

ADVENTIST REVIEW

MAY 2017: THE MIRACLE COMPLETE + WHEN JESUS SETS YOU FREE + THE BIBLICAL RATIO OF GOOD TO EVIL + THE FACE OF GRACE + STRANGE GRACE + ARE WE SAVED BY HEALTH?

GRACE: **WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?**





ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY
OF HEALTH SCIENCES

YOUR HANDS DOING GOD'S WORK

- Small class sizes
- State-of-the-art simulation labs
- Select online degrees available
- Conveniently located in Florida Hospital's Health Village

For the past 25 years, Adventist University of Health Sciences (ADU) has developed skilled professionals who live the healing values of Christ. **We are Florida Hospital's university**, and our students benefit from the unparalleled clinical access our campus offers.

**For more information, visit adu.edu/ar
or call (800) 500 - 7747.**



FEATURES

DISCOVER

- 19 **GRACE TO YOU** | LARRY LICHTENWALTER
We don't expect to read about grace when we read the book of Revelation.

CONNECT

- 36 **STRANGE GRACE** | ALAREECE COLLIE
Who complains about getting too much? Those who don't understand grace.

ENGAGE

- 51 **WHEN JESUS SETS YOU FREE** | JOHN K. MC VAY
Oh, to believe God means what He says!

“The idea of beginning by starting small is a powerful concept; however, by itself the initial portion of bread and fish could never have served thousands.”

72

ARTICLES

DISCOVER

- 23 **BECAUSE YOU SAY SO**
HOMER TRECARTIN
Who knows more about fishing than a fisherman?
- 26 **TO EAT OR FIGHT**
ABRAHAM RANGEL FLORES
There's a time to speak and a time to defer.
- 30 **"I ONCE WAS LOST, BUT NOW I'M FOUND"**
GraceNotes: A weekly reminder that grace surrounds us all day every day.

CONNECT

- 40 **FAITH AND FAMILY**
CRISTINA JENCKS
The lives mother touched will never be the same.
- 42 **THANK GOD FOR MOTHERS**
ELLEN G. WHITE
Where would we be without them?
- 46 **GUILT**
SHARLENE WEDIN-LECLERC
Too much is bad; too little is bad. It has to be just right.
- 48 **ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS**
A new series on ARTv reveals God's creation up close and personal.

ENGAGE

- 56 **THE FACE OF GRACE**
KEITH HEINRICH
A grace story with no words
- 60 **GRACE: THE MIRACLE COMPLETE**
HENSLEY MOOROOVEN
Christianity has to be experienced to be believed.
- 64 **EXPERIENTIAL RELIGION**
WILONA KARIMABADI
There's more than one formula for success.



48

NEWS | OPINION

- » Adventist Youth Blanket the World With Acts of Service
- » Volunteers Bring Prayer, Comfort to Surgical Patients
- » Desmond Doss Honored for His Vegetarian Stance
- » Businesswoman Shares Chocolates, Faith at the Oscars
- » Local Church Puts Spotlight on Mental Illness
- » The Sacred With the Mundane?



EDITORIAL

- 5 **BILL KNOTT**
ATTRACTIVE FAITH

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 **LETTERS**
- 55 **HOUSE CALL**
- 68 **CLOSER LOOK**
- 70 **VOICES**

COLUMNS

- 33 **CLIFF'S EDGE**
CLIFFORD GOLDSTEIN
- 45 **SEARCHING THE OBVIOUS**
DIXIL RODRÍGUEZ
- 63 **INTRODUCING THE WHY**
JIMMY PHILLIPS
- 72 **IN OTHER WORDS**
COSTIN JORDACHE

FOUNDED 1849. PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS®

PUBLISHING BOARD

Ted N. C. Wilson, *chair*
Guillermo Biaggi, *vice chair*
Bill Knott, *secretary*
Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, Williams Costa, Daniel R. Jackson, Peter Landless, Robert Lemon, Geoffrey Mbwana, G. T. Ng, Daisy Orion, Juan Prestol-Puesán, Ella Simmons, Artur Stele, Ray Wahlen
Karnik Doukmetzian, *legal advisor*

EXECUTIVE EDITOR/DIRECTOR OF ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES Bill Knott

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES

ASSOCIATE EDITORS André Brink, Lael Caesar, Gerald A. Klingbeil

COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR/NEWS EDITOR

Costin Jordache

ASSISTANT EDITORS Sandra Blackmer, Stephen Chavez, Wilona Karimabadi

MARKETING Jared Thurmon

DIGITAL EDITOR Kristina Penny

ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER Bryan Gray

WEB DESIGN/SOCIAL MEDIA Evan Bambrick

LAYOUT TECHNICIAN Fred Wuerstlin

COPY EDITOR James Cavil

OPERATIONS MANAGER Merle Poirier

FINANCIAL MANAGER Kimberly Brown

EDITORIAL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste

EDITORS-AT-LARGE Mark A. Finley, John M. Fowler

SENIOR ADVISOR E. Edward Zinke

AD SALES Glen Gohlke, Seth Hill

CIRCULATION Rebecca Hilde

TO WRITERS: Writer's guidelines are available at the *Adventist Review* Web site: www.adventistreview.org and click "About the Review." For a printed copy, send a self-addressed envelope to: Writer's Guidelines, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

E-mail: revieweditor@gc.adventist.org.

Web site: www.adventistreview.org.

Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this issue are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Unless otherwise noted, all prominent photos are © Thinkstock 2017.

The *Adventist Review* (ISSN 0161-1119) is the general paper of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church. It is published monthly by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Periodicals postage paid at Silver Spring, MD, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Adventist Review*, P.O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353.

Copyright © 2016, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Twelve issues of the monthly *Adventist Review*, US\$19.95, plus additional postage outside North America. Single copy US\$2.00 plus shipping and handling.

To order, visit adventistreview.org/subscriptions or send your name, address, and payment to: *Adventist Review* subscription desk, P.O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353

ADDRESS CHANGES AND SUBSCRIPTION QUERIES:
adventistreview@pacificpress.com.
OR call 1-800-545-2449

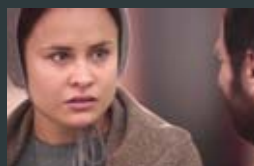
TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:



- 1 Adventist Church Goes Back to Court to Defend Sabbath Keepers
- 2 In the US, Deportation Fears Keep Members Away from Church
- 3 Remember What Made America Great, Says Adventist Professor
- 4 Church in North-America Reinforces Position on Church and State Separation
- 5 Adventist Student, First Black Female in Top Neurosurgery Program

VIDEO RESOURCES FROM ARTV



ELLEN HARMON—THE EARLY YEARS

Before Ellen White's words about God's love inspired so many, she herself struggled with doubts of her own salvation. Learn more in this dramatized segment of the "Tell the World" film.



BEYOND THE SEARCH—BEYOND GUILT

What do you do when the guilt just keeps coming back? Hear from a Sudanese child soldier forced to kill, and find out about the lengths of God's grace in this episode of the "Beyond the Search" TV series.



WHAT IS THE PUNISHMENT FOR SIN?

The doctrine of eternal torment has turned so many away from God. In this video, Boris Jovinov explores why so many Christians still hold onto a belief in eternal hell, and what the Bible says.

SIMPLY SEARCH FOR THESE TITLES AT ARTV.ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG

Engaged in service *at Walla Walla University.*



Student missions at WWU

Each year dozens of our students choose to serve around the world as teachers, deans, humanitarian aides, and orphanage helpers. Our benchmark service program leads in training, support, and placement rates at dozens of locations. Student missionaries return from their experiences with stonger leadership skills, clearer goals, and more determined lives.

During the **2016** → **54** → to → **22** → **\$75,000**
2017 school year → **student** → **world** → **for refugees to complete**
 missionaries → locations. → high school.

Learn more about student missions and service at Walla Walla University at wallawalla.edu.

Want to see what life is like on campus? You, or someone you know, can schedule a campus visit any time at wallawalla.edu/visit.



BILL KNOTT



*“The power of the Holy Spirit is drawing to God all who will be drawn.”**

Attractive Faith

At every time, in every place; through every means consistent with His purposes; on every media platform, the Spirit stirs the hearts of all who long for purpose and for clarity.

You know them well: the eager young couple in Apartment 3B, full of Jesus and fresh Bible promises, who invited you to join them at First Assemblies of God for the annual Christmas program. The graying colleague in the corner office who asks you—out of nowhere—what your faith tells you about how God looks at divorce. The sweating Tuesday regular at basketball who wants to know why you won’t play three-on-three on Friday nights.

At least a dozen times a week, in conversations large and small, we brush the lives of those who seek for God with hands outstretched, as though walking in a fog. And when our wits are with us—when we’ve gotten past surprise and strung some syllables together—we try to point them, gently, to the faith that won our minds and holds our hearts.

We play the “tapes” of these encounters endlessly, as though prepping for a follow-up we fear may never come. Was this the moment a thousand angels had spent months or years arranging—and was I ready for my part? Will there be another opportunity when we are less tongue-tied and more nimble, readier to give a reason for the hope that is within us?

This is the living edge of

Adventism: not where we gather in our well-scrubbed temples of plush carpet and polished glass, but where we intersect and interact with all whom God is drawing.

And it’s time you had the tools to make those interactions win-some; easy; happy; fruitful.

At the *Adventist Review* we’ve recently reframed our ministry to match the ways that Jesus has been using for nearly 170 years to bring His people to this movement. From its earliest days, this journal was the tool to make Adventism intelligible to those whom God was drawing. First the Second Coming; then the truth of Jesus’ ministry in heaven. Sabbath next, and conditional immortality. Righteousness by faith, and caring for the hurting. Lives reshaped, reformed—revived—by time well spent with Jesus.

What began laboriously with hand-rolled ink and hand-cranked presses now flies off complex machinery at 20,000 copies an hour. These words are also read by tens of thousands who never hold a printed journal in their hands. They scroll through digitized articles on their mobile phone apps, or read the latest news and features on the *Adventist Review’s* robust and colorful Web site (www.adventistreview.org). Many thousands more find courage in the short and shareable videos—hundreds of them—now available on ARTv (ARTvNow.com).

Powerful, well-told stories of

redemption, recovery, justice, and service now appear in print, on the Web, and via video to make the gospel walk and talk in Apartment 3B, in the corner office, and during water breaks on gym night.

These are the tools you need—and you deserve—to make your faith intelligible to those whom God is drawing.

You’ll notice in the coming months that this ministry, the oldest thing in Adventism, is also the newest thing in Adventism. This is the place you’ll find the best and most shareable content to start or keep the conversations with those responding to the Spirit. We preach and teach the same dynamic truth that God once used to gather the brave souls who founded this denomination. But now we do it through the media that make our world run. This is the faith that’s willing to explain itself, that seeks for common vocabulary rather than in-house jargon; that turns to also face the millions who know the Shepherd’s voice and follow Him wherever He goes.

So hand this journal to a friend—the one who has a heart for God. Post the www.adventist-review.org URL somewhere—say, on the office corkboard. Hit the “Share” button on the ARTv four-minute video that you know God can use to bring your friend to deeper faith.

Make the ministry you value valuable to someone else. 🍌

*Ellen G. White manuscript 44, 1900.

Penny's article should be expanded into a book to reach a larger audience. I will be there for the first book signing.

CONNIE MITCHELL, TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND



THE TEST

"This Is a Test,"

by Stephen Chavez, in the March 2017 edition is a tour de force. It

provides clear, understandable answers to questions all thoughtful Christians should ask themselves, and provides a framework for discussion when asked "What is it that you Adventists believe?" His caution, "What we [Adventists] have to avoid is coming across as the only ones who know God or whose view of Him is altogether correct." That is advice that should be heeded by everyone who answers questions or speaks as an Adventist.

Andy Hanson

Chico, California

WAITING INTO AN ADVENTURE

I have read and reread Kristina Penny's "Turning the Wait Into the Adventure" (January 2017). How inspiring and encouraging! I am an avid reader, but I have not read such an article before. I love its Christ-centeredness, which will always walk with us; especially in our adventure while waiting.

Penny's article should be expanded into a book to reach a larger audience. I will be there for the first book signing. Congratulations!

Connie Mitchell

Takoma Park, Maryland

FEBRUARY 2017 COVER

The editors must have had some message in mind by presenting the cover picture portraying a young woman walking out ahead of who appeared to be a male companion. Since the overall topic of the issue was healthy relationships, it might have been better if they were shown side by side.

Brad Jones

Charlevoix, Michigan



TRUE FREEDOM OF RELIGION

In his article "Watch!" (November 2016) Mark Kellner reports that "the chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued a report saying nondiscrimination laws must . . . take precedence over deeply held religious beliefs. He said 'religious freedom' was, to at least some, 'code words for . . . Christian supremacy' and intolerance."

Kellner implies that this is wrong, but I contend that in many cases this is correct. Discrimination is anti-Christian. So if your deeply held beliefs allow for discrimination, then the man is right.

Further, in the religion of Jesus, there is no place for "Christian supremacy," only humility. Yet for many in this country who call themselves Christian, "freedom of religion" means nothing more than freedom to be a Christian. If you are of another faith, expect your freedom to practice your faith to be challenged, curtailed, or downright negated by some.

So whenever either discrimination or "Christian supremacy" show their ugly heads, the chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is right on target. I am proud of the Adventist

I think it would be better to spread these articles over a number of months, reminding readers frequently of their importance.

MATTHEW P. COZENS, COORANBONG, AUSTRALIA

Church, which has, on multiple occasions, gone to court to defend the rights of religious groups they adamantly disagree with spiritually, because we believe in true freedom of religion.

Dave Reynolds
Canby, Oregon

SUGGESTIONS

I grew up in Warburton, Australia, home of the Australian *Signs*, in the 1930s. My parents didn't spend money on toys but invested in the "Big Five," the *Review*, *Youth's Instructor*, *Life and Health*, *Liberty*, and *Sabbath School Worker*, if I remember the titles correctly. I now subscribe to the two survivors.

I have a couple suggestions about the *Review*. I realize you can't please everybody, particularly in these days when it is often hard to get people to read. The monthly *Review* seems to be essentially a booklet on certain topics—for instance, mental health in the January issue, with several articles on depression.

I think it would be better to spread these articles over a number of months, reminding readers frequently of their importance, and likewise as often as possible on other topics, the 28 Fundamental Beliefs, and so on. Having read one article

IN A FEW WORDS...

IN BRAZIL, CAB DRIVE SWITCHES PAYMENTS FOR PRAYERS (AR ONLINE)

What a way to live to bless others! Here is a living witness to the power of the gospel message. May the Lord bless and increase His love as he works in His vineyard!

D. Chongo Mundende, Via Web

AND GOD SAID, 'YOU SHALL BE CREATIVE' (AR ONLINE)

While reading this article, I was reminded of one of my favorite worship reference books by Warren Wiersbe—“Real Worship: Playground, Battle Ground, or Holy Ground.” He quotes: “Worship is the exercise of the mind in the contemplation of God in which wonder and awe play an important role in stretching and enlarging our vision.”

Creativity is not an amusement just to bring a smile to our faces; but as you so plainly put it, “it is a spiritual process and accessible to everyone. . . . Creativity is not a thing, it is a way.” Creativity, like wonder, is born as we contemplate God and expand our knowledge of Him. This is the paradox of Christian worship: we seek to see the invisible, know the unknowable, comprehend the incomprehensible, experience the eternal. As we encounter the realities of God, expand our awe and wonder of Him, He leads us to express those realities through worship in various and creative ways.

Michelle Riley Jones, Via Web

about depression, I was tempted to skip the others. I don't think that would happen a few months later. I particularly admired the contribution and courage of Heather-Dawn Small.

Thanks for taking time to read my thoughts. May God continually lead you in your important work.

Matthew P. Cozens
Cooranbong, Australia

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.

FOUR-YEAR



SCHOLARSHIPS

Did you know that Southern's scholarships can benefit freshmen for up to **FOUR YEARS** when students maintain a 3.0 GPA?

**Freshman Academic
Scholarship
\$8,000 TO
FULL TUITION**

awarded over four years
based on GPA
and ACT score

**Freshman State
Scholarship
Replacement
\$12,000**

awarded over four years
for students from most
Southern Union states

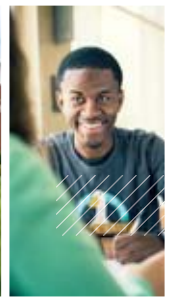


**Freshman Leadership
Scholarship
\$10,000**

awarded over four years
for students who held a
leadership role during
their senior year of high
school

**Freshman Lightbearer
Scholarship
\$8,000**

awarded over four
years for students who
graduated from a non-
Adventist high school
or homeschool after
attending for at least
two years



For complete details about Southern's scholarships and other financial aid, call 1.800.SOUTHERN or visit southern.edu/scholarships.

P.O. Box 370 • Collegedale, TN • 37315-0370
1.800.SOUTHERN • southern.edu





Adventist youth and young adults hand out food as part of the Global Youth Day observance in Mandeville, Jamaica.

ADVENTIST YOUTH BLANKET THE WORLD WITH ACTS OF SERVICE

GLOBAL YOUTH DAY PARTICIPANTS ARE "THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS."

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, SENIOR CORRESPONDENT, ADVENTIST REVIEW

Thousands of Seventh-day Adventist young people and their mentors around the world took part in a special event that encourages church members under 35 to step out of the walls of the church and go into their communities to perform acts of service and kindness.

In its fifth edition, the worldwide annual event known as Global Youth Day (GYD) rallied young people on March 18, 2017, to offer free hugs and prayers, clean beaches and parks, sing on sidewalks and in prisons, share tips about healthy living, and show themselves ready to empower, encourage, and share

the hope they have in God.

