nutritious and packed with essential nutrients, phytochemicals, and fiber. Refined, highly processed foods with added sugar and consumed in large amounts rapidly increase blood glucose and insulin levels. They also increase blood fats and naturally occurring destructive chemicals, as well as the risk for diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses.

Added fructose is a potentially dangerous chemical. Fructose is processed by the liver, and although it does not have a significant effect on blood sugar or insulin levels at first, it can later, through its effect on blood fats and chemicals that stimulate

the liver to ignore insulin and produce more sugar.

The more than 200 nonnutritive sweeteners (NNSs) now known may occur naturally in plants, may be produced by chemically modifying natural substances, or be completely synthetic. Apart from stevia, a green herb native to South America, non-nutritive sweeteners are synthetic. They may cause nervous disturbances, cancer, and disturbance in the body's food and energy processing when consumed at or above the acceptable daily intake (ADI).

In healthy subjects, appetite and short-term food intake, risk of cancer, and the risk of diabetes may be altered with NNS use, but evidence is inconclusive. In the Multiethnic Study of Atherosclerosis, however, individuals who consumed diet drinks every day had a 36 percent greater risk for developing a syndrome associated with many deadly diseases and a 67 percent increased risk for type 2 diabetes—the very conditions that diet drinks and NNSs are supposed to help us prevent!

For persons with chronic diseases or their precursors, avoidance of added sweeteners of all kinds is definitely warranted. The key for them and otherwise healthy individuals may be in retraining the taste buds to enjoy and savor lower, more natural amounts of food sweetness. Then, the avoided (i.e., not added) sugars and NNSs will have a minimal effect, whether they prove to be detrimental or not.

We cannot really improve on God's packaging of our food. 🌱

**Peter N. Landless**, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department. **Zeno L. Charles-Marcel**, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.

**HIDDEN SUGARS** More than 60 FDA-approved names for added sugars are listed on food labels in the United States. Look carefully for added sugars in the ingredients listed. The ending "ose" is a clue (e.g., dextrose). Here are some not so obvious ones:

- |                |                |             |              |               |             |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| agave nectar   | panocha        | fruit juice | carob syrup  | evaporated    | fruit juice |
| maltol         | dextrin        | rice syrup  | maltodextrin | cane juice    | concentrate |
| barley malt    | golden syrup   | treacle     | grape sugar  | saccharose    | cane juice  |
| corn sweetener | buttered syrup | muscovado   |              | sweet sorghum | crystals    |

# SEARCHING FOR MY MISSION

*Who knew it was right there all the time?*

**M**y struggle to find a mission began several years ago when I was asked to serve as an elder in my local church. As elders, we were encouraged to have a personal mission. This raised several questions for me: What were my talents and abilities? How could they be utilized to help and support others? What did time allow for me to do?

I live alone, work a full-time job, and attend several regular board meetings and other church events. Family activities and school programs for the grandchildren were also a big part of my life. So time was a big consideration when trying to find a personal mission. I was already beginning to feel the stress of having too much to do and not enough time to do it all in. Now I was being asked to add in something more. But that still left the question: what is my mission?

**OUTSIDE MY COMFORT ZONE**

One of my biggest struggles is giving the pastoral prayer at church. I start praying about the prayer as soon as I receive my appointed date to do it. I note prayer requests, concerns, and praises, but when I finally have it all put together, my mind begins to doubt. *Is this what I want to say in my prayer?* I ask myself. I want to say the right things and in the proper order. I long to sound like those who can get up spontaneously and give beautiful prayers that are not written and read. My desire is to appear professional and intelligent, not weak and confused.

I am a prayer warrior and find it easy to pray in the privacy of my home, but although I believe that the Lord knows all along what needs to be said on Sabbath morning, public prayer is very stressful for me.

Various individuals have often told me that my prayers are inspiring to them, and how a certain phrase has touched their heart. I am encouraged by their comments—and I always tell them that my prayers come from the Lord, not from me. But I still stressed over my prayers to the point that I was going to have my name dropped from the pastoral prayer list.

**PROVIDENTIAL INTERVENTION**

After giving what I had planned on being my last pastoral prayer, I arranged to talk after church with the person who sets up the elders' prayer

**I felt a tremor run through me. *Mission?* Was she inspired by God to use that particular word?**

schedules. Before I could, however, a longtime acquaintance stopped me in the hallway and told me that she is always inspired by and appreciative of my prayers. I knew her well enough to speak candidly, and I shared with her how stressed I had been and that I was going to have my name taken off the schedule.

"Oh, no! Don't do it!" she said. "Your prayers do not come from your head; they come from your heart. You have a real mission here. Don't give up that mission."

I felt a tremor run through me. *Mission? She said "mission" not once but twice.* Was she inspired by God to use that particular word: *mission*?

That was what I had been looking for—a mission! But could it really be prayer? Is prayer truly a mission to help and encourage others?

My answer now is yes, absolutely! I realize that God inspires the words used in prayers. And just like words in a sermon, we hear what we need, not necessarily what is said. Or we hear what is spoken with a new application and meaning. And sometimes those God-given words are spoken in casual conversation with someone as well.

Public prayers are outside my comfort zone; however, God often calls us to go outside our comfort zone to help us grow. God's friends are my friends, and His family is my family. Our bodies are God's sanctuary. So wherever I am, He is always with me, and I am at home with Him.

Now I give my public prayer times to God, and I am confident that whatever is said in prayer, He is talking to someone, and He will take care of the rest. I am now relaxed in Jesus and let His will work through me. There is no one present but my Friend and me. I can speak with Him as friend to Friend, and I confidently pray to my Friend and Savior wherever I am.

My mission? God had me there all the time. 🌟

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Thora Bliss writes from Walla Walla, Washington.

A black and white photograph of a young boy looking up at a hand holding a measuring tape against his head. The boy is wearing a plaid shirt and has a thoughtful expression. The background is a plain wall.

**SPIRITUAL  
CHANGE  
AND GROWING  
UNDERSTANDING**



## ADRIANI MILLI RODRIGUES

**N**ot everyone is comfortable with the experience of change. In a well-known quote from Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov ponders about and highlights the major fear of human beings: "Taking a new step, uttering a new word is what they fear most."<sup>1</sup>

To be sure, the context involves a complicated moral dilemma regarding cowardice or taking action. But the statement can be taken to nicely express many people's hesitation and resistance concerning new things in a general, including the complexity of change in the spiritual realm.

### CHANGE AT THE VERY BEGINNING

The beginnings of Christianity in the first century, and of Adventism in the nineteenth, provide remarkable and positive examples of the complexity of change in the spiritual realm. In these examples believers had to take new steps on the basis of transformations taking place in their understanding. These transformations were not quick and automatic. Rather, they resulted from a complex but ultimately positive process.

Jesus' teachings regarding the crucial role of suffering in the identity and work of the Messiah were met with hesitation and resistance (Mark 8:31-34; 9:30-35; 10:32-45). Because of their resistance, the events of the Crucifixion produced profound disappointment (Luke 24:17, 21). The disciples had expected powerful action, not agony and death (verses 19, 20). Remarkably, then, the beginnings of the early church after the resurrection of Christ were preceded by a major disappointment of his disciples concerning his death.

The pattern of development in their spiritual understanding, as seen in the Gospels, continues in the book of Acts with the apostles' experience of increasing maturity. Acts seems to suggest that a wrong expectation regarding Israel (see Acts 1:7) was a major barrier for the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.

In Acts 10 the Spirit takes the initiative to lead Peter to interact with Cornelius and other Gentiles in his house (see Acts 10:17, 19, 20, 22-24). The Spirit's guidance was absolutely essential for Peter to take this new step of interaction with Gentiles

(see Acts 10:28, 29, 34-35, 45-47). And just as he was not naturally inclined to evangelize Gentiles, many Christians in Jerusalem were strongly uncomfortable with the idea of evangelized, uncircumcised Christians.

This led to the Jerusalem Council debate (Acts 15), in which Peter testified that his interaction with Gentiles was part of the work of the Spirit (verse 28) in guiding the church to take the step of recognizing uncircumcised converts as genuine Christians. Paul's letters reveal that the practice of this recognition in many places was not quick and automatic. Rather, Paul's ministry and teaching had to guide the church progressively in this direction.

### CHANGES AT THE BEGINNING: PROGRESSIVE UNDERSTANDING

Fortunately, not every change at the beginning of the early church is marked by human resistance. Jesus' rebukes against the misconceptions of the disciples about the Messiah are not unusual (Mark 4:40, 41; 8:33; 10:38-40; Luke 24:25, 26). They show how much more open the disciples' minds should have been to receiving a clearer picture of the identity of the Messiah and His work.

But Jesus never intended to teach His disciples everything during His earthly ministry. There was much for the Spirit to teach them after His ascension (John 16:11-14). Not that Jesus simply gave up on their learning more. In His prayer to the Father Jesus emphasizes that the disciples positively received His word (John 17:8). Thus His reason for not teaching everything during His earthly ministry relates more to basic characteristics of human understanding and experience. As Jesus put it: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (John 16:12).<sup>2</sup>

The complexity of change includes not only the possibility of resistance, but also the reality of progressive understanding in human experience. In this sense we can appreciate the fact that God gradually reveals more information that unpacks and clarifies previous revelation. This aspect highlights His sensitivity to, and patience with, the nature of our gradual understanding. In John 14-16 the promise of the Holy Spirit does not emphasize the giving of completely new revelation. Rather, "the Holy

Progressively they came to understand that 1844 was not about the end of grace to other people but the transition to another phase of Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

Spirit's ministry involves elucidating the truth, bringing belief and persuasion and conviction."<sup>3</sup>

#### **CHANGES IN THE ADVENTIST MOVEMENT**

Our discussion about the beginnings of the early church provides a helpful biblical framework for appreciation of God's gracious work in the Adventist movement, where we also observe change in terms of new ways of thinking and new steps taken under the guidance of God. George Knight provides useful categories for the understanding of change in Adventist history, identified as change in terms of (1) "clarification"; (2) "progressive development"; and (3) "contradiction or reversal."<sup>4</sup> Many situations involve a combination of two or all three of these aspects, beginning with the Great Disappointment of 1844.

Why should a movement celebrate a disappointment as its major starting point? To begin with, there is no denying a similar situation in the beginnings of the Christian church. Christ's death deeply disappointed the disciples. Fortunately, they were able to go through change in terms of contradiction/reversal in their understanding. They learned that far from disqualifying Jesus as the Messiah, suffering was the crucial demonstration of His Messiahship.

The cross then became, not a disappointment, but the fulfillment of a decisive aspect of the work of Christ. The foundation for this new understanding, however, is the progressive developmental experience by which they could gradually make sense of this conception on the basis of Scripture. This allowed the disciples to harmoniously connect the new concept of suffering with other aspects about the Messiah that they already understood correctly.

Likewise, the Great Disappointment of 1844 led to an experience of change both in terms of contradiction/reversal and progressive development. As a reversal, 1844 is not about the second coming of Christ, but about a new phase in His heavenly ministry.

At the same time, the stability of the date (1844) meant that the studies that led to that date were not a disappointing waste. Rather, they correctly point to a fulfillment of prophecy on the work of Christ. The new understanding of Christ's heavenly work then needed to be harmoniously connected, on the basis of Scripture, with other aspects already understood correctly. In this sense

there was change by progressive development.

If the disappointment of 1844 can be compared with the disappointed reaction of the disciples to the death of Christ, the belief in the shut door after 1844 can be paralleled with the resistance of the first Christians to preaching to the Gentiles. Peter's experience (Acts 10) was change by contradiction/reversal. He came to understand that Gentile evangelization was not a threat to God's plans for Israel, but the true fulfillment of His plans.

The first Christians needed to substantiate this understanding on the basis of Scripture, a task that characterizes in large measure the theology of the apostle Paul. This allowed the first Christians to integrate this notion of the Gentiles with other aspects about the people of God (Israel) that they already understood correctly. This articulation amounted to change by progressive development.

Similarly, the change about belief in the shut door after 1844 involved change both by contradiction/reversal and through progressive development. "All Adventists (including Ellen White) who held that a fulfillment of prophecy had taken place on October 22 also believed that human probation had closed. Only gradually could they disentangle error from truth in this aspect of their theology."<sup>5</sup> Progressively they came to understand that 1844 was not about the end of grace to other people but the transition to another phase of Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. This understanding fostered an interest in mission and evangelism in the Adventist movement.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

These developments highlight God's patient grace as He gradually unfolds further dimensions of truth and enlightens the mind of His people. Ellen White points out that in His earthly ministry, "Christ's lessons were not a new revelation, but old truths which He Himself had originated and given to the chosen of God, and which He came to earth to rescue from the error under which they had been buried. . . . But His instruction to the Jewish people was a new revelation to them."<sup>6</sup>

She then moves from the first century to new understandings in Adventism: "For a few years in the past, and especially since the Minneapolis meeting, truths have been made known that have been of great value to the world and to the people of God."<sup>7</sup> She urges that the pursuit of a better

understanding never stops, as "there are still treasures to be searched for. Let the shaft which has begun to work the mine of truth sink deep, and it will yield rich and precious treasures."<sup>8</sup>

While Ellen White warned that "we should be careful how we receive everything termed new light,"<sup>9</sup> she also argued that "the truths of redemption are capable of constant development and expansion. Though old, they are ever new, constantly revealing to the seeker for truth a greater glory and a mightier power."<sup>10</sup>

In fact, a growing understanding of the truth is not merely an intellectual enterprise, but a spiritual experience: "Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His Word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths."<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, "as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth."<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the experience of change caused by a growing understanding of God's truth in Scripture is not limited to the life of the early church and of Adventism's beginnings. Every believer is always in need of the new insights into God's truth that foster new growth in grace. Self-satisfaction with our current ways of thinking ultimately leads to resistance to unfolding truth. Instead, we may ever praise our gracious God for the light of His glory that floods us with light (Ps. 36:9). It is a progressive revelation of light: for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18, KJV).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Predrag Cicovacki, *Dostoevsky and the Affirmation of Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014), p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, *English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>3</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> George R. Knight, "Adventists and Change," *Ministry*, October 1993, pp. 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1987), p. 1689.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1900), p. 127.