Below are a few of the day's highlights, which were broadcast during a 24-hour live transmission from the Hope Channel Germany headquarters near Frankfurt, and streamlined around the world from the event Web site at globalyouth.org.

BLOOD DRIVE

More than in previous editions, GYD 2017 was marked by concerted efforts to encourage young people and their mentors to donate blood. By partnering with various blood banks and blood donor organizations, including the Red Cross,

Adventist members from Peru to England to Kenya donated their blood to help save other people's lives.

In many cases participants used the occasion to highlight the importance of giving blood as a symbol of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. "I give some of my blood because Jesus gave all of His blood for me," said one donor from India as he tried not to look at the big needle going into his right arm.

The connection between blood and good health was not lost. In South America many blood drive organizers and donors wore a red T-shirt with the phrase "Great blood is the result of good habits!"

In many places the generosity of Adventist youth took hospitals and blood banks by surprise. "They couldn't believe so many people were coming to donate their blood,"

CALL FOR COMPASSION

Leaders of the Adventist Church in Australia have joined 11 other Australian churches calling on the Australian federal government to make compassion and equity foundations of the

nation's foreign policy, and to increase levels of foreign aid. Australia's foreign aid is at its lowest-ever percentage of gross national income (GNI).

shared one young donor. Many young people also pledged to make a long-term habit out of this life-saving practice.

REFUGEES

The 2017 edition of GYD was marked by a recent worldwide influx of refugees—mostly Syrian nationals fleeing from war in their country—and Adventist young people's desire to provide them with relief assistance, a word of encouragement, and a prayer. From Germany to Turkey to Jordan, Adventist young people reached out to the newly arrived refugees in their com-

way to go. Minutes later they received a tip about a nearby backroad where a few Syrian families were cramped in tight living quarters. The families had fled from Syria a couple months before, and one family had lost one of their children a few days before.

"They were so happy that someone took the time to visit," one of the young adults involved said, tears coming down her face. "Even though they have nothing, they went inside and prepared tea for us, as they thanked us repeatedly for stopping by. We will never forget their smiles."

In Lebanon a Seventh-day Adventist school put together a special day for refugee children struggling to integrate into their new country. In Tel Aviv, Israel, a group of Adventist youth in clown costumes visited a nearby children's hospital, bringing songs and smiles to the little ones. Leading to GYD 2017, in Morocco, young Adventists organized sports activities for children, including soccer, their favorite sport. "For me, it is very clear," said one of the organizers. "My talent is my ministry."

CREATIVE YOUTH

Across the world the creativity of young committed Adventists during the special day of service seemed never-ending.

Donning military-green helmets and T-shirts in a military memorial site in Belgrade, Serbia, young Adventists gave away roses to tourists and residents as a symbol of peace. Meanwhile, a youth group in Cape Town, South Africa, decided to spend a day at the local fire station to thank firefighters for their service. In Krakow, Poland, Adventists staged a reenactment of the Reformation's defining moment in a public square, as one of them, playing the Reformer Martin Luther, "nailed" his theses on a door to call attention to the 500th anniversary of that movement.

In Milan, Italy, young people paraded on a notorious bridge from which many hopeless locals choose to jump to their deaths. As they marched and showed their ban-

THE ELDERLY AND CHILDREN

According to statistics from various organizations, the elderly population has grown exponentially around the world. Knowing this, and the related loneliness, health, and financial problems seniors face in several countries, young Adventists did their best to make them feel cared for, accepted, and loved.

In Taiwan Adventist young people visited apartments and residences, offering songs, free massages, and healthy meals. In Tunisia young people successfully engaged with those who were elderly in their communities. "The message we gave them loud and clear was "You are not abandoned!" shared one joyful participant.

Adventist young people around the world also set out to bring hope, comfort, and support to children, often named as the first casualties of war, famine, or disease.

munities as they offered them food, clothes, toys for children, and heartwarming smiles.

An encounter with refugees moved a group of young people to tears in Antalya, on the southern coast of Turkey. Local Adventist youth had planned to minister to those who were poor and homeless, but after driving around for more than 30 minutes, they had not managed to find a single homeless person in that prosperous resort city. A little confused and not knowing what to do, they prayed, asking God to show them which



THE CREATIVITY OF YOUNG COMMITTED ADVENTISTS DURING THE SPECIAL DAY OF SERVICE SEEMED NEVER-ENDING.



ners, they offered messages of hope in God and the future to passers-by. In Zimbabwe Adventists took part in a massive distribution of sanitary pads for teenage girls, who often are forced to miss school days when sanitary supplies are unavailable in the area. In Chisinau, Moldova, mothers were honored with flowers and Academy Awards replica statuettes. The message for mothers? You are winners!

MORE THAN A DAY, A LIFESTYLE

“Global Youth Day is not only here to stay, but also to trigger a different way of thinking about life,” said the organizers. “GYD must not be an event,” said Pako Mokgwane, associate youth director of the Seventh-day Adventist world church and main organizer of the special day. “GYD must be a lifestyle.”

Youth leaders and participants across the world echoed his definition. “For sure, activities won’t end today,” said one young man from Kenya. “This is just the beginning.”

The opportunities for serving are many, reminded Gilbert Cangy, a former youth director of the world church. “We don’t need to reinvent the wheel. Many organizations are looking for volunteers. We can join in to serve,” he said.

A young woman from Taiwan seemed to summarize the general mood of many young people at the end of the day. “I learned that serving others can be tough sometimes,” she said. “But there is such a joy in service!”

VOLUNTEERS BRING PRAYER COMFORT TO SURGICAL PATIENTS

THOSE WHO ASSIST CHAPLAINS PROVIDED WITH TRAINING AND ONGOING COACHING

C. J. ANDERSON, ADVENTIST MEDICAL CENTER—PORTLAND

Payer with patients is not a new concept in Seventh-day Adventist health-care institutions. Hospital chaplains regularly pray with patients during their rounds. However, for surgery patients (particularly those having outpatient procedures), the window of opportunity is small, making it difficult for chaplains to reach patients before their scheduled procedures.

Trying to fill this gap, Adventist Medical Center—Portland, a 302-bed Adventist health-care institution in Oregon, decided to look for extra help.

“We wanted to expand our reach,” said hospital chaplain Marshal George. “Our team recognized an opportunity to involve and train volunteers to better serve our patients.”

From that initial discussion, the institution has grown a dedicated team of volunteers who visit surgery patients and offer to pray with them before their procedures. In addition to prayer, these visits help ease the loneliness and uncertainty patients may feel as they wait. These volunteers know that experience well.

“I have a lot of faith, but when I had my own surgery I still got nervous,” said Lillian Shannon, one of the spiritual care volunteers. “I love being there to provide a little peace and to help patients find their comfort zone.”

Every Tuesday Shannon visits patients with David Tupper, another volunteer, who also brings his own surgery and faith experiences to the job.

“I love being involved with this program,” Tupper said. “We get to witness how the nurses and clinical staff care for patients and are a part of that process.”

Tupper and Shannon were prepared for this opportunity through training from the spiritual-care team, and, like all volunteers in the program, they receive ongoing mentoring.

“We’re constantly coached on how to listen and support what the patient needs in that moment,” said Sandi Dykes, volunteer and program coordinator. “When we walk into a patient’s room, it’s not our agenda, it’s theirs.”

This presence, listening ear, and voice of comfort are welcomed by Adventist Health patients. The spiritual-care volunteers report that they are rarely turned down when they ask to pray with a patient.

“In the rare instance that a patient says no, they usually want the volunteers to pray for their surgeon and care team,” they said. ▀

An original version of the story was published in gleanernow.com.



Lillian Shannon and David Tupper share a prayerful moment before meeting with a surgery patient at Adventist Medical Center Portland. GLEANERNOW.COM

PALACE DISCOVERED

Iraqi archaeologists believe that inscriptions and engraved bulls and lions recently discovered under a destroyed shrine in Mosul, Iraq, have revealed the palace of Esarhaddon, an ancient Assyrian king mentioned in the Bible.

Esarhaddon is mentioned three times in the Old Testament, explaining that he was a son of Assyrian king Sennacherib, who failed to conquer Jerusalem in the times of King Hezekiah.



Dan Matthews, senior vice-president of PETA, presents the “Hero to Animals” award to Desmond T. Doss Christian Academy principal Steve Doss. The honor, awarded posthumously to Desmond Doss, acknowledges his longstanding advocacy of non-violence and compassion. JASON WITT

DESMOND DOSS HONORED FOR HIS VEGETARIAN STANCE

ANIMAL RIGHTS ORGANIZATION PRESENTS AWARD.

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, SENIOR CORRESPONDENT, ADVENTIST REVIEW

More than a decade after passing to his rest, Desmond T. Doss, the Seventh-day Adventist United States Army medic who became the first conscientious objector to win the Congressional Medal of Honor, hasn't stopped collecting honors and awards.

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), an animal rights organization with more than 5 million members around the world, presented its Hero to Animals Award posthumously because, in addition to refusing to pick up a gun while in the Army and throughout his life, Doss was also a lifelong vegetarian and a longstanding advocate for nonviolence and compassion.

The Hero to Animals Award was

presented on February 7, 2017, at the Desmond T. Doss Christian Academy, a Seventh-day Adventist-operated K-12 school in Lynchburg, Virginia, United States, by PETA's senior vice president Dan Matthews. February 7 was Doss's birthday, the day he would have turned 98. In a school assembly, school principal Stephen Doss accepted the award on behalf of his namesake honoree.

“I'm honored to receive this award on behalf of Desmond,” said Principal Doss, according to the Web site of the Potomac Conference, which oversees Desmond T. Doss Academy and other 19 Adventist schools within its territory in the state of Virginia and the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

Principal Doss then recalled how

in the movie *Hacksaw Ridge* Doss is “in the middle of the battle, in the most heinous conditions,” when he decides to hand his meat products to another soldier. When Doss's fellow soldier asks him why he does not want them, he simply tells him, “I don't eat meat.”

“I think it shows how Desmond lived his life and was always true to who he was,” said Principal Doss. “That's a lesson to all of us at Desmond T. Doss Christian Academy: to always honor your conviction and don't let other people or conditions make you compromise,” he said.

While the story of Doss was well known in Adventist circles for years, a 2016 film directed by Mel Gibson made his exploits during World War II known to a worldwide audience. In the experience depicted in the highly acclaimed film, Doss—who decided never to carry a gun to kill another human being—managed to save 75 fellow soldiers in Okinawa in the middle of a fierce battle. The film was nominated for the Academy Awards in six categories, and went on to win in two. 🦋

Tiffany Doss contributed to this article.

NEWSBRIEFS

1



KETTERING COLLEGE obtained a MetaNab device for airway clearance and hyperinflation therapy, thanks to a grant from Hill-Rom, a provider of medical technologies. The school also announced that it had added a specific scholarship for its first-time respiratory-care students. The new incentives come at a time when health officers and practitioners around the world must deal with a surge in respiratory diseases.

2



DOUGLAS CLARK, director of the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology in La Sierra University, recently signed on a grant to launch the creation of an archaeological museum in the Jordanian town of Madaba. The museum will showcase the region's monuments dating from all time periods, and exhibits from excavations in the broader region, including those headed by La Sierra University.

3



THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SWEDEN is behind the change in how the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (SweSAT), a mandatory test for senior students across the country, will be administered. Beginning in 2018 the test will be offered on Sunday and Saturday, instead of only on Saturday, a move that benefits Jewish and Adventist students.

4



THE PARTY FOR THE ANIMALS, cofounded and led by Marianne Thieme, a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, grew from two to five seats in the Parliament of the Netherlands after general elections on March 15, 2017. During the campaign Thieme, who is a vegetarian, defended her party's platform to impose a ban on game hunting, the killing of animals without anesthesia, and ecological agriculture.

5



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEADERS in the North-American Division (NAD) met for the first Facebook Live event on the campus of Union College, in Lincoln, Nebraska, United States, on March 14, 2017. Students at the event, along with young adults on social media across the territory, asked questions on many subjects, including race relations in the church, women's ordination, and LGBT+ issues.

6



OPHELIA BARIZO, a Seventh-day Adventist science teacher at Highland View Academy (HVA) was recently named "Environmental Educator of the Year" by an organization supporting restoration and environmental education efforts in Maryland, United States. The award adds to Barizo's long list of professional accomplishments. In more than two decades at HVA she's been responsible for bringing in more than \$800,000 in grant funds from public and private donors.



The handiwork of Rayanne Sabará Rodrigues was on display at two events connected to the 2017 Academy Awards in Hollywood, California. Rodrigues used the occasion to distribute Adventist literature as well.

BUSINESSWOMAN SHARES CHOCOLATES, FAITH AT THE OSCARS

“CHOCOLATE LADY” SEES HOLLYWOOD AS HER MISSION FIELD.

BY MÁRCIO TONETTI, ADVENTIST REVIEW, BRAZIL

For the third year in a row a Seventh-day Adventist businesswoman shared her faith at the most famous film event in the world. Rayanne Sabará Rodrigues, a chocolate maker who immigrated to the United States from Brazil less than 20 years ago, is regularly invited to Hollywood celebrities’ events, where she offers not only her cocoa sweets but the sweet message of God’s Word.

This year Sabará showcased her sweets at the Hollywood Museum, located across the street from the Dolby Theatre, where the Academy Awards—commonly known as the Oscars—ceremony has taken place since 2002. She made 550 choco-

late figurines for guests attending two benefit galas during the Oscars week—the Roger Neal Style Hollywood, and the UNICEF Children United Nations events, the latter coordinated by Daphna Ziman, owner of the Warner Brothers mansion, and actress Sharon Stone.

“I feel honored to be personally invited by these people,” said Sabará in an interview with *Brazilian Times*, the largest, oldest Brazilian newspaper in the United States. “I’m at a loss for words to express what I feel when I take part in events like these. I just thank God for opening those doors.”

Sabará made it to Hollywood af-

ter a New York stylist tried her vegan sweets and shared them with one of the producers of the Oscars week events a few years ago. The producer invited her to showcase her products at events surrounding the annual Academy Awards ceremony in Hollywood, California. Given that chance, Sabará made the most of it, as her Glamour Bombonier brand, based in Worcester, Massachusetts, won the celebrities’ palate, and she soon became known as the “Chocolate Lady” in Hollywood.

The Adventist businesswoman, who in 2015 was named by the Brazilian Immigrant to the U.S. Workers’ Union (CTBI) as one of the 30 Brazilian personalities in the country, said she often keeps in touch with some of the celebrities she meets at the events she is invited to. Last year, for instance, singer and songwriter Carol Connors invited her to her mansion in Beverly Hills. “She was very kind to me,” said Sabará. “She sat at the piano and played the theme song from the movie *Rocky*, one of her most famous compositions.”

Sabará made clear, however,



ADVOCATE HONORED

Ganoune Diop, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Adventist world church, received the 2017 Thomas L. Kane Religious Freedom Award on February 17 for his commitment to

promoting religious liberty as a fundamental human right. Diop received the award for his years of promoting religious freedom at the United Nations and other international and national organizations.

that her business is much more than advertising and selling chocolates.

For one, God has a preferential seat in everything Sabará says and does, as both her business cards and product labels include the phrase “Always trust in the Lord.” “This is the message I want to share with my customers,” she said.

Sabará, who worships at the Worcester Brazilian Seventh-day Adventist Church in her hometown, walks tall when explaining that her ultimate goal is to make the most of her business as a tool for reaching out and sharing hope with others.

This year, as the February 26, 2017, Academy Awards ceremony approached, Sabará saw in the movie *Hacksaw Ridge*—which received six Oscar nominations and ended up winning in two categories—an even greater opportunity for sharing her faith. The film tells the story of Desmond T. Doss, a Seventh-day Adventist United States Army medic who became the first conscientious objector to win the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Understanding the significance of the story, Sabará presented some celebrities the biography of this Adventist hero of World War II. The businesswoman also distributed copies of *The Great Hope*, a condensed

edition of *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White, a cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. “I have noticed that often celebrities often suffer from loneliness and emptiness, something that prompted me to share love and hope through our literature,” Sabará said.

The Adventist businesswoman is also known for reaching out to immigrants. “We help immigrant families from Brazil with clothing and food,” she said. She even set up a Facebook group to share information about job vacancies and rental properties. Sabará also volunteers as a hospital chaplain assistant as part of a group that prays for those who are sick and collects toys for hospitalized children. As a result of their work, several people have requested Bible studies, she said.

Sabará, who was recently invited to participate in a television show and tell about her business and her religious beliefs, believes that what is happening to her fits into God’s plan for her life. “It was for a special purpose that the Lord brought me here,” said Sabará. “It is the reason I want to keep advertising my products and using this opening in Hollywood to uplift God’s name,” she said. 🍌

With additional information from Márcio Basso Gomes.

LOCAL CHURCH PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON MENTAL ILLNESS

LIVING LEGENDS AWARDS CREATE AWARENESS OF CHRISTIANS AND MENTAL HEALTH.

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, SENIOR CORRESPONDENT, ADVENTIST REVIEW

When I was diagnosed in 2001 with clinical depression, I was ashamed.” These were the words of Richard Smallwood, celebrated Christian musician and author of such gospel classics as “Healing,” and “Total Praise,” at the Emmanuel-Brinklow Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ashton, Maryland, on February 25, 2017. “It was a triple strike, as an African American, as an African American male, and as an African American churchgoer.”

Smallwood was one of the 2017 recipients of the Living Legends Awards for Service to Humanity, in a ceremony that honored outstanding people who in the past have struggled with mental illness. The other 2017 recipients were philanthropists and business owners Lois and Leroy Peters, and Kay Redfield Jamison, a psychologist, professor, and author.