<sup>11</sup> E.G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Assn., 1946) p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

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# SOLDIERS TRY TO KIDNAP FUTURE ADVENTIST LEADER



## ADVENTIST HEROES

The Government — yes, the Government — tried to kidnap a 10-year old boy named Abel. The soldiers already had him in a military truck to take him away. But local women found out. The women mobbed the truck. *“You can’t take him. He is our pastor,”* they shouted. And their outrageous claim that this boy was their pastor became true in a big way...



In 2014 The Carter Report ran the largest Protestant meetings ever held in Catholic El Salvador. We filled the largest stadium in the country. And the boy rescued from the truck coordinated the whole giant project.

Pastor Abel Pacheco, now leader of our Church in El Salvador, organized 70 pre-crusade programs across the country. He supervised a national advertising blitz on radio and TV. To bring the people to the stadium in San Salvador, he and his team rented

765 buses. Yes, that's right, 765 buses. When John Carter stood up to preach, he looked into the faces of 55,000 people. Of this great audience, 5,500 souls were baptized for God's glory.

The soldiers failed to forcibly recruit young Abel into their army. God and the ladies won. The 10-year old boy pastor was destined to go on and do great things for Christ.

**We salute Abel Pacheco as an Adventist hero.**



*If you would like to support The Carter Report ministry as it proclaims the Gospel of Christ, please contact us: PO Box 1900, Thousand Oaks CA 91358. You may also view Pastor John Carter on 3ABN, FOX in Washington DC, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, ROKU, and SAFE TV. Visit our website: [www.carterreport.org](http://www.carterreport.org)*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE POOR WISE MAN

**A** muscular young man at a construction site was bragging that he could outdo anyone in feats of strength. He particularly emphasized his prowess over one of the older, seasoned workers. After several minutes of listening to the boasts, the older worker had enough. "Why don't you put your money where your mouth is?" he asked. "I'll bet a week's wages that I can haul something in a wheelbarrow over to that building that you won't be able to wheel back." "You're on," the young worker replied.

The old man grabbed the wheelbarrow. Then he turned to the young man and said, "All right, get in."

Wisdom is at a premium. Solomon shares this insight: "I also saw under the sun this example of wisdom that greatly impressed me: There was once a small city with only a few people in it. And a powerful king came against it, surrounded it and built huge siege works against it. Now there lived in that city a man poor but wise, and he saved the city by his wisdom. But nobody remembered the poor man" (Ecc. 9:13-15).

Bible scholars seldom agree on the precise meaning of this passage. But we can derive several insights that speak to us.

First, Solomon likely observed this incident personally. A poor wise man delivered an entire city from a great enemy. Yet after this phenomenal deliverance no one honored or remembered him. Solomon saw this as an irony of life.

Second, the story offers profound

insights into the gospel and the great controversy. The "poor wise man," hero of the story, provides a compelling picture of Christ and how His redemptive work for humanity is largely overlooked (John 3:16).

Third, this "poor wise man" offers twenty-first-century believers several lessons that can help them navigate life.

## BE POOR

Problem solving is one of the most valued skills of life. Develop the ability to see problems, even as they develop, and come up with solutions to address them or avoid them.

Oppose (1) the urge to get credit for your problem solving. Resist the anger and pain that may develop if you don't get praise or accolades for your accomplishments.

Oppose (2) the myth that life will be fair. Instead, with a view toward providence, accept the inevitabilities of life.

Resilience, tough elasticity, is the ability to endure or to spring back from difficulty. Nurture habits of devotion, virtue building, and delayed gratification.

## BE WISE

Wisdom is a principle; so cooperate with divinity by getting wisdom and understanding (see Prov. 4:7; James 1:5). Judge well in important and uncertain matters. Be thoughtful in the pursuit of both the means and ends of noble objectives.

Investigate and initiate good wherever possible. Pursue virtuous enterprises regardless of fame and personal advantage.

Sin, suffering, sickness, and strife are the stuff of life. Use every test and trial to give glory to God.

Excel when pressure is highest. Others may run from problems, but you, in partnership with the Spirit, run toward them with solutions.

As we face the challenges of life, let's meditate on the lessons of the poor wise man. 🌱

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**TRANSFORM-  
ATION TIPS  
DELBERT W.  
BAKER**

**RESIST THE ANGER  
AND PAIN THAT MAY  
DEVELOP IF YOU  
DON'T GET PRAISE  
OR ACCOLADES  
FOR YOUR  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS.**



**ALSO IN THIS SECTION:**

- » AT THE CORNER OF . . .
- » GOD'S PROVIDENCE
- » THE BIRTH OF SCATTERING
- » CANDOR IS QUEEN

# ENGAGE

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

*The question isn't going away.*

**A**s you skim over this magazine or online post, pause for a moment and ask: "Why do I exist?"

It is essentially impossible to get through life without asking this. But our reaction to this question can vary from person to person. Perhaps this is a question we hardly ever think about, a vague shadowy concept tiptoeing around the corners of a life that is far too busy to pause and think about.

Or maybe we are more familiar with it; possibly from



**JONATHAN BURT**

time to time it jumps out at us like a stranger in the shadows that leaves us fearing, with heart pounding and a knot in the pit of our stomach, that maybe we are on the wrong road.

It might be more like the buzzing fly in our brains that just won't leave us, but is still too fast for us to catch. Maybe it's a familiar friend that keeps us company as we plan our day. It is such an important question that, when properly considered and answered, it becomes a guiding light that keeps pulling us back to what really matters.

As crucial as this question is to consider individually, it is an indispensable question for us to consider collectively as a church.

### **WHY WE ARE CHRISTIANS**

Christianity is best defined as a movement of people following Jesus. But why do we follow Him? That must have been a question similar to what Peter, John, and the other disciples asked themselves that Sabbath after Jesus' death. They spent three and a half years following this Man. Like the two on the Emmaus Road the next day, the feeling of their heart was "We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21).

But now Jesus had joined the ranks of all of the other would-be messiahs who had come before: a burst of hope and a promise dashed on a Roman cross.

Worse, they had all abandoned Him. Even Peter, that self-confident, combative, and vocal disciple, had denied his Lord, not once but three times, at the most crucial time.

For these followers of Christ there was no going back; all that was left was an empty world filled with regrets as they huddled in fear in a room, hoping that the next moment would not bring the sound of soldiers pounding at the door.

But their whole world was completely changed the next day. Impossibly, but just as He had promised, Jesus came to life again! Something new had happened: death was swallowed up in victory!


### **A DEAD LEADER VERSUS A LIVING SAVIOR**

Once again, Jesus filled their nets with fish, ate with them, forgave them, filled their hearts with His words.

But He was different now. He came and went without warning; locked doors had no effect on Him; He could be anywhere He chose. Their hearts







reverberated with Thomas' awestruck declaration: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

For 40 days they walked with the resurrected Jesus. More than 500 others saw Him at some time (1 Cor. 15:6). Finally, they gathered together on the Mount of Olives. Listen to what the apostles heard as the resurrected Christ declared, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20).

The command to go and make disciples electrified them because it came from their living Friend and Lord. They had a purpose, a reason to exist; no other reason could even come close in importance.

Then as they watched, He rose into the air, returning to heaven. Two heavenly messengers appeared with the promise: "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus was coming back again!

Though He left physically, Christ did not leave them alone.

**They had a purpose, a reason to exist; no other reason could even come close in importance.**

## NOT JUST WITH, BUT IN

Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit, who would provide the power and presence of Christ in their lives (John 16:7; 14:17, 18). The disciples knew about the Holy Spirit; they had seen His power demonstrated in Christ's ministry. But the Holy Spirit had not yet permeated their being; they needed the power of God *in* them.

As the disciples waited in the upper room the promise was fulfilled on Pentecost: "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:2-4).

God in them changed everything, and they could not help sharing. Jesus made it clear that when the Holy Spirit came, He would bring the presence of Christ with Him.

## THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION: NEW LIFE TO DEAD SINNERS

Only the Holy Spirit can "prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). And He did, with thousands being drawn to Christ and converted on that day alone, and unnumbered thousands more in the days and years to come. The disciples, too, were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus led His people through the Holy Spirit (mentioned 56 times in Acts), and He had much to teach them. Prayer became the centerpiece of their lives. In the 28 chapters of Acts prayer is mentioned 30 times, more than in any of the Gospels. The followers of Christ did it all the time, individually and corporately.

Their characters were different too. People were changed; self-reliance died. Peter was transformed from a self-sufficient and (paradoxically) cowardly fisherman into a man who could stand before the very people who condemned Christ to death and

declare with certainty, "We must obey God rather than human beings" (Acts 5:29).

Raging persecutors like Saul of Tarsus became passionate servants of Jesus. New believers no longer lived for self (Gal. 2:20); no longer attached to their possessions, they shared with anyone in need (Acts 4:32). Believers became witnesses for Jesus, no matter where they were, whether house to house, on the run for their lives, or in whatever they did (Acts 2:46; 8:4; etc.).


This doesn't mean there were no challenges. Christ led them to face the work He had to do in them, to grow them beyond their own fears (Acts 9:10-18) and prejudices (Acts 10; 11), and in the midst of conflicts, whether domestic (Acts 6), doctrinal (Acts 15), or external (Acts 5:17, 18, etc.). Their hard experience only fueled their desire for more of Him. Whatever it took, they wanted Jesus. In Paul's words: "I consider everything a loss" "that I may gain Christ and be found in him. . . . I want to know Christ. . . [and] the power of his resurrection" (Phil. 3:8-10). No other life was worth living.

That same resurrection experience with Christ is His invitation to us. "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord" (Jer. 29:13, 14).

## PRIMARY SOURCES

Until Christ lives in our hearts, every word we speak, though true, is still secondhand. When the living, transforming presence of Christ rules in our hearts through faith, that turns us into witnesses. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).

This is the purpose of Christianity. Only this can motivate and compel us. This is why we exist. Shall we not seek the power of His resurrection in our lives today?

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9, 10). 

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## AT THE CORNER OF . . .

*The voice of an anti-retirement advocate*

**A**rriving at the corner of Aging Avenue and Dependence Drive, in Graytown, Anywhere, I find myself wondering how much longer I'll be able to serve my Lord, His church, my family, friends, and strangers.

In my late 80s, I'm still considered independent, but I'm really not. I seldom cook, and even then it's the complication of a major-simplistic endeavor. I don't drive anymore. My husband chauffeurs Miss Daisy, we live in an independent retirement community (out of necessity, even though I'm anti-retirement), and life is not quick-paced. With a degenerative disease, to get around with some semblance of inde-

pendence I require a cane, a walker, or a scooter. But does this make me unable?

Though I do little housekeeping, I still manage laundry, mending, and ironing (while sitting). Not much, is it?

### **STILL WORKING, SORT OF**

Yet I still work at my profession: freelance writing. Most of my hours are spent writing interviews, devotionals, articles, poetry, press releases, and letters from a recliner, because I can't sit at a desk for long.

Though I can't be "out there" working as a journalist anymore, getting the stories by face-to-face interviews, I can do it all by e-mail. Modern technology is



amazing. I continue to receive assignments from magazine editors, and I also submit unsolicited material. Why?

Sometimes I'm asked, "Wouldn't your aging years be easier without the press of deadlines?" The hard part for me would be *not* to carry on, because God gifted me with the ability to reach others through words. I enjoy the interchange with people that life as a writer provides. I've never found any Bible admonition that total retirement is a requirement of old age.

My work is a gift I prayed for, though I knew not for what I prayed, except that God might favor me with a ministry to bring honor and glory to Him. I thanked Him in advance. By the time I'd reached age 40, I discovered that a writer lived inside me, and I launched into a lifelong service.

#### **A BIBLICAL MANDATE**

Terry Benedict, award-winning Seventh-day Adventist filmmaker, founder of the Shae Foundation, and recent producer of *Hacksaw Ridge*, shares his discovery about being created in God's image when God brought the animals to Adam to name (see Gen. 2:19). Imagine being newly created and given all that responsibility! Adam hadn't even been an intern in life. Afterward, Adam surely must have bowed low before God, just as an accomplished violinist might do, in gratitude for the creative privilege.

Benedict refers to our tasks as "art with accountability." But one doesn't have to be an artist, as he is, to create. All our work, white collar or blue collar, is creation of some kind, because God made us that way, in His image.

For those relegated to the retirement pasture, our intriguing journey of service can continue. We don't need to lie down and check out. Thus, arriving at the two corners is no reason to come to a full stop. I've been at many crossroads before, especially crisscrossing the country with moves. Yet God has always had new, unexpected assignments waiting.