PEOPLE WHO TALK ABOUT IT

Doreen Hines, executive director of the Living Legends Awards Foundation, explained the golden thread



The Emmanuel-Brinklow Seventh-day Adventist church.

that connects the 2017 honorees. “They have all been touched by mental illness,” she said in a video message recorded days before the ceremony. “But they have been bold enough to speak up about it.”

In her video message, Hines made clear the significance of this year’s ceremony as she invited people to join her “to come out of the shadows together.”

“[We need] to remove the stigma of mental illness within our faith and ethnic community,” said Hines, a member of the Emmanuel-Brinklow church, a traditionally African American Seventh-day Adventist congregation.

This is exactly what happened during the ceremony when the honorees and others shared their journey from mental illness to restored health. Live music during the event was provided by the Living Legends Awards Singers with Camerata, Lulu Mupfumbu, conductor, and the New England Ensemble, based at Washington Adventist University, in Takoma Park, Maryland. Ensemble director Preston Hawes, who succeeded legendary founder-director Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse, gave firsthand testimony to the challenge of mental illness in his own life.

“I found that compelling,” said Lael Caesar, associate editor of the *Adventist Review*, who attended

the gala, “to think that the orchestra was not there just for its music, but because its illustrious director was also willing to share his personal testimony of his struggle with mental illness.”

A TRADITION OF SERVICE AND CARE

Now in its twelfth year, the Living Legends Awards for Service to Humanity event honors people who have made important contributions to fellow human beings. Previous honorees include Wintley Phipps (2014), a Seventh-day Adventist singer and pastor who has performed for several U.S. presidents; and Leymah Gbowee (2010), a peace activist who a year after receiving the Living Legends Award went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

This year the Saturday evening ceremony was followed by a mental health fair a day later, on the campus of Washington Adventist University. Under the theme “Shine From the Inside,” this free event, cosponsored by Adventist Health-Care, invited people to “come” and “talk about it”—to openly discuss the harmful thoughts and actions that can beset anyone, and find ways toward mental wellness and hope. Led by India Medley, approximately 70 people spent four hours discussing depression, suicide, and

other mental health issues affecting even faithful Christians.

LEAVING A MARK

When one is dealing with mental illness, the essential thing is to connect with the people who suffer, inviting them to go out and look for help, believes Kay Redfield Jamison, one of the 2017 honorees and an academic who has been described as perhaps the most well-known writer on manic illness. “People don’t get treatment because people keep quiet,” said Jamison, who has been both patient and clinician. “Because of the silence, people have no idea that mental illness can be treated.”

Organizers consider this to be a major reason events such as this one can be invaluable for connecting with people on a deeper level in order to help them. As Leymah Gbowee, the 2010 Living Legends honoree and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner, once put it: “You can never leave footprints that last if you are always walking on tiptoe.”

The Living Legends Awards, its supporters, and its host church, Emmanuel-Brinklow, have found a way to make footprints of care and service that will endure the test of time. ♣

Lael Caesar contributed to this story.

THE SACRED WITH THE MUNDANE?

IN ROMANIA, COMBINING THE ORDINARY WITH THE ETERNAL IS THE WAY TO GO.

BY JAROD THOMAS, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, GENERAL CONFERENCE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION



This Adventist storekeeper combines business with discussions about religious topics. She sells Seventh-day Adventist literature, in addition to clothing, in her shop in Bucharest. JAROD THOMAS

It was the quintessential European street: a narrow, cobbled corridor strewn with tiny cars and draped in Austro-Hungarian architecture. I walked these Romanian avenues as a guest evangelist, holding one of more than 2,000 meetings with the Romanian Union's countrywide outreach.

My pastor friend and I stepped inside a small bookstore that was tucked amid pastry shops, second-hand stores, and pharmacies. It was filled with books, having both familiar covers and foreign titles, and health food products that aligned with the habits of another culture. This was clearly an Adventist bookstore, known locally as Sola Scriptura Library. I greeted the two workers and purchased a hymnal of the beautiful songs I was learning, and we made our way down the street.

Later that week an errand took me to the same part of town, and my friend and I ducked into a different kind of shop. I was looking for something special to take home to my family, and my friend helped me navigate the traditional clothes on the shelves. In this store, too, I noticed some familiar literature. Brochures with the face of Jesus. An assortment of books were displayed on the shelf behind the point of sale. We'd stepped inside another center of influence, this one run by an Adventist who mingled business affairs with spiritual passion.

I was introduced to the shop's owner as a guest evangelist from the United States and conversed with her about the meetings taking place all around the city. She explained to my translator, face radiant with a smile, that one of her customers had decided to be baptized in one of the seminars. Another customer whom she was studying with had also made decisions, and would likely be baptized as well.

The striking difference between these two shops, at least when I was there, was the activity inside them. My companion and I were the only patrons in the Adventist book store, planted in the center of this community that fuses European secularism and Eastern Orthodoxy. The Adventist *Church Manual* copies, among other things, would have been foreign elements to common passersby. The clothing store, however, was disarming, with its common, everyday wares. The door was constantly opened by local people coming and going, turning their heads as we talked, and listening to our discussion about spiritual matters.

An institutional presence is important. Serving our members and their communities with literature and resources is a critical part of our church's work. And perhaps there are people in that city who trace their knowledge of God and His end-time message to that little

bookshop on the cobblestone street. But on that cloudy afternoon in Romania, the message to me was clear. The most powerful influence comes from people like you and me, doing everyday things while bringing Jesus to them.

Proclamation ministry is also important. Just ask the gentleman who traveled home from Italy to Romania for a two-week vacation. His trip happened to coincide with the two weeks that our meetings were being held near his family's home. We both recognized that God had a purpose in orchestrating his schedule so that he could learn new truths in his native language; and he expressed gratitude to God for the divine appointment. But it is personal work—coming close to people with a spirit of compassion and unselfish love—that gives our message traction in the minds and hearts of those who hear it.

Incredible things are happening in Romania. Guest speakers have returned to the United States, Australia, and other places in Europe with stories about how God touched people through the great evangelistic effort that recently took place. But the greatest of stories may be waiting to be told on a sea of glass, somewhere in eternity. They're stories of everyday individuals like you and me. People who mingled the sacred with the mundane, and rejoiced as lives were changed for eternity. ▀

Need More Faith?

Faith may
be closer than
you think...

*Faith is the assurance
of things hoped for,
the conviction
of things not seen.*

HEBREWS 11:1



Mike Tucker,
Speaker/Director

SUMMER SCHEDULE

June 1-3	Lake Junaluska, NC – Carolina Camp Meeting
June 6-8	Hutchinson, MN – Minnesota Camp Meeting
June 9-11	Blue Ridge, VA – Potomac Southern Camp Meeting
June 24	Mississauga, ON – Ontario Camp Meeting
June 29 – July 1	Ruidoso, NM – Texaco Camp Meeting
July 16-22	Bowden, AB – Alberta Camp Meeting



Engaging the Mind • Touching the Heart

P.O. Box 7729 • Riverside, CA 92513-9804 • (888) 940-0062 • www.FaithForToday.tv



ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- » BECAUSE YOU SAY SO
- » TO EAT OR FIGHT
- » "I ONCE WAS LOST, BUT NOW I'M FOUND"
- » THE BIBLICAL RATIO OF GOOD TO EVIL

DISCOVER

GRACE TO YOU

God's Revelation is grace.

For Andrei Sinyavsky, Russian critic and novelist, serving seven years in a corrective labor colony called Dubrovlag (the "oak-forest-camp"), Revelation's vision of grace was a tiny bit of freedom in a tundra of thought control. The book's images of hope made him invulnerable to his torturous ordeal.

Because Scripture was forbidden in the labor camps, Sinyavsky kept his handwritten copy of Revelation concealed in one of his boots. Wherever he went, Revelation went; its vivid images a constant companion of light to his darkness and the silent thoughts that filled his soul.

Why Revelation? Why not the Psalms? Why not one of the Gospels?

Sometime during his second year at Dubrovlag, struggling with how hard it was to live in hope, Sinyavsky



LARRY LICHTENWALTER



THE REVELATION

...of the Lord Jesus Christ, which God
sent into his servants things
... to pass, and he sent and
... his servant John:
... of God, and of the
... of all things that

6 And hath made us
and his Father, to live
ever and ever. Amen.
7 Behold, he cometh
shall see him, and they
all kinds of the
Even so, A-men.
8 I am A-pha
the ending, saith
which is to c

became captivated with Revelation. He came to the place where he could say, “I understand,” and wrote: “Henceforth it will never leave me. Eschatology, the Revelation in my boot—I march on, happy as can be.”¹

What had he come to “understand” that would “never leave” him? What had those hand-scrawled pages in his boot revealed that would make him invulnerable to his ordeal? What could ever enable him to “march on, happy as can be” in a place he himself called the “house of the dead”?

“Eschatology,” he claimed, a vision of *last things* bounded and defined by divine grace. He saw a view of God, human history, and the real meaning of life. He saw how our human darkness will finally end in a glorious morning, where righteousness and justice, truth and shalom, will triumph. All because of grace, God’s grace.

Sinyavsky had come under the spell of the God that atheistic communism had so rudely ousted from his country. Somehow all the confusion and turmoil of Russia’s terrible years as well as the moral gloom it cast for the days ahead no longer seemed so hopeless. God was surpassingly present. Sovereign Lord. God of grace and peace. So Revelation remained in his boot.

GRACE BOOKENDS

Grace doesn’t usually come to mind when we think of Revelation. Violent sequences of blood, death, war, judgment, and threat of eternal damnation make the book a challenging, often horrifying, bewildering, and confusing text.² We often read with foreboding rather than hope. We wonder about the moral stance it seems to take, and whether we need the book at all.³

Yet John’s Apocalypse begins and ends with

grace: “Grace and peace to you” (Rev. 1:4); “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen” (Rev. 22:21). Grace is the first word that welcomes every listener. Grace is Revelation’s last word of blessing and benediction. The farewell of grace corresponds to, and echoes, the welcome of grace. Like two weighty bookends, grace holds everything written in between firmly in place.

It forms an interpretive literary *inclusio*. It places everything in its own context. We must read Revelation within those brackets in order to understand its heart message. Grace is that message, conveying what the Apocalypse is really about, and providing Scripture’s last word to human beings!

More than a casual greeting or benediction, Revelation’s grace bestows what it proclaims.⁴ The book unveils grace that helps; grace that saves; grace that can make a difference both now and for eternity; grace that brings hope and peace; grace that provides a defining vision of God.

As an apocalyptic writing, this kind of greeting and benediction is unusual.⁵ However, the seriousness of the human situation is unusual too.

Here is the record of arrogant evil; unremitting war against the right; the tenacity of sin; and the depravity of humanity. What, besides God’s grace, can meet such a catastrophe!

Nothing but grace can hold us steady when moral and spiritual compromise seem to purchase everyone around. Only grace can provide and nurture the staying power we need to keep faith in the assurance of God’s ultimate redemptive, re-creative victory. Only grace can fulfill that vision of the cosmic conflict ended, all things made new, and the universal experience of eternal shalom.

Grace begins Revelation. Grace pervades throughout. Under one symbol or another, God

How much would you risk to protect your copy of Revelation? Would you give up your freedom? Your sanity? Your life?

and His saving grace through Christ are woven throughout. Grace is God's last word.

Before the book lists good and bad churches, closed and opened seals, coming and sounded trumpets, scorching or avoided plagues, beasts and their menacing pursuit, we first hear God's blessing of grace. And when every chilling scene has passed through our imagination, till the truth comes home to us that the cosmic conflict includes the geography of our own heart, then God softens the impact of that unnerving truth with grace. After the traumatic, existential impact, He presses firmly into the deepest recesses of our hearts the certainty of His desire that, above all, He wants us to experience grace—His grace, the grace of the Lord Jesus.

It is a grace that will be *with us* in real time—wherever we go, whatever our experience in life (Rev. 22:21). It is grace that is intensely personal. It is mediated by a personal, living God who assures us that grace is *with us*, because the God of grace Himself is with us, profoundly present and sovereignly in control of our world and its future: "One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation—that the connection between God and His people is close and decided."⁶

TRIUNE GRACE

Revelation's grace unfolds with a dynamic view of the triune God: "from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:4, 5). Grace comes from the Father, *and* [from] the Spirit, *and* [from] Jesus Christ. The "from" connected by "and" indicates three separate and distinct persons. Each person of the triune God is

capable of communicating grace and peace—as well as the judgment, protection, hope, and redemption within Revelation's narratives.

Grace originates in the triune God. The Father, the Spirit, and the Son are each identified with the movement of grace in the book of Revelation. From beginning to end, human salvation is purely a work of divine grace. Grace undergirds the entire experience of salvation. Grace displays itself in a person's life. The grace of the triune God reaches out to humanity. The Holy Spirit brings personal application to every believer of the grace that the Father has ordained from eternity, and the Son has accomplished through the cross.⁷

THE GRACE OF LOVE

Grace is the God of love moving toward humanity with blessing. The book offers praise "to him who loves us" (Rev. 1:5). The form of the verb John uses for love is a present active participle. It is love that is current, continuous, compelling, real—and intensely personal. It is love that encompasses our past, our present, and our every tomorrow.

Grace then, flows from God's unconditional love. God loves me in spite of who I am. Such love stirs overflowing praise: "to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen" (verse 6). God has done, is doing, and will do for us what we can never deserve. Nothing can make God love us less. Nothing can make God love us more. The Father, the Spirit, and the Son, each and together love us!

This is grace: neither abstract, nor elusive, but personal; real; born of love that longs to restore us so that we can behold with wonder the face of Him who now loves us deeply (Rev. 22:4). The grace of love assures us that God's power can work in our lives (Rev. 1:5, 6; 12:11).

Revelation's unfolding of love-prompted grace brings important aspects of the cosmic conflict into sharper focus. Salvation unfolds as the real plot of Revelation's philosophy of history and the *why* of divine grace.⁸

In the centerpoint of the book, between its two *grace markers* (Rev. 1:4; 22:21), a loud voice in heaven raises a triumphant hymn celebrating God's mighty actions on behalf of human beings (Rev. 12:10-12). The song underscores the wholistic nature, cosmic dimension, and universal application of Christ's substitutionary death. It reveals selfless grace, sacrificial grace, vicarious grace—grace both unique and efficacious, a mystery of sacrifice (see Heb. 2:9) that challenges our reflection.

Christ's death and resurrection make Him not only the Lord of history and human destiny but also the exalted focus of celebratory worship (Rev. 5:9-14). Saving grace compels our song of praise: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain" (verse 12); "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10). So that while grace provides interpretive bookends, the cross takes center page as the most profound demonstration of grace.

TRANSFORMING GRACE

Within the book's cosmic conflict narrative, this unfolding of divine grace in the Lamb's death is the unequivocal turning point of salvation history (Rev. 5:1-10; 12:10-13; 13:8). Grace overtakes and surpasses sin and sickness, war and catastrophe. Grace is grander than our human disgrace. God's grace effects change in human hearts, our human condition, the destiny of our planet and the universe. It is profoundly transformative.

Grace releases us from our sins (Rev. 1:5) and delivers us from shame, guilt, and the uncertainty of judgment (Rev. 12:11; 18:20). Washed deep within, we can now celebrate innocence before self and God Himself (Rev. 7:14). Grace invests us with significance: "a kingdom and priests" in relation to God, reflectors of divine grace to a lost world (Rev. 1:5, 6; 5:9, 10; 14:1-5). Our personal experience with redeeming grace results in obedient living, purity, truthfulness and innocence before God, a life that follows the Lamb's self-sacrificing way (Rev. 7:15; 14:1-5; cf. Rev. 3:21).

Our experience of grace becomes God's witness to a world in need of a word of grace and the hope

of grace (Rev. 14:1-13), in fulfillment of God's promise that reading Revelation will generate "a great revival" and "an entirely different religious experience."⁹

URGENT AND URGING GRACE

We have said that in the process of closing, Revelation becomes intensely personal. It moves from the cosmic to the individual, from global events and world history to personal accountability and private decisions. Apocalyptic visions now generate personal vision—a look within, a focus on the existential.

In doing so, Revelation no longer speaks to just everyone. Its word to "the one" (Rev. 22:11, 12, 17-19) is a word straight to you, to me. Its meaning is direct and explicit. And urgent: grace is present, freely available, and lingering. But not forever: the call of "the Spirit and the bride" (Rev. 22:17) ends for those who will not come. They have no place in the book, and become objects of the final plagues (verses 18, 19).

In the end, the "grace of the Lord Jesus" is Revelation's final thought to all, letting us know that this is what revealing Jesus is all about. Grace is God's revelation. Let it haunt your imagination. Let it hang on your lips (Rev. 22:21). It is grace flowing from a heart that loves us dearly—grace flowing from Jesus.

Grace is an appropriate opening and close for the final description of God's gracious provision for His people in heaven and on earth. In a sense, Revelation itself is a manifestation of this grace, as it unveils a hope that helps. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the book bestows what it proclaims.¹⁰

"Grace to you!"

¹ Abram Terz (Andrei Sinyavsky), *A Voice From the Chorus* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), p. 77.

² Harry O. Maier, *Apocalypse Recalled: The Book of Revelation After Christendom* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), p. ix.

³ Beatrice Neall, "Apocalyptic—Who Needs It?" *Spectrum* 23, no. 1 (May 1993): 46.

⁴ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1977), p. 68.

⁵ Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), pp. 521, 522.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1923), p. 114.