#### **A MINISTRY TO OTHERS**

Though first and foremost I'm a Christian writer, my work also includes select secular writing. My secular service is no different from, for instance, being a Christian secretary who works for a business. I pray to do the best I can to serve those who

**Though first and foremost I'm a Christian writer, my work also includes select secular writing.**

employ my services. To always meet deadlines and fulfill the requirements expected keeps me on my toes. Thus, I'm keeping my mental faculties healthy. My daily walking regimen is no more. However, I keep my brain well exercised and serve at the same time.

A fine satisfaction for me as a writer is sharing the how-to of it with others. To see the bylines of those who study with me is greatly rewarding.

The best part of a writing ministry, however, is to write that which turns hearts to God. The Bible admonishes, "Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18). The entire psalm is a lament, but one with hope! Christian writers desire to leave their readers with hope. And if I can pass any advice on that contains the fragrance of heaven, I'd like it to be that young writers use their words as a ministry.

I find sacred excitement in the writings of today's youth. They are honest about all facets of life and seem unafraid to approach the subjects that need approaching. Superabundant ways of communicating are available to them. As I read their words and sense their passion to reach readers with the story of Jesus, I admire them, and pray for these verdant scribes. May the young write or do whatever God designed for them with fervor to draw others to praise Jesus.

Yet as an anti-retirement advocate I realize that being at the corner of Aging Avenue and Dependence Drive may be even more reason to continue in the image God made me. Retirement? Forget it. I have too much to do. 🍷

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At age 86 **Betty Kossick** writes from Apopka, Florida. Joy in Jesus is her motto. Her e-mail address is [bkwrites4u@hotmail.com](mailto:bkwrites4u@hotmail.com).

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# LOVE ALIVE

It's time to stop trying to ignore ugly truth, and start honoring true love. True love esteems others even as we love ourselves. Biblical love is forgets self, fears no danger, counts no cost, and cannot be quenched or drowned (S. of Sol. 8:7). It is the love that Jesus commands (John 13:34, 35).

These two verses mention the word love four times. And not as request, but as command. ever wondered why Jesus commands, rather than requests, love? Perhaps it's because human love is selective and conditional, expects returns on its investment, and thus is seldom, if ever, given freely. Consider these characteristics of real *agape* love:

It is indiscriminate: like a rose that doesn't withhold its fragrance from anyone; like the light that never withholds its rays from the wicked, even those who love darkness more than light; like a tree that gives its shade to good, bad, young, old, high and low; to animals, to humans, to enemies. God makes His sun shine on good and bad alike and the rain to fall on saints as well as sinners. We express and experience this love by seeing all people as children of God, created in His image.

Second, true love is always giving. Like the tree, the rose, the light, it gives and asks for nothing in return. We despise the gold digger, one whose choice of a spouse is determined only by the money he/she brings to the marriage. But is our own love any different when we love God only for what He provides, or seek only the company of those who bring us emotional gratification? To acquire the gratuitousness that characterizes love means abandoning our self-

ishness and seeing again, as if for the first time, what real love is in Christ.

Third, love is un-self-conscious. Love so enjoys loving that it is blissfully unaware of itself; not blind, as some may say, but rather, clear-sighted and intuitive, aware of others more than its own self-expression of grace—the way light is busy shining with no thought of whether we approve or not; the way a rose gives out its fragrance whether there is someone to enjoy it or not. The way a tree offers its shade regardless whether one is around or not: that's how real love is. It has no consciousness of any merit for doing or being good. Its left hand has no concept of its right-hand action, asking instead: "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty and help You?" (see Matt. 25:37).

Finally, love is free. Coercion and control are its opposite. Think how the rose, the tree, the light leave us completely free. The tree drags no one into its shade, even if we are in danger of a sunstroke. A lamp will not force its light on us lest we stumble in the dark. They respect our freedom to use or not enjoy their resources. Think of all the coercion and control that we submit to on the part of others when we so anxiously live up to their expectations in order to buy their love and approval or because we fear we will lose their love. Each time we submit to these, we undermine the capacity to love and receive love that is our very nature, for we cannot but do to others only what we allow them to do to us.

Reflect then, on your life, as I've been doing to recover my voice and speak up, freely, about Jesus and His love. After all, freedom is just another word for love. 🌹

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## GOD'S PROVIDENCE

*Being ever ready to move and obey God's command*

### ELLEN G. WHITE

**T**he encampment of Israel at Kadesh was but a short distance from the borders of Edom, and both Moses and the people greatly desired to follow the route through this country to the Promised Land; accordingly they sent a message, as God had directed them, to the Edomite king. . . .

To this courteous request a threatening refusal was returned: "Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword."

### PERMISSION REFUSED

Surprised at this repulse, the leaders of Israel sent a second appeal to the king, with the promise, "We will go by the highway: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet."

"Thou shalt not go through," was the answer. Armed bands of Edomites were already posted at the difficult passes, so that any peaceful advance in that direction was impossible, and the Hebrews were forbidden to resort to force. They must make the long journey around the land of Edom.

### ISRAEL'S FAILURE

Had the people, when brought into trial, trusted in God, the Captain of the Lord's host would have led them through Edom, and the fear of them would have rested upon the inhabitants of the land, so that, instead of manifesting hostility, they would have shown them favor. But the Israelites did not act promptly upon God's word, and while they were complaining and murmuring, the golden

opportunity passed. When they were at last ready to present their request to the king, it was refused. . . .

### HEEDING GOD'S COMMAND

It is important to believe God's word and act upon it promptly, while His angels are waiting to work for us. Evil angels are ready to contest every step of advance. And when God's providence bids His children go forward, when He is ready to do great things for them, Satan tempts them to displease the Lord by hesitation and delay; he seeks to kindle a spirit of strife or to arouse murmuring or unbelief, and thus deprive them of the blessings that God desired to bestow. God's servants should be minutemen, ever ready to move as fast as His providence opens the way. And delay on their part gives time for Satan to work to defeat them.

In the directions first given to Moses concerning their passage through Edom, after declaring that the Edomites should be afraid of Israel, the Lord had forbidden His people to make use of this advantage against them. . . . The command given them was, "Take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession." Deuteronomy 2:4, 5. . . .

Had they in this manner passed through Edom, as God had purposed, the passage would have proved a blessing, not only to themselves, but to the inhabitants of the land; for it would have given them an opportunity to become acquainted with God's people and His worship and to witness how the God of Jacob prospered those who loved and feared Him. . . . Again they must traverse the desert and quench their thirst from the miraculous spring, which, had they but trusted in Him, they would no longer have needed. 🏹

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This excerpt is taken from the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 422-424. Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

LAEL CAESAR

*What a song will rise on that bright,  
eternal morning,  
When the saints are gathered home!  
Love divine will be ev'ry happy soul adorning,  
When the saints are gathered home!"<sup>1</sup>*

**A**ll the world's continents today live with the impact of scattering: it may be the hundreds of thousands who are fleeing their lands in search of peace and stability wherever they can find it; or the millions displaced within their own country as a result of years of civil war; or the camps in which they are made to languish as governments strive to preserve their lands from being overrun by the influx of refugees. Or it may be some other characterization, like the apparent strengthening of nativist sentiment, shown in street protest and at the ballot box, by citizens who fear a threat to their nation, culture, and economic stability from foreigners invading. In turn, their electoral performance forces governments to compromise their nobler, good Samaritan sentiments. On one side or the other, people everywhere today are either engendering or reacting to societal instability, disruption, dislocation, scattering.