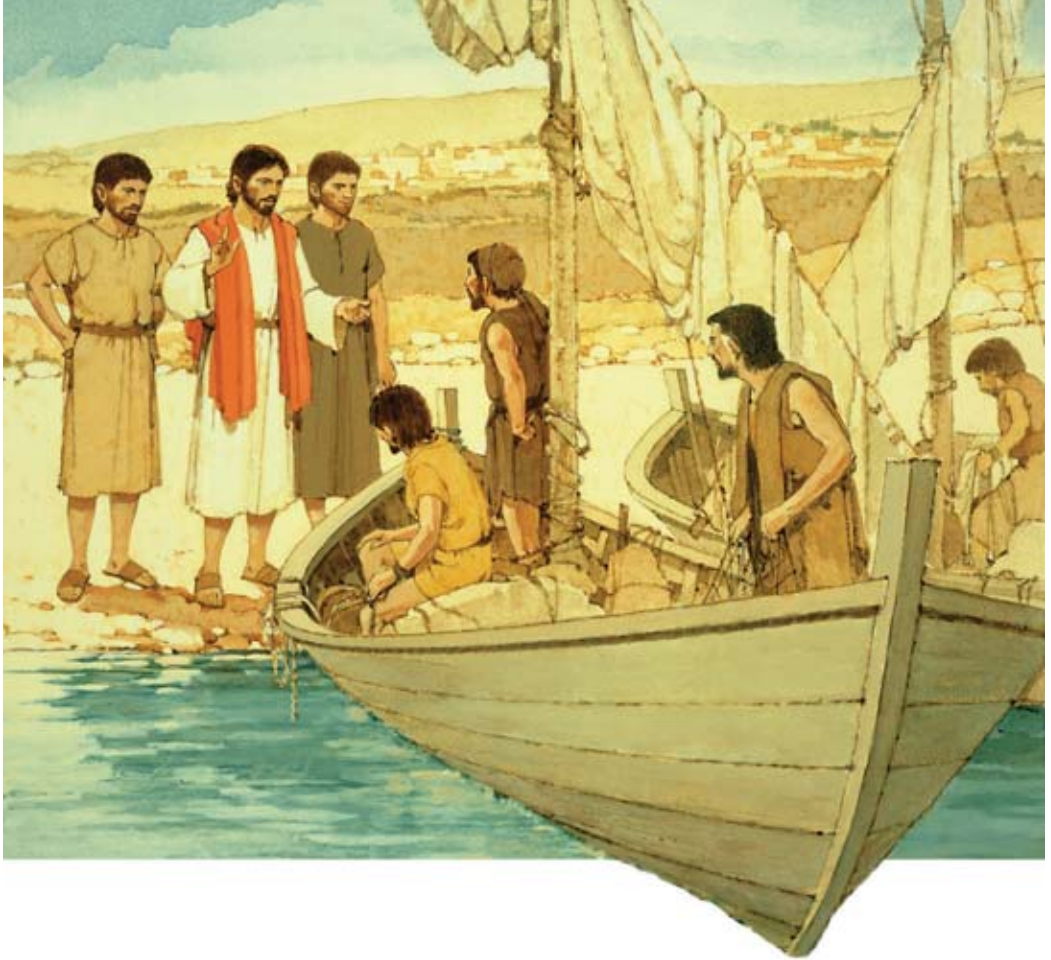
⁷ Malcolm B. Yarnell, *God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Academic 2016), p. 39.

⁸ Eugene H. Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988), p. 153.

⁹ E. G. White, pp. 113, 114.

¹⁰ Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, p. 68.

Larry Lichtenwalter is dean of the faculty of theology, and head of the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Studies, at Middle East University, Beirut, Lebanon.



BECAUSE YOU SAY SO

*Obedience may be
the first miracle*

I was probably 7 or 8 years old the night Dad called home from a meeting and said he didn't think he would make it in time to milk Elma, our cow. It turned out to be a life-defining night for the rest of my childhood and youth.

MILKING COWS

My brother and I had helped Dad for a year or two with the milking, but it was never for long. We would milk a few squirts, then go play in the hay or chase the cats or stick our hands way down deep in the grain bin and inhale the wonderful smell of grain. But this night Mom took my brother and me out to the barn, and we sat down and started: squirt, squirt, squirt, squirt.

For a few minutes things went fine, and we felt pretty good. Mom had tried first and failed. We were doing something Mommy couldn't. But then our hands started to hurt, and we wanted to quit: just try making a fist and opening your hand; then repeat the action, maybe 500 times, and you will know how we felt.

I can still remember that long evening: taking turns milking, then sitting in the door of the barn crying and holding our aching hands. Dad came in after we were through and said he was proud of us. So

HOMER TRECARTIN

proud that from then on, milking, morning and night, was part of our daily chores till we moved from that farm.

MILKING COLLEGE COWS

Going off to college ensured I'd never be milking again. Or so I thought, until the business manager called me into his office to give me my work assignment: "Homer, I am going to send you to the farm to be one of the morning milkers."

Every morning I was up at 3:30, over to the barn at 4:00, begrudging the hard, dirty, dairy work, milking the 50 to 100 cows that we milked each day. Sure, there were milking machines; but it was still a lot of smelly work with ungrateful cows. Sometimes one of them would slap my face with her wet, soggy tail or kick me into the gutter. By graduation I was [something of] a cow authority.

CATCHING FISH

I knew about milking cows, and Peter knew about catching fish. Which is why it must have been awkward for him that morning by Lake Gennesaret, when Jesus instructed him, and whoever else was involved, to "put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4).

Peter and his colleagues were already exhausted. They had fished all night and caught nothing; they had pulled their nets out onto the shore and were cleaning them; the long night of work had them feeling down that morning.

I knew about milking cows, and Peter knew about catching fish.

Besides, Jesus' recent behavior had puzzled, perplexed, and maybe even frustrated them. Luke 4:38-44 shows that the work was just getting started in Capernaum: lots of new interests; many people right there to work with. Why would Jesus leave now? It didn't make sense.

Sometimes launching out can look quite pointless, certainly very unpromising. In the Middle East, Adventist members are located mostly in a few communities—one little strip of Cairo; two or

three little groups in Istanbul; Sabtieh in Lebanon; a few groups in the Gulf countries, etc. And even in those localities Adventism is such a tiny minority with so much work to do that we struggle at the thought of branching out into new areas.

In Jamaica, where there is one Adventist for every nine people, 89 percent of the people have still not accepted God's final message. There is so much to do right where we live. Why leave and go to some place new?

Jesus, and later Paul, focused much attention on unentered areas and people groups. I certainly am not saying to ignore where we are already working, or to start something, drop it, and move on to something else. That kind of work can do its own share of harm.

But it does help to remember that while we keep going with what has already been started, we must keep looking for places and ways to launch out again. Current success or previous failure need not be proof against branching out into new areas.

LEAVING CAPERNAUM

Grudgingly, perhaps, the disciples have followed Jesus out of Capernaum. Still having their boats allows that they may have sailed to their new location. Jesus, in character, probably spent the night praying. The disciples, in keeping with their trade, spent their night fishing.

The next morning people started to gather, and Jesus began to preach while the disciples sat nearby working on their nets. Disgruntlement notwithstanding, their hearts still burned within them as they heard Jesus' words. More and more people kept arriving, until it became almost impossible for Jesus to be seen or heard by all. So He stepped into Peter's boat and asked him to push out from shore a little bit. From that pulpit He preached the rest of His sermon.

Whatever He said was powerful. Peter may have absorbed it all while standing in the water holding the boat so it wouldn't drift away; or while sitting in the boat holding a pole wedged between some rocks on the shallow bottom. Whatever he was doing, his mind was on Jesus and His powerful words.

Then he realized that Jesus was done preaching and was talking to him. "Peter," the Master said softly, "let's push out to where it is deep and do some fishing."

It was the kind of remark that unknowing farm-

ers or shopkeepers could make—tourists down by the seaside for a holiday; intrigued by Peter and his companions, so quaint out in their little boats; capturing all the memories in their cameras, and wanting to feel the nets and see the fish; even wanting a ride and asking Peter to “just push out a little ways and show our boys how you fish.”

Ignorant tourists. It was like trying to tell me how to milk cows. If you wanted to catch fish on Galilee, you didn’t sleep in, then saunter down to your boat after a late and leisurely breakfast. You had to be there at evening; you’d fish through the night. Then you could sleep a little during the day.

But then, what do tourists know about fishing? Even carpenter tourists who were good at preaching?

LIVING A MIRACLE

Now the tourists who heard the preacher’s words want to see what Peter does next. And Peter himself doesn’t know. Does he embarrass this wonderful Leader with an informed explanation? The nontourists knew people don’t fish during the day. If Peter does push out, he could become the laughingstock of the whole local community.

Peter tries hard to be tactful, very un-Peter. He doesn’t tell Jesus He is ignorant. He just says that he and his friends have already tried all night; they’re tired now; it’s time to quit and . . . The look in Jesus’ eyes stops him.

“OK, Lord. Because You have asked me to, I will do it.”

The miracle most celebrated in this story is the netful of fish. But there is another: the one that took place just before Peter obediently pushed out his boat; the miracle that made Peter say, in effect, “Lord, what You suggest makes no sense at all to me. You are a carpenter-preacher from Nazareth. I am the Galilean fisherman. But because You say to, I will launch out into the deep.”

This was the miracle of a heart so affected by Jesus that Peter was willing to let go of everything that made sense to him—all the built-up traditions of ancestors, all the established practices of his own ample experience—and do what might make him the laughingstock of his Galilean world.

LETTING DOWN THE NET

Peter’s “deep” will not be everyone’s deep. But his miracle is replicated a thousand times as men and

women agree to serve because they choose to follow God’s voice (see Rom. 8:14): maybe in an overseas assignment; or perhaps, in apartments downtown. Or else, making a financial sacrifice as you have done before; or attempting a share-your-faith venture yet again where you feel you have failed before.

Letting down your net may mean investing your next six years in a needy community, taking years to get to know its people so you might find appropriate ways to reach their hearts. Launching out may get you lockups, stonings, cat-o’-nine-tails, shipwrecks, and journeys in a basket flung over a wall (2 Cor. 11:23-33). For Waldensian youth, launching out meant infiltrating the heart of the enemy’s territory with the Word of God, knowing full well that many of them would never return home.

Early Adventist missionaries traveled by donkey cart for months into areas where there was no possibility of medical care. They were pushing out into the deep, whether the deep of the South American jungle or the perilous shallows and rapids of the Amazon. And many of those who launched out at God’s command have fallen and been buried in the lands of their sacrifice.

In the 1800s Lilius Trotter, a wealthy young woman and gifted artist, fell in love with Jesus, dedicated her life to Him, and launched out into the deep. Leading art critics were hailing her as probably destined to become the best British artist of the nineteenth century. But leaving wealth, power, and prestige behind, Trotter moved to North Africa to spend the next 40 years sharing the gospel with the people of Algeria. She learned Arabic, started schools, wrote books and tracts, helped with Bible translation, and took long journeys into the desert by camel train to visit scattered communities. She served until her death, and they buried her in Algiers.

On the shores of Galilee, Peter surrendered his expertise and launched out into the deep because Jesus said so. In England, Trotter set aside a brilliant-looking future and went to North Africa because Jesus said, “Go.”

The miracle God means to do in and through us needs neither our judgment nor our competence. It just needs the prior miracle of obedient conformity to Him that mirrors Peter saying, “Lord, I’ll go because You say so.” 🌿

Homer Trecartin is director of Global Mission Centers and Total Employment at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

TO EAT OR FIGHT

KNOWLEDGE, CONSCIENCE, LOVE



A model for serving a wonderfully diverse church

ABRAHAM RANGEL FLORES

A short while ago my wife brought me some fruits of the season, among them a few beautiful mandarins. While I peel the biggest one my mind flies back to my Mexican childhood.

GROWING UP MEXICAN

My country of birth has united the traditions of various native peoples with the Roman Catholicism of Spanish conquistadors. Our syncretism intrigues many tourists, ethnologists, and theologians.

Consider, for example, our “Dead Altar” tradition. During the Roman Catholic holiday All Saints’ Day many Mexican families build private altars honoring deceased relatives. Families adorn these altars with flowers, drinks, pictures, the finest candies, and the most delicious plates of food for the beloved dead to visit and enjoy during the night. The biggest mandarins I have ever seen were on one of those altars.

But given what we know of the Bible’s teaching about mortality, Mexican Adventists had a fight on their hands: was it right to eat any of those exquisite mandarins? Some church members said that eating from the Dead Altar was idolatry. Others insisted that the Bible teaches that the dead are dead, and that nobody came during the night to eat the food; therefore, eating from the altar transgressed no biblical principle.

How does one settle such a fight? In favor of group one, of course. And group two as well. Why? Because both groups behaved in harmony with their Bible-based conscience. When I wonder if different positions can similarly exist in God’s remnant church today, my Bible answers “Yes.”

OUR MEXICAN CORINTHIAN DILEMMA

In 1 Corinthians 8 we find the biblical version of the Mexican dilemma. The church in Corinth faced the question of whether it was appropriate for Christians to eat food that had been presented to idols. One group thought such eating was idolatry. Another group said that “even if there are so-called gods . . . , yet for us there is but one God” (verses 5, 6); therefore, the food could be freely eaten. Who was right? Though it sounds rather like theological relativism, the chapter shows that both groups were right.

In a worldwide, transcultural church such as the Seventh-day Adventist Church, opportunities to diverge multiply. All of us who attend multicultural local churches have discovered that our creed and lifestyle understandings challenge other Adventists who see things from their own theological angle.

Mexican Adventists are troubled by the worldliness of North Americans who wear wedding rings. Thai brothers and sisters struggle with the disobedience of Western Adventists who ignore Exodus 3:5 and keep their shoes on in church. Europeans and some Americans may not understand why Hispanic churches in North America sometimes include people of questionable or no resident status who may or may not pay proper taxes. My German Church boards consider baptizing 12-years-olds to be a serious problem, though their pastor (that’s me!) was baptized in Mexico at the age of 11. Brothers and sisters from Eastern Europe find Christmas decorations unfathomable at the Adventist university in Mexico where I earned my theology degree. Imagine: a Christmas tree on the church platform! And this is no exhaustive list of divergences.





FINDING THE RIGHT FIX: KNOWLEDGE

I find that 1 Corinthians 8 presents us a three-factor model that effectively handles the problem of potential divergence, and may serve as a paradigm to those of us who live in the twenty-first century.

Knowledge is the first factor of Paul's model for diversity accommodation. It could hardly be otherwise: in Corinth everyone had studied the issue. Everyone had some knowledge. But knowledge, Paul warns, can be its own problem: "'We all possess knowledge.' But knowledge puffs up" (1 Cor. 8:1). Believers must beware of the dangerous intellectual pride that can sterilize our discussions.

The best way to the best knowledge follows the Berean principle. The Bereans "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11, KJV), dedicating the time to personal and thorough study that led to ever-comprehension about God's will on a particular issue.

This personal experience between me, my Bible, and the Holy Spirit is irreplaceable. Hand in hand with it, the gift of prophecy offers inspired counsel and clarification (2 Chron. 20:20). We should also be constantly aware that we are part of the "church

of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Our representative form of church government allows us to contribute at all levels of church administration, whether on financial policies or new theological insights, though sharing our opinions does not mean persuading everyone.

Ellet J. Waggoner's and A. T. Jones's new insights into Bible teaching on righteousness by faith in 1888 have been differently received than those of Desmond Ford in 1980 on prophetic interpretation. In the end, the General Conference in session is the peak of the iceberg of meetings that analyze theological and procedural matters at many levels of the organization, sometimes over many years. General Conference statements are neither the decision of a single country or individual, nor last-minute conclusions.

FINDING THE RIGHT FIX: CONSCIENCE

The second factor in Paul's diversity accommodation model is closely linked to the first. Some Corinthians had basic levels of knowledge and a weak conscience. Others, with whom Paul identified, knew and understood more than the "Weeks" did. Their greater knowledge gave them

a stronger conscience. It seems that the conscience of each church member in Corinth was loyal to its personal knowledge. Interestingly, the English word “conscience” comes from the Latin word *conscientia* (“with knowledge”).

Just as with knowledge, conscience deserves caveats. Despite Karl Barth’s esteem for conscience as “the perfect interpreter of life,”¹ the Bible speaks of “corrupted” and “guilty” consciences (Titus 1:15; Heb. 10:22), and even those “seared as with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:2).

Note Ellen White’s pointed question: “Has the man a well-instructed, good conscience, or is it biased and warped by his own preconceived opinions?”² “It is not enough for a man to think himself safe in following the dictates of his conscience. . . . The question to be settled is, Is the conscience in harmony with the Word of God?”³ Only in context of such agreement should we be willing to entertain any pair of contrasting positions.

FINDING THE RIGHT FIX: LOVE

The first two factors of the Corinth model operate in the private sphere: both knowledge and conscience are personal. But when our knowledge or conscience threatens to divide us, we need a unity factor. Believers in Rome apparently had to face the same problem as in Corinth. Paul spoke directly to the Weak: “The one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does” (Rom. 14:3). Weak who judged Strong as worldly and profane needed to believe in and practice mutuality. And Strong who despised Weak for their lesser knowledge needed it too.

But in his search for a solution, it was the Strong whom Paul most decidedly addressed. They could keep their knowledge, but should do nothing to hurt the conscience of Brother and Sister Weak: “Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall” (1 Cor. 8:13).

Strong, Weak, every one of us who makes up the fellowship of the saints, may revel together in implementation of the five imperatives so wonderfully sequenced toward the end of Paul’s letter to Corinth: “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love” (1 Cor. 16:13, 14).

The Strong are not sentenced to silent suffering

under what Loren Seibold calls “the tyranny of the weaker brother.”⁴ For weak conscience would stand as the weirdest of ironies if it came to constitute a tyranny of control. Our church would not have grown as it has, and will not grow as it should, without Strong free both to think and to exercise their moral duty to edify their spiritual siblings, bringing greater enlightenment to their weaker conscience: “Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up” (Rom. 15:2). Everyone, Weak included, should grow in their knowledge of God (Col. 1:10). And everyone, Strong included, is to do everything in love: Sister Strong and Brother Weak may thus both contribute to, and, indeed, may both be needed for, church growth into the body that Jesus means it to be.

FIXING MY OWN SPHERE

This article is for me anything but theory. I pastor three churches: one English-speaking, one Portuguese-speaking, and one German-speaking. Additionally, I nurture a Hispanic group. My congregations represent 41 countries. I have had the support of visiting evangelists from four of our world divisions. I sing from four different hymnals.

Start thinking now about what potluck means to me, and exclaim with me: What a blessing! What a richness!

Sure, there have been tense situations, even broken relationships. But I praise the Lord who has been teaching us—beginning with me—the principles of the paradigm of Corinth: knowledge and conscience in love. It is a model that helps us preserve both our “we” and our “me.” It is the miracle of our unified identity in spite of our immensely heterogeneous background. It is our experience of being one whole, coordinated body in Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-27).

Oh, I must get back to my mandarin—it is waiting for me. 🌿

¹ Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man* (Gloucester, Mass.: 1978), p. 9.

² Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1977), p. 322.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

⁴ <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2012/11/the-tyranny-of-the-weaker-brother>.

Abraham Rangel Flores pastors four congregations using four different languages (English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish) around Frankfurt, Germany.

“I ONCE WAS LOST— BUT NOW I’M FOUND”

What happens when grace becomes personal?

Adventist Review associate editor Gerald Klingbeil recently sat down with Bill Knott, executive editor of the magazine, and talked with him about *GraceNotes*, a weekly Sabbath message focusing on God’s amazing grace.

Tell us about the origins of *GraceNotes*. When and why did you begin to send out these weekly e-mail and text messages?

For many years I’ve carried a prayer list in my Bible that named friends and leaders in God’s church for whom I was interceding. During quiet moments of worship services and while waiting for appointments, I would pray for each of them.

It occurred to me one Sabbath

morning about six years ago that many of these same people don’t have persons regularly reminding them of the truths of the gospel, and that they might be blessed by a weekly reminder of God’s care for them. The list was small then—about 70 persons—but it has grown to include thousands of friends, pastors, leaders, and members around the world.

Why did you decide to focus on grace? Surely there is more to the Christian journey than grace, isn’t there?

Ellen White frequently describes redemption as “an inexhaustible theme,” and the longer I’ve pondered the grace of Jesus, the more amazing it appears to me. Week by week, as I write the five



or six sentences of each GraceNote, I try to capture the lessons that the Lord has been teaching me: lessons about my own sinfulness, about the perfect salvation available through the love of Jesus, about the way grace intersects with our most important relationships.

The GraceNotes project is a weekly record of what I'm learning through study and prayer. It's designed to build encouragement and hope in those who read each note.

What has this journey into grace done in your own life?

As a lifelong Adventist and a pastor for 30 years, I thought I understood the grace of Jesus—and perhaps I did in a theoretical way. I could explain how the undeserved favor of Jesus rescued me from my own lostness—but it remained a theological construct, not a living experience. Through the amazing kindness of Jesus and the witness of godly friends, I came to fully trust my life to Jesus. I recognized that I could do nothing to save myself—that I had to rely entirely on the righteousness of Jesus.

I like to tell friends that though I'm married to the same woman, live in the same house, and hold the same job, everything about my life is different. In a word, I discovered the joy I had been missing as a believer, and I began to understand how powerfully gratitude can reshape a life.

From your vantage point as editor of the flagship magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well as a trained historian, what's the story of grace within our faith community?

Like believers in all ages, including in the era of the New Testament church, we're tempted to assume that everything, in the end, depends on us: on our sincere intentions, on our hard work, on our acts of service for others.

At key moments in our history—the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference session; the renewed emphasis on the righteousness of Christ in the 1970s and 1980s, and the contemporary hunger to understand this theme I see everywhere in the church today—God has been reminding us to put first things first.

Grace will always be counterintuitive for sinners: we mistakenly assume that we can by ourselves fix what's broken in our lives. The irony is that we diminish the work of Jesus when we



I could explain how the undeserved favor of Jesus rescued me from my own lostness—but it remained a theological construct, not a living experience.

underline the importance of our effort. By celebrating grace, by highlighting the salvation wrought through Jesus, we find our lives—and our behaviors—increasingly conformed to His image.

What do you hope to accomplish by sharing your weekly GraceNotes online?

My weekly GraceNotes are a testimony designed to encourage the many who are “heavy laden” to come to Jesus, trust His love for them, and allow Him to transform them through a daily, living experience of gratitude. Seventh-day Adventists ought to be foremost in proclaiming the grace of Jesus, for grace is still the most powerful and transformative force in this universe. 🌿

You can find each week's GraceNote—and the entire archive of previous posts—at www.adventistreview.org

PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES AND CREATE YOUR LEGACY



Your loved ones need you, but what would they do if you were not there? With just a little planning you can have peace of mind knowing you have taken care of your family and secured their future.

ARE YOUR PLANS UP-TO-DATE?

A current estate plan is vital to making sure your wishes are carried out and can help you leave a lasting personal legacy.

IT'S EASY TO GET STARTED

To assist you with making or updating your future plans, we can provide you with our FREE *Planning Your Legacy* wills guide. Many of our members have found this guide useful in helping them think through their goals. To obtain a copy please contact us or visit our website and select "Downloads". (*Planning Your Legacy* is available in English and Español.)



301-680-5002

LEARN MORE BY VISITING OUR WEB SITE

AT: WWW.WILLPLAN.ORG

THE BIBLICAL RATIO OF GOOD TO EVIL

The pain in the world always outweighs the pleasure," wrote Arthur Schopenhauer. "If you don't believe it, compare the respective feelings of two animals, one of which is eating the other."

How nice to get pleasure from your spouse's kiss, even if, just beyond the sound of the smooch, a 6-year-old is, maybe, being molested by daddy. Is your delight in a chocolate mousse diluted by the bloated belly of a starving child across the sea? A cost-of-living increase is great, even if at day's end a homeless man's empty cup isn't. And how does one compare parents' emotions at a child's diploma with those at a child's death certificate?

I have a Bible, 1,175 pages long. Of those, only pages 1 through 3 and 1174 through 1175 outline a Paradise in which the good outweighs the bad because there is no bad. In contrast, pages 4-1173 are, even with the hope of the gospel echoed in each one, ravaged with violence, war, sickness, death, corruption, incest, crime, lust, greed, revenge, hate, starvation—every imaginable evil and every evil imaginable.

What's the logic, then, that argues that the God revealed in the Bible can't exist because of evil, when the Bible that reveals this God records, simultaneously, the evil that supposedly negates His existence? Bible writers who recounted all the evil affirmed not just the existence of God but His love and goodness as well. Even amid the ravages in pages 4 through 1173 of the Bible, the goodness of God and the grace He offers exist. These writers, obviously, saw no contradiction between the one (evil) and the other (God's goodness).

Of course, five pages of Paradise (pp. 1-3 and pp. 1174, 1175) to 1,770 pages of a fallen world (p. 4 through p. 1173) is a dismal ratio. However, on the last page, 1175, a text about the redeemed saints reads: "There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5).

"For ever and ever"—that is, infinite time. Though dealing with finite numbers is hard enough—having read a bit about mathematician David Hilbert's work with different infinities (yes, there are different infinities)—I know that when infinity is introduced into the equation, weird things happen. And in this case the weirdness is great news.

Yes, a ratio of five to 1,770, with five the good and 1,770 the bad, sounds depressing. But a ratio of 1,770 to infinite time, when 1,770 is the bad and infinite time the good, creates another reality, one eternally in our favor. What is 20 or 50 or 89 years of bad in a cage fight against an infinite time of good? Divided by "for ever and ever," this dismal existence here comes to nothing, even less than nothing. Our hard lives end in a death that seems to us, when dead, a quiet moment only before we awaken to an eternity of the good.

In depicting the scriptural ratio between good and evil, God made the math work in our favor, infinitely so. 🍀

Clifford Goldstein is editor of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*. His next book, titled *Baptizing the Devil: Evolution and the Seduction of Christianity*, is set to be released this fall by Pacific Press.

CLIFF'S
EDGE
CLIFFORD
GOLDSTEIN



WHAT IS 20 OR 50
OR 89 YEARS OF BAD
IN A CAGE FIGHT
AGAINST AN INFINITE
TIME OF GOOD?

♀ Ukraine

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE

The Carter Report Celebrates 26 Years in Russia & Ukraine



Commencing in Moscow in 1991, John Carter continues to preach Christ's Gospel to the people of Russia and Ukraine.

• More than **TWO MILLION attendees**. Almost **20,000 souls baptized**.

• 3ABN Center in Russia was built after the great Nizhny Novgorod campaign of 1992.



3ABN Center, Russia

1 1991 – 1997

- Moscow, Russia (1991, 2009)
- Nizhny Novgorod, Dzerzhinsk, Russia (1992–1994, 1996)
- Volga Auto Plant, Nizhny Novgorod (1994)
- Kiev, Ukraine (1995)
- St. Petersburg, Russia (1997)

- Trans-Siberian Express – Moscow to Vladivostok, Russia (1998)
- Trans-Mongolian Express – China to Russia (1998)
- Irkutsk, Siberia, Russia (1999)
- Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine (2001)

2 1998 – 2001

3 2002 – 2008

- Kharkov, Ukraine (2002)
- Odessa, Ukraine (2003)
- Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine (2004)
- Kiev, Nizhny Novgorod (2005)
- Kazan, Tartarstan, Russia (2007)

- Volgograd, Russia (2009)
- Nizhny Novgorod (2009, 2017)
- Kazan, Moscow, Russia (2009)
- Kiev, Ukraine & Russia (2016)

4 2009 – 2017

TO GOD BE THE GLORY,
GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE.

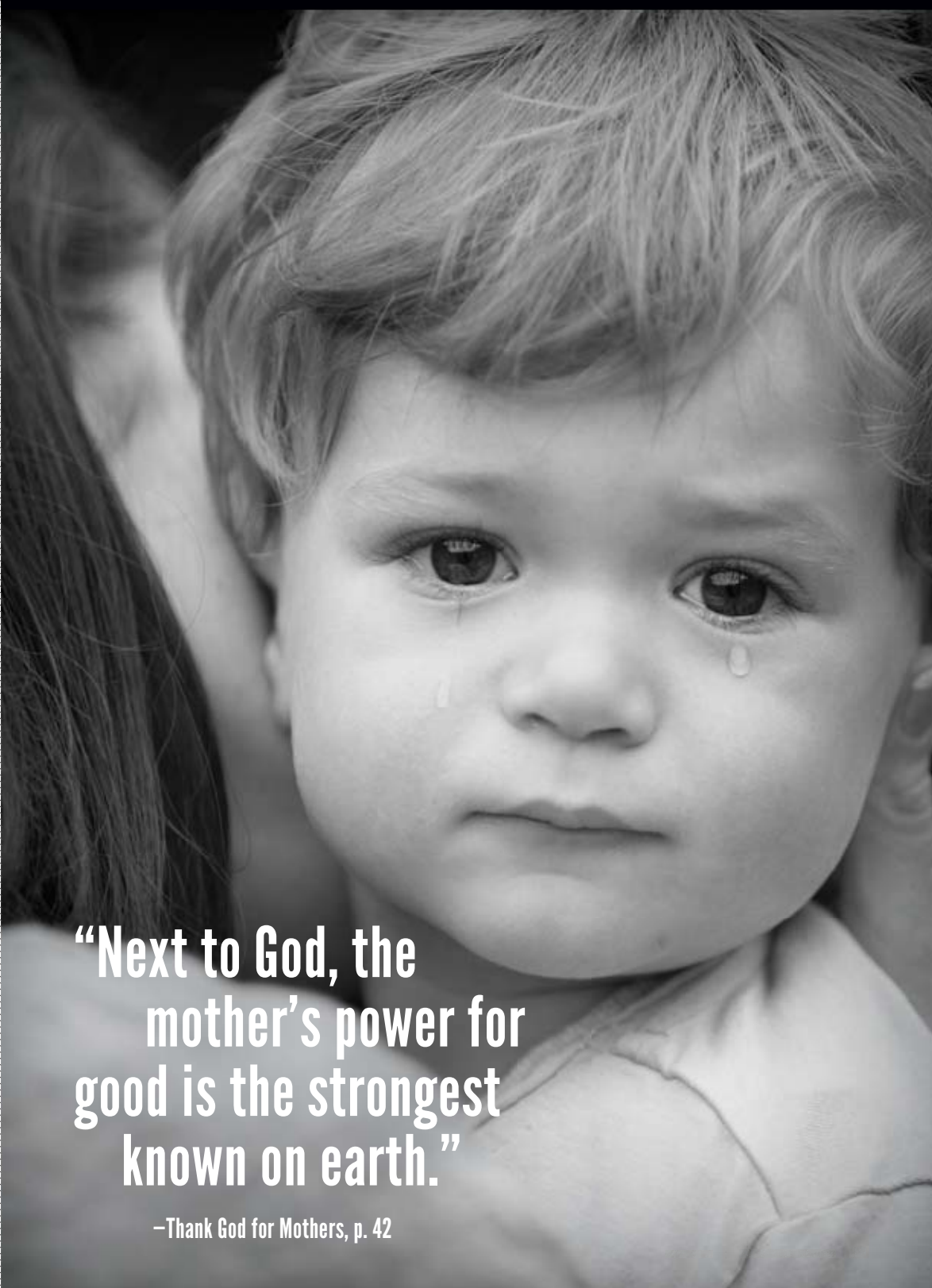


PO Box 1900
Thousand Oaks CA 91358
805.532.0038
Website: www.carterreport.org

ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- » FAITH AND FAMILY
- » THANK GOD FOR MOTHERS
- » FORGIVENESS AND RESILIENCE
- » GUILT
- » ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

CONNECT



**“Next to God, the
mother’s power for
good is the strongest
known on earth.”**

—Thank God for Mothers, p. 42

STRANGE GRACE

Not getting my fair share

ALAREECE COLLIE

When I was a senior in high school, I wanted to be class president. In the Bahamas, we called it head boy or head girl, although some schools chose both. If you were a head girl, your chances for employment and scholarships after high school increased, because you were a leader.

I WANTED TO BE FIRST

Have you ever felt as if you didn't get something that you deserved? I wanted to be class president, and part of the selection process involved speeches by the candidates to the student body. After I gave my speech, I was satisfied. Based on the students' responses, it was one of the best speeches given that year. I was sure that I would be chosen class president.

However, the decision didn't rest with the students, but with the teachers. And they chose someone else. They made me a vice president. What? My 16-year-old self began to think, *This isn't fair! Her, not me?* Others agreed with me that I deserved to be class president.

FIRST CALL

The parable of the vineyard is a fascinating story wrapped around the truth of God's strange grace. Jesus begins by stating that "the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard" (Matt. 20:1, 2).

In those days the workday went from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. And day laborers waited in the marketplace to be hired. The marketplace was a crowded center for commerce where public meetings, rallying of troops, even celebrations, took place. Day workers, people of a status just above slaves—some of them being freed slaves—waited to be noticed and hired. A denarius (plural





denarii), Roman currency and the wage for a day's worth of work, was often just enough to provide meals for their families for just one day. To be chosen to work was a major blessing, both socially and financially.

SECOND CALL . . . AND THIRD AND MORE

After a few hours the landowner hired more laborers. This was not entirely unusual, for sometimes the harvest's bounty required more laborers. The landlord sent the new workers in with a promise: "I will pay you whatever is right" (verse 4). At the sixth hour, noon, he repeated this process; and again at the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). Always, it was the landowner's initiative that made the working relationship possible.

One hour from the close of the day, the landowner stood again in the marketplace and accosted those waiting around: "Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?" (verse 6). Evidently the employer was aware of their movements—or nonmovement.

"Because no one has hired us" (verse 7).

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard'" (verse 7).

Is their last-minute employment a response to crisis? After all, the landowner always knew where to find them. The answer is that the parable's purpose does not go in that direction, as the day's final activity will now show. The story is not about bosses' provisions, but about employees' notions of justice.

PAYROLL CALL

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first'" (verse 8). So they came. To receive what was theirs they had to come. And when those hired latest arrived, "each received a denarius" (verse 9).

"How strange!" we exclaim. "One day's pay for one hour's work!" We would love it, wouldn't we? Some of us may have been stunned silent with gratitude; others moved to tears, or perhaps even leaping with joy. We can picture the celebrations swelling as each group comes to receive their pay: the 3:00 p.m. group—a full day's pay! The 12:00 noon group—a whole denarius again! The 9:00 a.m. group—a whole day's salary! What excitement in the vineyard! What delight as each indi-

He simply delights in bestowing good on others. His generosity is part and parcel of the goodness of His nature.

vidual experiences this unusual generosity: one whole denarius for something they haven't done. How wonderful! How strange!

EXPECTATIONS

The 6:00 a.m. group observes all this: fiesta in the vineyard! Perhaps they are touched by the graciousness of this landowner. They may even say so: "Look at that! It's so touching—a whole day's pay!" They are touched and moved. But not for long. For "when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius" (verse 10).

JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

"What?" The smiles fall from their faces. The conversation quickly changes: "This landowner is unfair!" And they do have something of a point: they worked from the beginning, more hours than anyone else; they endured the heat of the day. I've been to Israel: I know the noonday heat. Then some last-minute group comes along for an hour and receives the same pay as they do. It doesn't make any sense! In this world, when you work harder you should get more; when you work longer you should get more. It is an assault on their sense of justice and normalcy. Their hopes and expectations dry up like a raisin in the sun.