# THE BIRTH OF SCATTERING

*A story of Babel*



Rohingya refugees fleeing across the Bangladesh border from Buchidong in Myanmar. International organizations have reported human rights violations and summary executions allegedly carried out by the Myanmar army. © K M ASAD VIA ZUMA WIRE







To reach the Cox's Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh, thousands of pregnant mothers have had to walk for days without food. Mothers and children are dying everyday due to complications during childbirth.

© MASFIQUR SOHAN / NURPHOTO  
VIA ZUMA PRESS

### SCATTERING: A SNAPSHOT

In 2018 pregnant women, of the waves of refugees that have now flooded across the southeastern border of the country of Bangladesh, will commit more than 48,000 newborn infants to mangers more repugnant than Mary's, places described as "cramped and squalid refugee camps," somewhere in the land they have now entered. Those squalid camps are the only option they can think of that will bring any benefit to themselves and their babies.<sup>2</sup> Their flight is for the sake of safety, for relief, for survival, at least. So they go to Bangladesh for survival and giving birth in squalor.

For them, as for hundreds of thousands of their spouses, other relatives, friends, neighbors, and people they have never met, running away from home is distinctly better than standing their ground. Staying at home would most likely mean persecution, rape, murder, seeing their houses burn to the ground.

I make no pretense of comprehending the situation, or resolving the imponderable issues involved. The potent combination of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, Amnesty International, the United Nations secretary-general, and the pope together has shown us no movement toward ending this sorrowful human crisis of scat-

tering. The fleeing people claim that Myanmar has been their home since the fifteenth century. The government identifies them as illegal immigrants, Bengalis from Bangladesh, who merit neither lodging nor citizenship in Myanmar.<sup>3</sup> Consequences of these radically differing characterizations include massive population disruptions, and scattering; engagements between insurgents and government military, and scattering; violent attack and counterattack, and scattering. Suffering of varied and tragic sort, and scattering.

### SCATTERING: A RANDOM SELECTION

By account of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the 855,000 Southeast Asian fugitives crowded into the literary snapshot above currently constitute no more than a minuscule 1.3 percent of all the people forcibly displaced worldwide. Thousands of miles west of Rohingya misery,<sup>4</sup> Syria's 5.5 million refugees, after seven years of civil war, would be only 8.4 percent of the total.<sup>5</sup> After a while the numbers stun more than horrify: 5.5 million is too many to be only 8.4 percent of the total number of humans subject to just one of earth's countless causes of pain.

Moreover, the phenomenon of scattering and scattered people is no twenty-first-century inge-



nunity. A trade of scattering born at the heart of the fifteenth and strong till the second third of the nineteenth century (1451-1870), disrupted the lives of millions of African continentals, sweeping them off their feet into seagoing containers that dispersed survivors of the Middle Passage<sup>6</sup> across the waiting cane and cotton fields of North, South, Central, and Caribbean America.

And long before Rohingyas fled their Myanmar villages or Africans were rounded up for the Middle Passage, the children of Jacob mourned and wept on the banks of the Euphrates as they remembered Zion, the homeland from which Babylon's tyrant king had torn them away, in order to ensconce their scattered remainder in exile in his city (Ps. 137:1).

### SCATTERING: AN ETIOLOGY

Where, indeed, did human scattering first arise? And why? The biblical account pinpoints a period of two centuries of human social reestablishment and economic development, demographic growth, and population concentration "after the flood" (Gen. 10:1).<sup>7</sup> Those post-Flood days were probably cautious and respectful times at first. The Flood was still a living memory: Noah and wife, daughters-in-law and sons, told its improbable story to children and grandchildren. If his wits stayed with him for his 350 years of life after the Flood, Noah may well have been recounting all the way to Abram of Chaldean Ur. After the global disaster, God had promised that humanity would "never again be cut off by the water of the flood" (Gen. 9:11).

Noah's stories on divine compassion that helped him and his family survive in a little zoo boat through an entire year of storm and claustrophobia consistently included comment on the kindness of his heavenly Father. His grandchildren and great-grandchildren knew they were safe from being cut off by a future flood. It was God's own word that "never again shall the water become a flood" that could destroy everything (verse 15). Every time it rained Noah's multiplying descendants saw again the memorial of God's reliability, the rainbow. Though visible, it would be as untouchable as another divine memorial, seventh-day Sabbath holiness (Gen. 2:1-3; 9:12-17). So God puts His markers where they can neither be removed nor erased.

But they could still be defied. Or one might rather say, humanity could still be defiant. As days turned to years, changes came, though at times

they were only half perceptible. Caution and trust turned to self-confidence and invention. Urbanity usurped sincerity, and forward-looking sophistication commanded more authority than godliness. Savvy new authorities explained to their timid cousins who still "feared" God, and closed their eyes in prayer even at fast-food restaurants, that what they deemed irreverence and apostasy was in fact a liberating, positive turn for humanity. An age heady with notions of creaturely omnipotence began to spread its light across the horizon.

A fresh ethos affirming the boundlessness of human capacity came to prevail. Everything was possible, it now seemed, including skyscraper construction: "a tower whose top will reach into heaven" (Gen. 11:4). Success in this grand vision would require intense time investments, strong labor cooperation, and effective communication. Vision-casting leaders urged the world toward it with a triple cohortative: "Come, let us" (verse 3); "Come, let us build for ourselves" (verse 4); "and let us make for ourselves" (verse 4).

God in heaven could see the requirements and possibilities at their disposal: He knew, for life's good and perfect gifts derive only from Him (James 1:17). He saw and knew, and it distressed Him greatly. He saw the total disregard for those gifts' original purpose. His imparted endowments were no longer being employed for service to the needy and glory to the Giver. Instead, they would now advance a project that would stand as proof of contempt for His word and promise.

Humans would defy God and presume upon the long-forbearing "Ancient" of grandfather's stories. They would make explicit their cynicism about His alleged caring and solicitude: in response to His promise never to drown the world again (Gen. 9:11, 15-18), they would ensure their safety on their own; they would guarantee their own insurance that they would never ever drown again. They would do it with a building reaching "into heaven" (Gen. 11:4). They reasoned out loud that a structure immortalizing their defiance would establish both their fame and their unity: "Let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth" (verse 4). *We are strong and we are one* might have been their seven-word mantra.