If they had never witnessed the later groups' payment, they would have been content. They would have left thinking that they got exactly what they deserved. But they needed to witness it, and thus be confronted with the condition of their heart. Devoted as they were to sheer common sense, they needed to learn that kingdom principles are different. Their sense of justice and ours is often shaped, not so much by what we have, but by what we think we should have, especially in comparison with others.

If roles were reversed, would we feel the same?

If those hired first had actually been among those hired last, would their response have been the same? Would they have thrown their denarii back in the landlord's face? Perspectives change when we can empathize with others.

ENVY AND OUR SENSE OF FAIRNESS

We too may have witnessed circumstances somewhere that have tested our understanding of fairness. Seeing people given a raw deal can awaken our own resentment. But Jesus' story teaches that our sense of right and wrong may sometimes contradict heavenly principles.

The heavenly Father, the story's generous landowner, has a different perspective than ours. And we should thank Him for that. He declares, through Isaiah, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isa. 55:8). There would be no hope for us sinners if things depended on getting just what we deserve; the salary we are owed is eternal death (Rom. 6:23).

The landowner's message to one representative of the group states the contrast plainly: "I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?" (Matt. 20:13-15).

Jesus is asking whether or not it is right for Him to dispense His grace as He wishes. Here is a wonderful pair of implications: First, grace is His, not ours. No individual, no institution, is ever authorized, or even capable of dispensing divine grace. Second, Jesus wants to give His grace away to whosoever, without reservation, trammel, or hindrance: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17, KJV).

Jesus wants to give. And it's not because He thinks there will ever be something of comparable worth that we might conceivably offer Him in return. He simply delights in bestowing good on others. His generosity is part and parcel of the goodness of His nature. It is this goodness of His—His "bands of love"—that draws us to Him (Hosea 11:4, KJV).

EQUALIZING GRACE

When it comes to grace—glory be to God!—His understanding of what is fair prevails. In God's

strange grace what is good for one is good for all. What works for the last works just as well for the first. His summing up is no more preferential than grace itself: "So the last shall be first, and the first last" (Matt. 20:16, KJV).

Promotions and demotions depend exclusively on our relationship to grace. We are all first who recognize our need and rejoice in His supply. And we are all last who are impressed by our own hours or years of service, or size of portfolio.

Thus the similar conclusion to end an earlier conversation with Jesus' disciples (Matt. 19:30) after His exchange with the gifted young millionaire turned out poorly (verse 22). Against all our property-based, title-based, career-based, status-based evaluations, Jesus sets forth and lives out His kingdom principles. He and they erase all our categories of preference: Jew contra Gentile, slave against day laborer against free, male instead of female. In need and reception of His grace we are all at the same level, all needing the same amount—one denarius—for our salvation from sin, and all receiving the same one denarius of His generous reward to enter through the pearly gates into the everlasting city of His love (Gal. 3:28).

Our "Yes" to His call to labor does not remove us from the ranks of those needy of grace. And that is good news! His freely and daily distributed denarii are what Lamentations speaks of in declaring that "because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23). The mercies of His grace are fresh and available every day of our lives.

FINAL CALL

Jesus told this story so that we may understand the constant, unailing availability of His wondrous grace. Rather than force or obligation, it is invitation that brings us to partake.

For me, kingdom principles are now so much more alluring than the moralities of my 16-year-old ambition. I follow my Lord because His grace has captured my heart. His grace has wooed me into friendship with Him. His grace inspires me every day to live the life of love that serves. I praise Him for this grace. This strange grace that has taken hold of me and will not let me go. 🌱

Alareece Collie is executive pastor of the Walla Walla University church in Washington state.



FAITH AND FAMILY

Mother taught us both were important.

CRISTINA JENCKS

Mama grew up in a small town in Portugal. As the third oldest in a family of six children, she was known as the hardest worker of the family. Working from sunup to sundown with less nourishment than necessary for a growing girl, she developed health issues in her late teen years. At the age of 25 she married a young man from a neighboring town, and together they had two children.

As far back as I can remember, my mother had a strong faith in God. During my early years in Portugal I remember many nights of her praying the rosary, attending Mass every Sunday, and taking catechism classes. Mother loved God and her church.

I also remember many doctor and hospital visits, as my mother was diagnosed with lupus. Her doctors encouraged her to travel to the United States, where knowledge of the disease and medicines were more advanced.

HEADING WEST

So at the age of 41 Cidália and her family immigrated to Milford, Massachusetts. The move wasn't easy. Her health deteriorated before it began improving; medical bills mounted, and my parents were forced to accept jobs in factories in order to survive.

Through it all, the one constant in my life was

my mother's love and her deep faith in God. We attended Mass every week and went to confession on a regular basis, and my brother and I attended catechism classes. Our Portuguese parish priest was a regular visitor in our home, often sharing Sunday dinners with our family.

Then one day everything changed. After Sunday Mass, our priest announced that he had some Portuguese Bibles (Catholic, of course) for sale. He encouraged anyone who wanted to buy one to see him after church. Not having any money with her, my mother asked my father to buy a Bible. He didn't think it a wise investment, so he denied her request.

But Mama wasn't deterred. Approaching her brother after church, she asked to borrow some money. Hungry to read God's Word, she didn't rest until she had read the book from cover to cover. She also encouraged my father to read it, which he did periodically.

Sunday dinners with our priest became a time of interrogation. *Why aren't we keeping the Sabbath on Saturday? Why are we encouraged to pray to Mary and the saints instead of directly to Jesus? Why do we confess our sins to priests?* Mama couldn't understand why the church she loved didn't follow the teachings of the Bible.

Our priest had answers, but they didn't satisfy my mother. She longed for answers that would quiet her troubled heart.

A MAN SELLING BOOKS

One Sunday after Mass the priest announced that a man at the back of the church would be selling religious books. The priest had perused the books and said they were very good. He encouraged his parishioners to stop by the man's table.

Mama found the books interesting. She invited the man to come to our house.

That man, Artur Oliveira, was a Portuguese colporteur and later became a pastor in the Southern New England Conference. He visited our

house, and my mother purchased *The Desire of Ages*, *The Great Controversy*, and some children's Bible story books for me (I was about 13 at that time).

She also had some questions. *Why aren't we keeping Saturday as the Sabbath? Why do we have statues in our churches? Why are we encouraged to pray to Mary and the saints instead of directly to Jesus? Why do we confess our sins to priests?*

This began a series of Bible studies that resulted in my mother turning from her Catholic faith. It was also the beginning of lifelong persecution from our very Catholic family. My father, a nominal Catholic during the best of times, forbade my mother to leave the church of their parents. My mother's grandmother encouraged my father to divorce my mother to force her to rethink her decision. Aunts and uncles badgered and demeaned her, saying she was being brainwashed. Mama stood firm through it all.

As my mother's faith grew, my father forbade the colporteur to return to our home or have contact with my mother. There were no Adventist churches nearby, and Mama didn't drive, so she spent Sabbaths at home, studying her Bible and praying. After more than a year of this, one Saturday morning my mother walked three miles to a bus that would take her to a larger city (without knowing whether it had an Adventist church).

After a 30-minute bus ride, she approached a police officer directing traffic on a busy downtown intersection. In broken English she asked if he would direct her to a church holding Saturday services. The officer, thinking she might be Spanish, hailed a taxi and gave the driver the address of a nearby church, really a small house-church.

ANOTHER FAMILY

The taxi driver pulled up to the Framingham Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church, and Mama never looked back. She found a church family that welcomed her with open arms. Although they sometimes had difficulty understanding her Portuguese, she had no difficulty understanding their Spanish. She was thrilled to worship with them, and within six months she became a Seventh-day Adventist.

Although she was repeatedly persecuted and ridiculed by family and friends, her faith never faltered. She shared her newfound faith with

Mama Ingathered at work, started a Bible study in her home, and prayed, prayed, prayed.

anyone who would listen. She bought Bibles and books to share, and invited people to come to attend church with her. She Ingathered at work, started a Bible study in her home with some neighbors and family members, and prayed, prayed, prayed.

Many mornings and evenings I saw my mom on her knees in her bedroom. Many late nights and early mornings I saw her sitting on her bed reading her Bible. She longed for my father, my brother, and me to follow the Lord completely. She longed for her friends and family to know the joy, love, and freedom that she'd found in the Lord.

She never forgot how the Lord had led her. She knew that He had always had a plan for her life, and she marveled at how He had worked all things out for good. When she passed away suddenly in 1998 at the age of 68, it was a loss too large for me to describe. I questioned why the Lord would take her at such a young age, why such a loving mother and faithful child of God couldn't be spared to live longer. And to my shame, I even wondered that if someone had to die, why her and not my oppressive father.

GOD'S FINGERPRINTS

My father was diagnosed with cancer two years later. He came to live with my family, and I was able to witness the Lord's mercy, grace, and perfect timing. Now my father was in a home where there was Bible study, prayer, and church attendance.

My pastor-husband and two children witnessed to my dad in such a way that, because of pride, he would not have listened to his own wife and daughter. As he saw his health deteriorate, he asked me to read the Bible to him and pray for him.

Mama's deepest desire was not to live a long and healthy life, but to live a life that honored Jesus, her Savior and Best Friend. The way my father changed in later years was evidence for me that God had honored that desire. 🌱

Cristina Jencks lives in Apopka, Florida.



take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world and for a home in the better world."

What image comes to mind when you think of the word "mother"?

"The mother is queen of her household. She has in her power the molding of her children's characters, that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life. An angel could not ask for a higher mission; for in doing this work she is doing service for God. Let her only realize the high character of her task, and it will inspire her with courage.

"Let her realize the worth of her work and put on the whole armor of God, that she may resist the temptation to conform to the world's standard. Her work is for time and for eternity."

"The mother is the queen of the home, and the children are her subjects. She is to rule her household wisely, in the dignity of her motherhood. Her influence in the home is to be paramount; her word, law. If she is a Christian, under God's control, she will command the respect of her children."

What are a mother's essential duties?

"The mother's work is given her of God, to bring up her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

"These children are to be educated and trained to become disciples of Christ, 'that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones,

THANK GOD FOR **MOTHERS**

*Practical applications
gleaned from Ellen G. White*

How would you describe the mother's position in the home?

"Woman should fill the position which God originally designed for her, as her husband's equal.

"The world needs mothers who are mothers not merely in name but in every sense of the word. We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man. Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God

polished after the similitude of a palace.’

“This work of molding, refining, and polishing is the mother’s. The character of the child is to be developed. The mother must engrave upon the tablet of the heart lessons as enduring as eternity; and she will surely meet the displeasure of the Lord if she neglects this sacred work or allows anything to interfere with it. . . .

“The Christian mother has her God-appointed work, which she will not neglect if she is closely connected with God and imbued with His Spirit.”

What about “stay-at-home moms”?

“If married men go into the work, leaving their wives to care for the children at home, the wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as the husband and father. . . .

“Her work is a solemn and important one. . . . The husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor. But if she works for the best interest of her family, seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world.

“God does not see things as man’s finite vision views them.”

Would you say that motherhood is a calling?

“The Christian mother’s sphere of usefulness should not be narrowed by her domestic life. The salutary influence which she exerts in the home circle she may and will make felt in more widespread usefulness in her neighborhood and in the church of God. Home is not a prison to the devoted wife and mother.”

“Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and, in the strength and fear of God, take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world and for a fitness for the better world. We address Christian mothers. We entreat that you feel your responsibility as mothers and that you live not to please yourselves, but to glorify God.”

“The world teems with corrupting influences. Fashion and custom exert a strong power over the young. If the mother fails in her duty to instruct, guide, and restrain, her children will naturally accept the evil and turn from the good. Let every mother go often to her Savior with the prayer,

The tenderest earthly tie is that between the mother and her child.

“Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?”

Say a little more about a mother’s sphere of influence.

“The sphere of the mother may be humble; but her influence, united with the father’s, is as abiding as eternity. Next to God, the mother’s power for good is the strongest known on earth.”

“The mother’s influence is an unceasing influence; and if it is always on the side of right, her children’s characters will testify to her moral earnestness and worth. Her smile, her encouragement, may be an inspiring force. She may bring sunshine to the heart of her child by a word of love, a smile of approval.”

“To fashion a character after the heavenly Model requires much faithful, earnest, persevering labor; but it will pay, for God is a rewarder of all well-directed labor in securing the salvation of souls.”

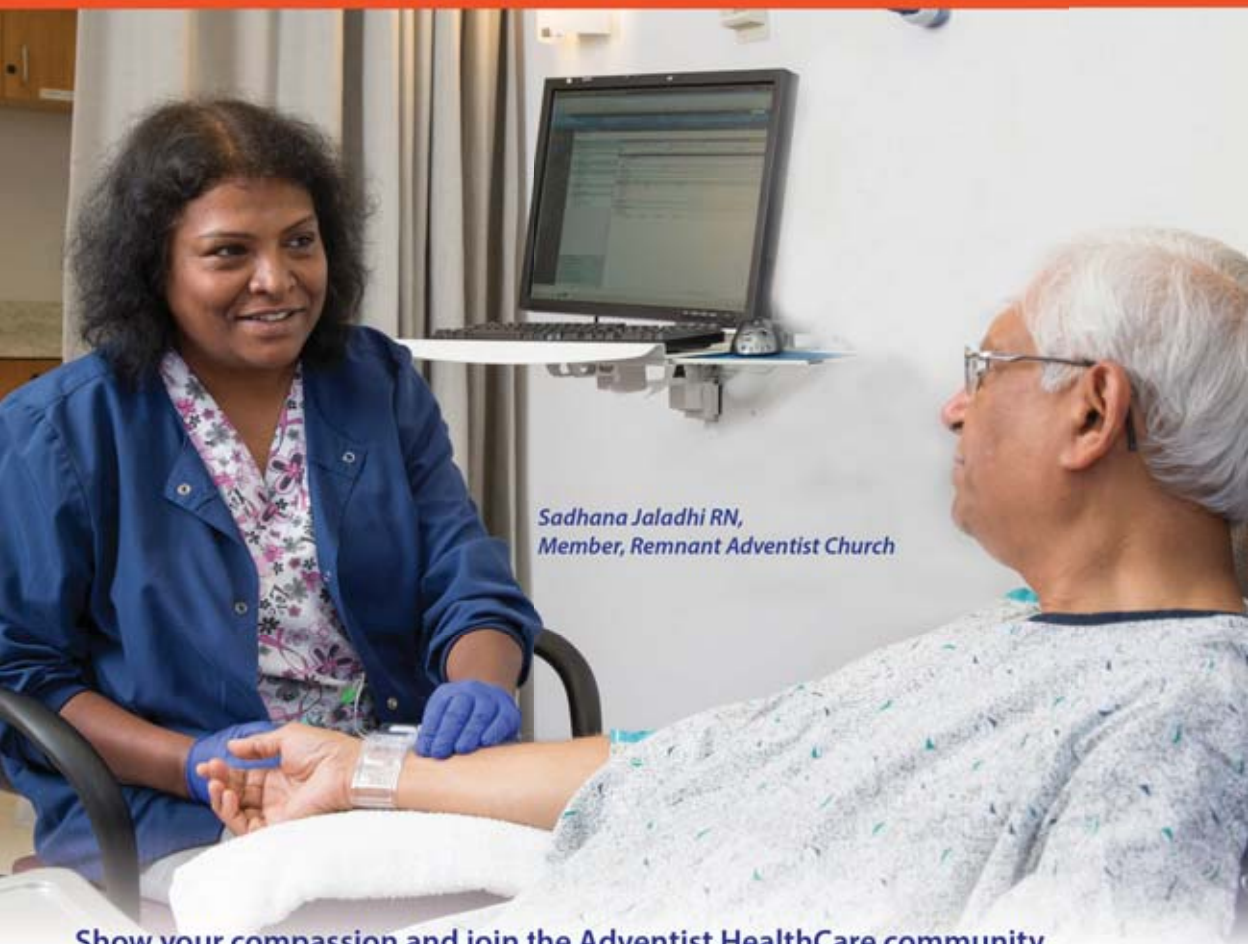
“The tenderest earthly tie is that between the mother and her child. The child is more readily impressed by the life and example of the mother than by that of the father, for a stronger and more tender bond of union unites them.”

As a mother yourself, how would you counsel today’s mothers?

“Mothers, awake to the fact that your influence and example are affecting the character and destiny of your children; and in view of your responsibility, develop a well-balanced mind and a pure character, reflecting only the true, the good, and the beautiful.” 🌱

These excerpts are taken from *The Adventist Home* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952), pages 231-237, 240, 243. Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

Caring Hearts. Skilled Hands.



*Sadhana Jaladhi RN,
Member, Remnant Adventist Church*

Show your compassion and join the Adventist HealthCare community in the heart of the Columbia Union Conference and near Washington, D.C. and the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference. Our team of nurses is dedicated to caring for each patient's physical, mental and spiritual health.

Learn about our nursing openings at [AdventistHealthCare.com/Careers](https://www.adventisthealthcare.com/careers).

 Adventist
HealthCare

Care.
Compassion.
Community.

FORGIVENESS AND RESILIENCE

There are first impressions we never forget. Sometimes we wonder: *Where are they now? Are they well?* Not long ago, while attending a teaching conference in Colorado, I got the answer to those questions from a first impression I never forgot.

Reagan sat very still, in the back-corner desk, carefully observing students walking into my public speaking course at the university. I noticed her response to what she saw: hands smoothing down her hair, a feeble attempt to cover the wrinkles on her clothes. On her desk: only a pencil, a few pieces of paper and a pencil, nothing else. During introductions students shared “something unique about themselves.” I remember her quiet voice: “Reagan. First semester. Forgiven and resilient.” *How curious.*

A week later Reagan visits my office, and we speak about the semester. Public speaking is difficult for her. “I’m not like my peers; my experiences are different. I am not seen or heard, yet. I enjoy the lectures, but I’m dropping the class. I’m not ready.” I encourage her to reconsider.

As she leaves the office, I head to my next appointment: observing a colleague chaplain lead a community drug recovery support group. My colleague has asked me to observe and evaluate his work. As I drive, I think about Reagan’s introduction: “forgiven and resilient.” *What can I not see? What am I not hearing?*

That evening I sit in the back of a small, dimly lit space, folding chairs placed in a familiar classroom style. Individuals attending share their life journeys: triggers, relapses, kindness, role models. Then a familiar face stands up to share: Reagan. She speaks of forgiveness, sobri-

ety, a new job, and a church community. “God forgave me. I pray for resilience. I read being resilient meant going back to your original form after being broken. I pray that others will see me, hear me, and not let my past blur the fact that God has a plan for me.”

Resilient: searching for another opportunity to be heard and seen as she is now: forgiven.

At the end of the evening, as I try to exit the meeting unnoticed, my chaplain colleague walks me out. I commend his dedication, then ask a favor: “Remind Reagan that class begins at 10:00 a.m.”

Next morning at 9:55 I walk into the classroom and see Reagan sitting at the front of the class: ready to be seen and heard, for what she has to say is more valuable than imagined.

Five years later, Colorado, I stand in line at a popular fresh produce market. I watch as the store manager, a pleasant person, walks through the lines greeting people. Then I feel a tap on my shoulder. *Reagan!* She is part of making things grow, meeting farmers who work the land and appreciate the resilience of soil that always yields fruit. Reagan: a shy student, now the owner of a thriving store. *Resilient.* She hugs me and whispers: “I believe God introduced us. Thank you for hearing and seeing me.”

I walk out of the store crafting a new definition. Resilience: forgiveness, embracing life, salvation, and having the grace to recognize it in others as a precious gift from God. 🌱

Dixil Rodriguez, a university professor and volunteer hospital chaplain, lives in Texas.



**“I ENJOY THE
LECTURES, BUT I’M
DROPPING THE
CLASS. I’M NOT
READY.”**



*Why
can't we
let go?*

SHARLENE WEDIN-LECLERC

As a clinical psychologist I help those who are suffering from distressing thoughts and feelings. Feelings can be quite tricky. After all, feelings are involuntary. They originate in the limbic system of the brain and often involve a whole system response, including an action-urge, such as fight, flight, or freeze.

Feelings are closely associated with our memories; in fact, the part of our brain that is associated with memories, the hippocampus, is also part of the limbic system. This close relationship between memories and feelings makes sense. It's important for us to remember whom we love and what we fear.

ILLUSTRATION © KRIEG BARRIE/GOODSALT

Feelings place a tag on incoming stimuli that let us know, “Hey, pay attention! This is important.”

Feelings are associated with an action-urge that propels us into motion. For example, feelings of love are associated with giving a hug or being physically close. Fear is associated with running away or defending oneself from harm.

All emotions have a useful purpose. Anger can alert us to an injustice that has been done. Fear can prepare or activate us for an impending threat. Love connects us to others and strengthens our social interactions. Guilt can alert us that we have committed a wrong and propel us into acknowledging our wrong and making amends. But while emotions in and of themselves are not either good or bad, our response to emotions is not always useful.

“I’M UNDESERVING”

I often hear stories from patients that highlight their painful feelings of worthlessness. Trials and tribulations of life reinforce their belief that they’re getting what they deserve. They harbor deep-seated feelings of guilt and shame that taunt them. They see themselves as irreversibly damaged, broken.

People respond to these feelings in various ways. Some lash out at the world in anger and aggression, perhaps to protect as well as fight further damage. Others put up a front, showing the world that they have their act together, but deep down inside they feel like impostors. Any tear of the mask might reveal their true damaged self. They conclude, “I am undeserving.”

When actions are based on merit, you get what you deserve. If I study hard for an exam, I expect to make a good grade. If I do a job for a wage, I expect to get paid. I am the initiator of the action and reap my earned reward.

Gifts, on the other hand, are not earned. Gifts stem from an action-urge experienced by the giver. Gift giving, however, can be fulfilled only if the gift is received.

But what if the receiver of the gift does not deserve it? Those burdened by feelings of guilt and worthlessness may reject the gift based on these feelings, concluding that they do not deserve it. To be the receiver of a gift we do not deserve is a challenge we all face. The Bible tells us, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not

perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).^{*} This is the ultimate gift given out of love by God. God’s action-urge toward us was to give His own Son in payment for our sin.

TRANSFERRING GUILT

We are all undeserving. The Old Testament sanctuary service provided the Israelites with a graphic, experiential practice to teach both the cost and the transfer of sin to an unblemished recipient. Sinners, in response to guilt and condemnation that come from wrongdoing, brought a sacrifice to the Temple. When the sinner confessed the sin and laid hands on the unblemished sacrifice, the sin was transferred from the sinner to the sacrifice. The transfer of guilt was ultimately borne by Christ at His death on the cross. This is the ultimate sacrifice that John the Baptist referred to when he called out to the crowd, pointing to Jesus and exclaiming, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

Pardon occurred for sinners when they, by faith, accepted the transfer of their sins to Christ. This is the act of receiving God’s mercy and grace. It is not just the knowledge of God’s mercy and grace, but the experience of receiving God’s mercy and grace. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). When we can truly receive God’s grace, it transforms us.

Amazingly, God sees our condition and loves us anyway. The Bible tells us, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). Jesus already paid the wages of sin. We don’t have to get what we deserve. We can let go of guilt and grab hold of grace. “Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Stop holding on to guilt. When we truly receive the gift of God’s grace, it frees us from the bondage of sin and transforms us into the likeness of Christ. His Spirit within us allows us to extend the gift of God’s grace to others.

It’s time to start practicing receiving God’s gifts and acting like children of God. 🌱

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

Sharlene Wedin-LeClerc is a clinical psychologist living in Charleston, South Carolina.



ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

The rich biodiversity of Costa Rica was chronicled by a production team created with a partnership between ARTv and Stimme der Hoffnung. The second season of the popular program, Animal Encounters, captures stories of rescue animals and the wonders of God's creation. It is scheduled for release on ARTv in the fall of 2017.





◀ Seven cameras work together to capture a virtual reality 360° view of a spectacular waterfall near Alajuela.

▶ Season two of *Animal Encounters* featured some familiar faces. Gabi Pratz (right) from Germany and Cássila Carvalho (middle) from Brazil both appeared in season one. Carolina Trisca (left) is from Argentina.





A PALE HORSE RIDES

A Direct-to-Church Experience Coming October 27

A Pale Horse Rides is a live, three-part experience from the Voice of Prophecy specifically designed to bring people from YOUR community through the doors of YOUR church.

A Pale Horse Rides delves into the 1,200 years between the merger of the Christian church with Roman power, and the beginning of Martin Luther's Reformation. Discover a remnant tribe of barbarians who find Christ and grow their faith outside the confines of religious tradition, depending on the Bible alone. How they lived just might surprise you.

**Request Your FREE
Event Resource Kit Today!**

- ✓ Preview DVD
- ✓ Complete Event Manual
- ✓ Sample Resources
- ✓ Book Offer

Featuring **Shawn Boonstra** *Voice of Prophecy Speaker/Director*



Request online at **PaleHorseRides.com/Host**
or call **888-744-3212** today!

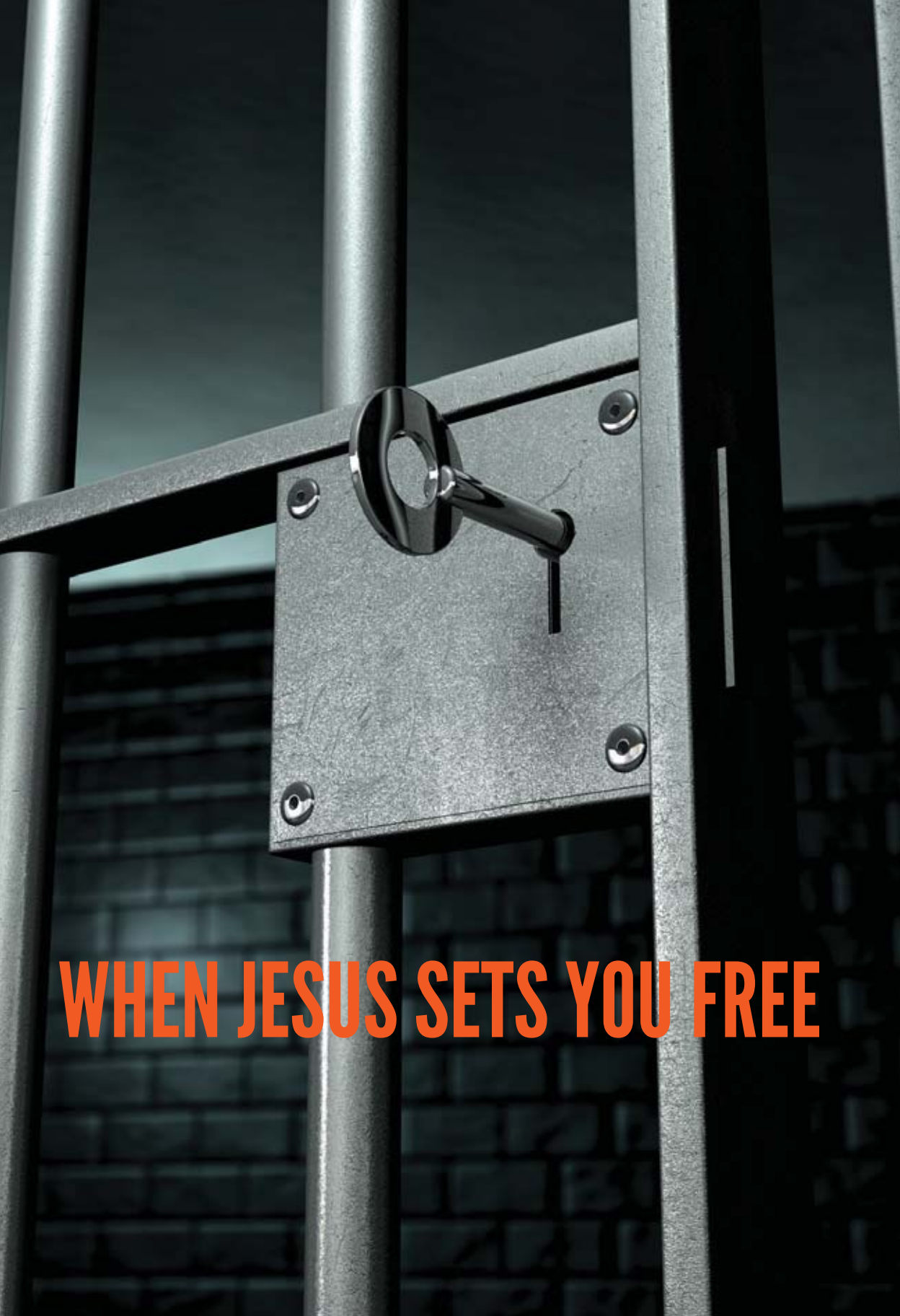
ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- » THE FACE OF GRACE
- » GRACE: THE MIRACLE COMPLETE
- » EXPERIENTIAL RELIGION
- » WE CAN'T GIVE WHAT WE DON'T HAVE

ENGAGE

“We serve a God who hears the prayer that falters toward the precipice of doubt and unbelief. He hears that prayer as it is translated into the language of heaven by the Holy Spirit.”





WHEN JESUS SETS YOU FREE

JOHN K. MCVAY

Peter is sleeping soundly, so he doesn't see the angel of the Lord appear, or experience the eerie, glorious light that surrounds him in the rocky dungeon. He awakens—to a degree—when the angel cuffs him in the side and issues three curt commands: "Get up quickly." "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." "Wrap your coat around you and follow me" (Acts 12:7, 8).¹

Peter obeys, but he is in a daze. Peter and his angelic escort slip out of the tomblike prison, past sets of guards and heavy gates. When Peter comes to himself, he says (to himself!), "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting" (verse 11). Peter's execution has not only been scheduled but advertised. Posters have gone up on the stately columns of the forum. Food vendors have already, in these early-morning hours, begun to set up shop.

LOOKING FOR THE (PRAYER) BAND

Having been effortlessly sprung from Herod's massive, rocky prison, Peter hikes quickly across town to Mary's house, "where many were gathered together and were praying" (verse 12). He assumes his friends are there and wishes to share the good news that Jesus has acted on their behalf. Members of an earlier prayer band, meeting on a similar occasion, had prayed in the exalted language of the fourth commandment (Acts 4:23-31). It's hard to imagine that the prayers ascending now for Peter are less earnest, eloquent, or biblical. If we could listen in we would be moved by their passionate, powerful, poignant petitions.

There is a problem, though: one that is at the heart of our story. Luke crafts his narrative to highlight it and uses humor to help us understand it: The eloquent prayers on their lips do not resonate fully with the convictions in their hearts. Their prayers are full of faith and buoyant expectation. Their hearts are not.

Peter approaches Mary's house. A sizable group is gathered in what is likely a spacious

home, arranged in the usual Greco-Roman style. The entrance opens onto an atrium lit by an opening in the roof and surrounded by various rooms and hallways. Since there seems to be some distance between the gate and where the group is gathered, they may be assembled back in the corner, in the dining room. The leftovers of a hasty meal are still on the table as they intercede for Peter.

UNWELCOME AT THE (PRAYER) BAND

The gatekeeper, Rhoda the slave girl, is attentive. When Peter knocks at the gate, she runs toward it. Looking through the iron lattice of the gate, she can see who is standing there. His identity is confirmed by his voice as he calls out. With prayers of intercession, ones dripping with worry, ringing in her young ears, Rhoda judges it selfish of her to welcome Peter. Instead, she dashes across the atrium to the dining room, flings open the door, and proclaims joyfully, "Peter is standing at the gate!"

She expects the news to be greeted with instantaneous acclaim. She expects the crowd to dash past her, to throw open the gate and welcome Peter. Instead, she finds herself needing to offer an extended defense of her announcement. The members of that prayer band are dismissive of her and her declaration. She is, after all, only a slave girl. "You," they say, "are out of your mind!" (Acts 12:15).

Being a slave girl, Rhoda is used to dismissive attitudes. But this slave girl has backbone. She does not capitulate. She fires back. She keeps insisting, "Peter is at the gate!" She makes her point effectively enough that the others cannot deny her eyewitness report. Nonetheless, they are convinced that the exalted Jesus will not act to free Peter. So convinced that they reach for a convoluted theological argument to explain away the obvious conviction of this eyewitness. They say, "It is his angel!" (verse 15).

Meanwhile, out in the street, at the gate, Peter himself is being insistent. He is knocking on—perhaps even rattling—Mary's gate. He is calling out with increasing volume. In that moment the action—or rather inaction—of the members

of that prayer band is powerfully revealing: They do not actively believe the premise of their eloquent prayers: that Jesus, exalted on the throne of the cosmos, hears and answers such requests.²

LOCKED OUT: BUT WHY?

Luke, the able storyteller, employs comedy here. He flashes a scene on the screen of his story, one familiar in the media of his day—the scene of a running slave—and he couples it with an anecdote common in the time, a “knock, knock” joke.³ Luke tells his true story in a way meant to trigger a reaction from his audience. They are to laugh, to catch the comedy, to hear the humor.

And a funny story it is! In scene one (verses 6-11) Peter discovers that it is rather easy to escape from Herod’s massive prison. It practically happens in your sleep. The chains melt off your wrists. The guards are all anesthetized, frozen in time. Doors and the final, large iron gate swing open effortlessly without a squeak. Before you know it, you find yourself waking up in the middle of the street. It’s easy to break out of jail!

In scene two (verses 12-17) Peter experiences how difficult it can be to break into church. He knocks and knocks. He cries out again and again. A just-escaped and easily identifiable prisoner is left stranded in the street. In fact, he never seems to have gotten

It may be easy to break out of jail, but it can be tough to break into church!

in. After a hasty report and little exhortation in the street, he is gone. It may be easy to break out of jail, but it can be tough to break into church!

When the laughter subsides, something important happens. The comedic timing is right, and we get it: the joke is on us. We are laughing at ourselves. Here in the heart of Acts we confront a central and durable problem of Christian discipleship. How often does the eloquence of our prayers find an empty echo in the cavern of our hearts? How often have our professions found a mismatch in our actions? How often have we experienced the post-Resurrection malaise? Of course Jesus is risen. But what difference does that make?

In that moment of painful self-knowledge we

drop to our knees in that dining room at Mary’s gate, in Peter’s cavernous prison, and pray a different kind of prayer. An earthy, quiet, simple prayer of repentance: “Lord, we believe—don’t we? Help Thou our unbelief.”

GOD AND US: BAD (AND OTHER) NEWS

The story, then, discloses some bad news about us. Blessedly, it also shares some powerfully good news about the God we serve. We recall James 5:16, which reads: “The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results” (NLT).⁴ We sometimes retranslate it, “The insincere and unbelieving prayer of a wavering disciple accomplishes nothing.” Our story suggests that is not true.

We serve a God who hears the prayer that falters toward the precipice of doubt and unbelief. He hears that prayer as it is translated into the language of heaven by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26, 27). The prayers of that early Christian small group are rooted in unbelief. The sublime language of their prayers belies the faithlessness in their hearts. Yet—and please don’t miss this—the risen Jesus, our gracious Lord, hears and answers those prayers anyway.

The point of the story? In their myopia, in their failure to truly believe in the cosmic lordship of Jesus, the church is locked up in a prison of doubt far more intimidating than Herod’s rocky cavern. Here, though, is the wonderful and amazing news: No prison, not a craggy dungeon, and not the more intimidating prison of our doubt, is immune to the Lordship of Jesus. You see, “if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). 📌

¹ 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.