It would be the wrong message. It would be a lie on behalf of tyranny rather than a testimony to the harmony of unity that is love. For however noble its rhetoric of unity, it was force, not love,

that inspired its principal genius; and it was fame, not service, that inflated its dreams. We know this because the God whose gifts were there abused has not let humanity forget the operation's CEO and COO, Babel's founding head, a mighty, in-your-face dominator named Nimrod.

The same compassion heard in Noah's salvation stories flows to us throughout God's teaching of damnation stories. His grace-filled instructions to us on sin and salvation have traced the arc of human rebellion through history from Nimrod's Babel, raised on Shinar's plain, to Babylon's disintegration at the end of the great controversy between Christ and Satan: He has shown us the fruit of the spirit of Nimrod: protological Babel is eschatological Babylon, He warns, so that we may be without excuse. Babylon will disintegrate in the end as its mother Babel did in the beginning (Rev. 17). God lets us see how Nimrod's glorious fantasy—making for himself a name—became his everlasting infamy. Heaven preserves for us the divine response to Nimrod's encouragements. The answer is God's own cohortative, "Come, let Us go down . . ." (Gen. 11:7).

Questioned, doubted, repudiated, defied, the Lord God came down for action: "So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth" (verse 8). True, God expelled Adam from Eden before the Flood (Gen. 3:22-24). But Babel, beyond the Flood, is the second cradle of all earth's subsequent social disruptions, communication obstructions, and diversity compulsions, the new birth of all our scattering and fights for reintegration. Human and cosmic scattering are born of creaturely conceit that dreams of greatness, or strives toward harmony, or wills toward integration



After crossing the Naf river, Rohingya refugees walk to Cox's Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh. According to the UNHCR 607,000 Rohingya refugees have fled from Myanmar Rakhine state violence since 25 August 2017, most trying to cross the border and reach Bangladesh. © K M ASAD VIA ZUMA WIRE



by excluding or philosophically diminishing God.

Scattering is the unavoidable consequence of every individual or institutional endeavor that makes God the liar, represents Him as the problem, or simply makes Him dispensable to success. The notion of creaturely independence is a lie on earth as it is in heaven. Rebel-I never ascended to sit on the seat of the Most High as he once pathetically promised himself that he would (Isa. 14:12-14). Yet despite its failure in his case, creaturely independence is still the lie he wields over his deceived and deceiving cohort on earth: "God knows that in the day you . . . [properly question His position on things, free yourself from subservience, repudiate His authority,] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God" (Gen. 3:5). Carrels united in corruption, criminals bound together by oaths of confidentiality and protection of each other, neither prove the harmony of the deceived nor disconfirm the truth of God's love.


#### SCATTERING: AN ANSWER

"God is love" (1 John 4:8) is truth beyond improvement, the truth that guarantees the complete restoration of all the broken souls, the reconciliation of all the broken institutions, and the reparation of all the broken systems of life that are necessary to fulfilled and coherent creaturely living.

"God is love" is the truth that yields a perfect physical, social, and spiritual Eden where God's children may flawlessly live (Gen. 1:1-2:24). It is the truth that produces pardon for our stupidity on the grounds of God's nature rather than the impulse of my weak will (Luke 23:34). It is the truth

expounded in a cadaver on a cross, arms spread wide to gather in all who believe in Him as their Savior, who died "that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"God is love" is the truth that imparts to blighted humans the faith to believe and know that we are pardoned and restored to God's perfect favor, and to know, too, that the scattering of Babel will soon be swallowed up in the gathering in Jerusalem, city of salvation, city of God, as He calls His faithful to Himself: "Gather My godly ones to Me," those who have kept the covenant to honor His sacrifice with their own (Ps. 50:5).

Then the voice that drove earth's first sinners from Eden will call all earth's saved back again, saying, "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). 

<sup>1</sup> James Rowe, "When the Saints Are Gathered Home," *The New Praise-worthy for the Church and Sunday School*, no. 136, [https://hymnary.org/text/what\\_a\\_song\\_will\\_rise\\_on\\_that\\_bright](https://hymnary.org/text/what_a_song_will_rise_on_that_bright).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/04/squalor-disease-await-rohingya-babies-born-bangladesh-camps>.

<sup>3</sup> "Who Will Help Myanmar's Rohingya?" Kevin Ponniah, BBC News, Jan. 10, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38168917>.

<sup>4</sup> Approximately 3,500 miles (5,600 kilometers).

<sup>5</sup> The UNHCR total is 65.6 million: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Total 9,566,000; the transatlantic shipping of slaves from Africa to the Americas and Caribbean is called the Middle Passage.

<sup>7</sup> Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

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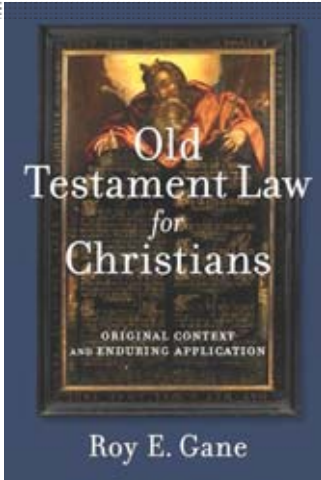


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# CLOSER LOOK



## OLD TESTAMENT LAW FOR CHRISTIANS

*Old Testament Law for Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application*, Roy E. Gane (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 464 pages, \$32.99.

Reviewed by Gerald A. Klingbeil, associate editor of *Adventist Review*.

**R**eaders who are often baffled by the intricacies and the seemingly strange logic of biblical legal texts permeating the Old Testament will be grateful to have a resource in this volume, authored by Andrews University professor Roy Gane. His point of departure covers a number of hermeneutical bases.

Gane recognizes that most Christians (and many Adventists, too) focus exclusively on the Ten Commandments when they consider Old Testament law, and thus overlook the divine wisdom in other law collections. But how should a twenty-first-century reader deal with the law on levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5-10 requiring the brother of a deceased sibling to marry the deceased's wife and create descendants for his brother? Gane wants to demonstrate the relevance of Old Testament laws, place them in the stream

of divine revelation, and illustrate a workable method focusing on the principles and values included in a particular law.

The book is a treasure trove of useful, at times very detailed, analysis and interpretation. The detailed table of contents and several indexes help the reader to get right to the point and navigate the extensive volume. Gane argues that the underlying subtext of every law is the revelation of God's character and His love for humanity (p. 40). He highlights the importance of knowing the original context of these laws. "Biblical laws express or encapsulate values and principles that transcend cultures," he writes, "but God did not give them in a cultural vacuum" (p. 105).

In Part III the author suggests the use of a "Progressive Moral Wisdom" model to understand the principles and values of ancient laws. This method involves five major steps a modern reader should take before attempting to apply biblical law: (1) analyze the law by itself; (2) analyze the law within the system of Old Testament laws; (3) analyze the law within the context of its historical situation; (4) analyze the law within the process of redemption; and (5) relate findings regarding the function of the law to modern life (p. 218). He then offers a number of examples of the application of this method.

Gane has done an excellent job offering a sound method, careful and detailed interpretation, and relevant deduction focusing on values and principles. The volume is full of interesting and intriguing information and discussions representing Gane's broad research interests. The writing is engaging and generally very clear.

Readers who accept the inspired nature of these laws ("*all Scripture*," cf. 2 Tim. 3:16) but often wonder how to make sense of them will value this volume. It tackles a difficult topic, is willing to ask (sometimes) tough questions, and offers a panoramic view of the bigger picture involving underlying values and principles. Highly recommended! 🔥

## INFLUENCED FOR GOOD

We gave our readers 100 words to tell us about a person who had a positive influence on them at a pivotal point in their lives. Here are some of their responses.—Editors

I used to be godly until I went to high school and life changed. I left God and lived my life without Him, without prayer. I was a confused soul for four years.

After I finished school, as I was scrolling my Facebook page, I found a post by a high school mate. I was amazed how she had stayed with God, even after high school. She seemed happy. I returned to God that same day and my life has never been the same. Today I encourage people through Facebook every day. I also opened a page recently to point people to God.

**ASTRID, KENYA**

For years I yearned to know the truth about the Sabbath. Being born and raised in a Sundaykeeping family, the seventh-day Sabbath was not discussed very often. My questions about it were never answered. I was bothered, because I always found the seventh-day Sabbath in the Bible, not Sundaykeeping.

Then one day my schoolteacher discussed the seventh-day Sabbath with the class. Everything became clear! Peace, hope, and joy filled me, and my life was never the same. I dedicated my life to the Lord, working to advance the everlasting gospel.

**BRIANA, INDONESIA**

In 1985 our Sabbath School class decided that we didn't want to follow the quarterly pamphlet, and we struck out on a yearlong tour of the Bible ("sola") in modern translations. I learned to "know" God, not know "about" God. I learned about love, grace, and feeling uncondemned by my inability

to be the perfect person my past experience insisted I must be to be saved.

**CHRISTY, CALIFORNIA**

My childhood was similar to many children of immigrant parents. We were taught values based on hard work, integrity, and modesty. However, things changed with my parents' divorce.

Financially frustrated, my siblings and I turned to the streets. The future was not bright, but there was hope. I had weekly Bible studies with Pastor Branner (now pastoring in South Sacramento) when I was in high school. When fear, rap music, drugs, and the stress of the world surrounded me, Branner's time with me changed my perspective of God, myself, my whole life.

Now I teach English in China, after having been the first one in my family to graduate from university. I simply wouldn't be the man I am without God and that pastor.

**GABRIEL, CALIFORNIA**

I learned to  
"know" God,  
not know  
"about" God.





I came from a family of nine, so my mother had to ask Jesus to help us with our needs.

We went to church on Sunday until I turned 13. Walking to school I met Margaret, and we talked about Jesus. She said we're supposed to go to church on Saturdays. I said, "No, we're not."

I told Mom what Margaret had said, and she said, "We are" (Mom was a closet Adventist). Today I attend church on Sabbath, and Margaret attends a Sunday church.

One day a man who sold books came to my door. Books by Uncle Arthur cost \$9 a month. That was a lot for a single mom. He asked if I went to church, and I said no. Then he asked if I were to attend, which church would it be. I told him the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He said that that was the church he attended. I went to my room, closed the door, and thanked God for bringing him to my house.

**KAY, NEVADA**

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One of the key people in my life journey was my third-grade teacher at John Nevins Andrews School, Lydia Chiomenti. She was the first teacher to treat me as equal to the children of the doctors and ministers who were in my class. I started the year as a slow reader, but by the end of the year I was reading at a ninth-grade level, all because of the confidence she gave me.

**MARGOT, MARYLAND**

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I never really looked at my experience with Gladys Stumpf as a pivotal point, yet it has so influenced my entire life that it must have been.

Gladys was in love with Jesus, especially the Jesus revealed in the heavenly sanctuary. She instilled that love in me so that it has been a con-

stant basis of interest and study. She didn't have to encourage me to study; I wanted to study, because I wanted to know her Jesus.

**NANCY, TEXAS**

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**She said we're supposed to go to church on Saturdays. I said, "No, we're not."**

Mrs. Shafner, my *second* seventh-grade teacher, influenced me during a difficult and pivotal point in my life.

I had already failed seventh grade once, and I had undiagnosed attention deficit disorder (ADD). I was an angry and troubled child who got into trouble daily. Mrs. Shafner diagnosed my ADD, showed me how to study and learn, and spent time with me every day. Finally she and her husband took an extracurricular interest in me as well.

Because of her influence in my life, I not only passed seventh grade, but grew to love school, ultimately getting my master's degree. Now I work in schools and the community as a counselor, paying forward to other students the love of God that Mrs. Shafner shared with me.

**OMAR, GEORGIA**

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## Candor Is Queen

*"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel"*  
—Carl W. Buehner

**K**indness is king. Candor is queen. Experience is everything. These three phrases changed my life. Life is made of moments: moments that make us cry; moments that make us laugh; moments that make us feel alive.

Is how we treat people more important than the truth we share with them? Before you think I've gone soft, take a look at how Ellen White put it:

"Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of theology, but they have cherished His principles. Through the influence of the divine Spirit they have been a blessing to those about them. Even among the heathen are those who have cherished the spirit of kindness; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the missionaries, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God."<sup>1</sup>

Or how about Paul? "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2).

People don't care how much we know, until they know how much we care.

This was the great debate among the religious leaders in Jesus' day; they felt candor was king: just laying out the truth, being totally honest and forthright, the *most* important thing.

But Jesus came along saying absolutely shocking things, such as, Love God and love your neighbor; upon these "hang all the law and the prophets" (see Matt. 22:40, NKJV; see also verses 37-39).<sup>2</sup> In other words, these are the most important things. But Jesus didn't stop there. It was easy to say they "loved God," but they didn't like that latter part. So they asked, "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29).

The apostle John put out this litmus test: If you can show you love your neighbor, then you can know that you're sincere when you say you love God (see 1 John 4:20).

Don't get me wrong—candor is *very* important, very important. No kingdom is happy without a king and a queen; and without both, chaos and corruption ensue. Sometimes I'm scared at how many of our organizations and relationships lack both kindness and candor.

Isaiah 58 and Matthew 25 drive the point home. It's the judgment scene: God isn't asking about how much information we shared with people, as important and life-changing as information can be. He's clear about what He's looking for. He's asking, "How did you treat people?"

I love His candor! 

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 638.

<sup>2</sup> Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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