² “They did not have enough faith to believe that God had answered their prayers. Therefore, they concluded, the young woman must be out of her mind.” “It would be hard to find a better illustration of the unwillingness of even good people to believe that prayers are definitely and specifically answered. When Peter stood before them, they could scarcely concede that it was he. Yet Jesus had given the fullest guarantee to His followers that their prayers of faith would be answered (John 14:13, 14)” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 272).

³ Recent scholarship has highlighted comedic features of the story. See, for example, J. Albert Harrill, “The Dramatic Function of the Running Slave Rhoda (Acts 12:13-16): A Piece of Greco-Roman Comedy,” *New Testament Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 2000): 150-157.

⁴ Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

John McVay is president of Walla Walla University.



PETER N. LANDLESS

ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

ARE WE SAVED BY HEALTH?

Some people seem to think so.

Q: I have heard that the Bible uses the same word for both “health” and “salvation.” Does that mean that we have to follow health laws in order to be saved?

A: First, it must be made clear that no one is saved by simply (or painstakingly) following any law; we are saved by grace made available through faith—period. There is no salvation by works of any kind: no salvation by Sabbath; by diet; by exercise; or even by CELEBRATIONS, CREATION, NEWSTART, or whatever acronym used to describe health principles.

It is vitally important to understand this, since salvation is arguably the overarching theme of the entire Bible. We must get that right. Salvation and health are expressions of God’s love for us; their requirements are born of grace and bathed in the hope that one day we may be as God originally intended. Once that is clear, we have a context for discussing the issues of health, healing, and wholeness.

The Bible uses several words that are translated as “health”; so while it is true that the Greek word for salvation, *sozo*, as you said, is translated as “health,” not every word that is translated “health” is also translated “salvation.”

Health has multiple dimensions: physical, emotional, relational, spiritual, and mental (thinking/reasoning/knowing). From the viewpoint of the Old Testament, the Hebrew concept of *shalom* best describes the complete well-being that Adam and Eve enjoyed in Eden. As soon as humankind strayed from the God-ordained path, we lost this and needed a process to restore us to being whole again.

God provided a Savior, and all that we need, to accomplish His saving of us: rescue, restoration,

and renewal. The process of salvation is a healing process, so salvation and complete health go hand in hand. Physical healing can be thought of as a tangible and visible representation of the intangible and often invisible spiritual healing that is taking place.

Health, or “wholeness,” is the state of being perfectly and completely well in body, mind, emotions, relations, and spirit. It is a gracious gift of our Creator, who desires our total well-being. It is the end point of the process of salvation: complete sanctification and restoration. Just as the process of salvation requires our cooperation with our Savior, so does our physical healing. We respond to His call to live a better, more abundant life in Him and in cooperation with the laws of health.

We are healthier when we responsively link with the Source of meaning, live in a community

Physical healing can be thought of as a tangible and visible representation of the intangible and often invisible spiritual healing that is taking place.

of mutually sustaining and nurturing relationships, and lean into a future of hope and assurance. God’s message of health and wholeness is a message of love, and we have the privilege of responding to that reality and assurance of His grace.

Our prayer for you is that “God himself, the God of peace, [will] sanctify you through and through” in “your whole spirit, soul and body” (1 Thess. 5:23). Shalom! 🍌

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.



ENGAGE

THE FACE OF GRACE



Reading lessons from a church pew

KEITH HEINRICH

I have listened to and enjoyed many wonderful sermons, worship talks, and morning devotionals on the topic of grace. Yet none of them spoke to me like the story I read one recent Sabbath morning.

TWO NEW MOTHERS

I read it, I say. Its page was a pew toward the back of the church where two young mothers were enjoying each other's babies: bouncing them up and down, snuggling them close, and commenting about how cute they were.

One mother teaches at the academy where I live. The other is a recent graduate of the academy. They had both delivered baby boys scarcely four weeks earlier. Just a few months before they had been teacher and student. Now they were two young mothers adjusting to life with their new babies.

BACK IN THE DAY

I thought back over the years to when I was an academy student. How would any of my classmates have been dealt with had they become pregnant? It wasn't difficult to imagine. It would have meant the end of their academy stay.

So what had happened? For something has happened. Something has changed. But what?

I'm not on the school staff or board, but my old ears still catch whispers upon occasion: it seems that somewhere in November the faculty became

aware of the fact that one of the girls was pregnant. After a while the community gossip line was no longer necessary. As nature would have it, hearing gave way to sight. And how did the school's decision makers relate to it?

Their action was to let the young mother stay in school, complete her final year, and graduate with her class. It was not according to the student handbook. And the variance was not because the handbook was fuzzy on that point. The handbook clearly disallows sexual contact. If discovered, it may lead to expulsion from school.

UNPREPARED FATHER

When our daughter found out she was pregnant with their first child, she shared the good news with her husband. He was somewhat surprised and a bit unprepared. He responded to his wife, "Well, can we send her back?"

We all had a good laugh. We all know the answer: it's "No, my friend, you cannot send her back; you have taken the first steps of a lifelong journey." And for parents through the ages it has been a journey that teaches us again and again about God's grace and patience toward us as we discover how much we need to extend grace to our children.

Loving our own children teaches us so much about our own rules, handbooks, and discipline. Most of all, they teach us, in our own moments and seasons of inadequacy, about God's long-suffering toward us, "not

Grace never sets aside the rules, or tampers with, modifies, or lowers the standards.

willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).*

Do we stick that closely to our rule books? Did the academy toe the line as per its handbook?

No, we don’t; and no it didn’t.

Were the rules violated? Of course they were. Does that student think it was so fine that she’d like to keep breaking rules? I cannot know, but I hardly think so. In fact, I wonder how it would have been if some thoroughly strident disciplinarian had simply read her the riot act. I wonder if she would have been in church that Sabbath, next to her former teacher, delighting in her new gift, and beginning from the beginning to bring up that little one as best she could “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

GRACE AND PRINCIPLE

What fear does the very thought of grace inspire! What dread of the lawlessness that will surely follow if we do not nip nascent evil in the bud and promptly consign every prodigal to the fires of hell!

But grace will not be distracted from its course, because its existence does not depend for a moment on evil or the evil one. The pretender for principle who stands to accuse God’s filthy-clothed Joshua is no seeker after righteousness. There is no such vein or streak in him. He comes in anger (Rev. 12:12) and seeks to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10).

Divine grace is favor, not indulgence. It is principle, not pusillanimous compromise. Its principle is unbreakable—the principle of undying, never-surrendering love. The face of grace is the face of forgiveness: “Neither do I condemn thee” (John 8:11), a supernatural phenomenon that miraculously undoes and redoes the yesterday of all who believe. Grace never sets aside the rules. Nor does it even tamper with, modify, or lower the standards.

Instead, the God of grace, in honor of the rules,

and in cognizance of our utter inadequacy to keep them, pays the penalty Himself for all the broken rules (2 Cor. 5:21), and gives us ever another chance to be free, by Him, in Him. The face of grace is Jesus in Gethsemane, at the whipping post, and nailed to a cross on a hill called Calvary. The voice of grace is Jesus crying out “It is finished” (John 19:30) as evil is vanquished and salvation for all of eternity’s ages is secure. Hearing His voice and learning its truth is our freedom (John 8:32); and because the Son has freed us, we are free indeed (verse 36).

There are consequences that issue from our choices. They may follow us all through life. We are free to ask for relief from their awkwardness.

But the first work of grace is its ultimate work: grace brings salvation (Titus 2:11). That great salvation delivers us from the powers of darkness and translates us into the kingdom of God’s dear Son (Col. 1:13); it sustains us through the fire and flood of life’s vicissitudes (Isa. 43:2; Ps. 91:11, 12). And if, when we seek for respite, God judges that something we have not sought will be better for us, then He may speak again. And when we hear again the voice of grace we know that we live with the fullest of assurance and the sweetest of consolation, for His grace is always sufficient, whatever our need (2 Cor. 12:9).

REST OF THE STORY

There is much more to read from the story of that church pew; much to read, and much to dwell upon, and years of tales to tell through eternity, I trust. No sermon was spoken, no text read, no long exposition presented that day. But the vision that graced my sight still thrills my soul. I still find joy in the happiness of two young mothers holding and loving each other’s child. I cannot say for how long they will be together to watch their children grow, but I trust that the friendship of that foursome will last forever.

And even as I thank God for the grace of one academy’s administration that preserved one precious youth, I thank Him too for His amazing grace—so sweet the sound—that saved a wretch like me. 🍷

*Bible texts in this article are from the King James Version.

Keith Heinrich is a retired missionary who lives in Hutchinson, Minnesota.



as seen on  HopeChannel

16 TASTY, HEALTHY RECIPES

Recipes From:



Apple Roses

INGREDIENTS

3-4 red apples

Recipes From:



Beet and Lentil Hummus

INGREDIENTS

½ cup black beluga lentils, rinsed and soaked overnight
2 medium beets, peeled and cut into chunks
1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped

2 Tbsp tahini paste
2 Tbsp cold-pressed olive oil
2 Tbsp lemon juice
2 tsp grated lemon zest
1 tsp sea salt

DIRECTIONS

Soak lentils for 6-8 hours in plenty of water. Drain and rinse soaked lentils, discarding the soak water.
Bring lentils, beets, and 1 cup water to a boil in medium saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer 15 to 20 minutes, or until all water is absorbed.
Blend lentils and beets on high until smooth in a food processor.
Add garlic while running to finely chop, then add tahini, oil, lemon juice, zest, and salt; process until creamy.
Season to taste.

FREE DOWNLOAD at hopetv.org/freerecipes





*Words of
grace,
words for
healing*

HENSLEY MOOROVEN

Luke 8:43-48 provokes a question: Is the famous New Testament missionary-physician just another writer obsessed with words? That brief passage features three distinct terms for healing.

THERAPY

Verse 43 introduces us to the Greek origins of our word “therapy.” The woman of our story has been sick for 12 years. Now she comes to Jesus to be healed, to get therapy: our root word here is *therapeuo*. When you and I cannot stop coughing, we seek out a cough mixture. At times, we even need a shot! The woman around whom the story whirls came to Jesus first, it seems, merely to get treatment.

MAKING THINGS WHOLE

In verse 47 the second occurrence of a word for “healing” comes from the Greek *iaomai*. This word goes beyond physical healing (therapy) itself and its benefits. It means to “put the pieces together” or to “make whole”—at times, instantaneously whole. This points to the truth that physical sickness affects more than our physical person.

Because of her physical condition, our

GRACE THE MIRACLE COMPLETE

hero had to cope with a serious social challenge. Her first disadvantage, her gender, may still be an issue today, where women earn three quarters of what men do for the same work. But in her time the disadvantage was more grievous. A woman, in her day, had either limited rights or no rights at all. Beyond this, sickness such as hers simply amplified her hardship.

For today’s woman there is the possibility of access to—or better, the ability

to pay for—good health insurance coverage. But even those who do not have good insurance coverage are generally much less ostracized than was the case with our story’s unnamed character.

In addition to her social and physical challenges, she eventually encountered a grave financial challenge when, having spent all she had, she found herself no better (Mark 5:26). She was now a sick, broke woman. When one comes to grips with so many challenges, one would hope: “If only I could go to church on Sabbath, listen to my pastor preach an inspiring sermon, and meet my encouraging friends, I could face another week.” Unfortunately, the levitical laws prevented her from even going to church (Lev. 12:4)!

To worsen this already-unfavorable situation, some, during Bible times and even today, consider sicknesses as direct punishment of a secretly practiced sin. Consequently, those who are sick may be viewed and related to as cursed by God. In addition to this woman’s existing social, physical, and financial challenges, she had to contend with this grave spiritual disapproval as well. What was there to hold her together? How could she not be broken into pieces?

She needed that instantaneous, miraculous healing that consists of putting together the broken pieces of her whole self. So while she may have come only to obtain a therapy, a treatment, she met with Jesus, who picked up all the broken pieces and made her whole again.

THE BEST

It looks as if Doctor Luke saved the best for last. His third use of the concept of healing depends on the Greek word *sozo*, which means salvation (see also Luke 7:50). Jesus now offers her something far better than just *therapeuo* or *iaomai*. He offers her total restoration! The power to overcome not only social, physical, and financial adversities, but sin and the damage it causes.

This reminds me of what happened during an evangelistic series I conducted in South Africa. Three women who attended made their position clear to the Adventist friend who invited them: “We want to be physically fit, and we are accompanying you to these meetings only for the health nuggets.” Health talks preceded each of the series’

biblical presentations, and these women faithfully attended them all; they also stayed for the preaching of the Word.

Even though they didn’t commit their lives to the Lord during that evangelistic campaign, they were all three baptized a few months later, during another evangelistic series. Through their simple interest in health talks, they were touched by the transforming power of the Word of God. While they came for a therapeutic exercise, in the process they met Jesus, who not only made them whole but also saved them.

MORE THAN THERAPY

In this episode Luke teaches us that human physicians can provide care, therapy, and treatment; sometimes they can even assist their patients, however imperfectly, in picking up the pieces.

**Nobody
meets Jesus
and remains
the same**

But there are things beyond Luke’s medical competence, beyond the insights of our most refined psychiatry, beyond the reach of our best science and research, that only the Mighty Physician can do: only He can restore body, soul, and spirit to the ideal He designed for them when He created humanity. Only He can completely save us from hopelessness.

Luke’s story also gives us a pattern on how best to present the gospel. We should not merely present the public with seminars on how to quit smoking, or how to cook healthy vegetarian dishes, and fail to introduce them to Jesus, who can make them whole and save them forever. God has not called us to make healthy sinners.

At the same time, we should not be judgmental toward those who come only for the health expo, the “therapy.” We must continue to present them to Jesus, who, through meeting their physical needs, prepares to extend to them the gift of salvation—something more than just therapy; more than just picking up the pieces. Accepting all His gifts will bring them total restoration and salvation. One way or another, nobody meets Jesus and remains the same. 🍌

Hensley Mooroooven is an associate secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

WE CAN'T GIVE WHAT WE DON'T HAVE

After graduating from Union College, I moved across the country to a place I'd never really heard of: Bakersfield, California. My only prior knowledge of Bakersfield came through a class discussion my senior year with my favorite professor, Chris Blake, who affectionately (or maybe not) referred to Bakersfield as "the worst city in California."

I love Bakersfield. But having lived here for almost a decade, I can easily see why these conceptions exist. As you pass through the city on Highway 99—likely on the way to world-class entertainment, the beautiful Pacific Ocean, or a majestic mountain range—you're met with the smell of cows, the repetitive racket of oil derricks, and basically one color: brown. Yep, brown pretty much characterizes the landscape for 11 and a half months a year.

Except for this year.

Pounding rain up and down the Golden State ended California's historic drought. The vast amount of rain made the rolling hills of Bakersfield look like Northern Ireland.

I work in downtown Bakersfield. To get home, I have to drive about 15 miles east, ascending slightly on Highway 178, then dipping into a valley normally characterized by the aforementioned brownness. But one particular evening, as my eyes took in the lush green scenery, I couldn't help drawing an instant parallel.

LIVING WATER

In John 4 Jesus encounters a Samaritan woman, at the same well Jacob, the father of the children of Israel, dug hundreds of years before. Although both Jesus and the Samaritan woman were descended from Jacob's family tree, the mere act of speak-

ing to one another was a cultural no-no.

Yet not only does Jesus interact with her, He offers to quench her thirst forever. "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (verses 13, 14).

As I drove through Highway 178, I was reminded of the power of water. The normally dry hills had been transformed into a fertile valley, simply because the heavens had opened and poured life onto the once-barren landscape.

In the same sense that these hills cannot make themselves green, you and I—apart from the Living Water—are bone-dry. No matter how much talent, knowledge, or strength we have, our ability to pour into others comes only as we allow Jesus to pour into us.

Commenting on this story, Ellen White wrote: "Every human resource and dependence will fail. The cisterns will be emptied, the pools become dry; but our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. He in whom Christ dwells has within himself the fountain of blessing."

Do we ever find ourselves feeling empty, filled with theoretical knowledge that doesn't fulfill the desires of our souls or allow us to share anything with others? Drink from the well of Living Water. If mere H₂O can turn brown hills green, imagine what heavenly rain can do for us.

*Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 187.

Jimmy Phillips is executive director of marketing for Adventist Health Bakersfield.

INTRODUCING
THE WHY
JIMMY
PHILLIPS



IN THE SAME SENSE
THAT THESE HILLS
CANNOT MAKE
THEMSELVES
GREEN, YOU AND I—
APART FROM THE
LIVING WATER—ARE
BONE-DRY.

*One university.
One young adult
community.
Two approaches.*

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION

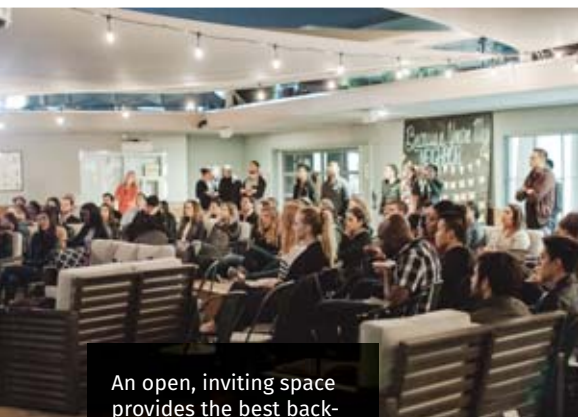
WILONA KARIMABADI

While a good part of the United States experiences the highs and lows of seasonal weather, southern California has always been known as a mecca for nearly year-round warm temperatures, sunny skies, and a relaxed vibe. This is certainly a draw for students from around the world who attend Loma Linda University (LLU).

But they don't come just for its 45-minute proximity to the beach. It is, after all, a world-renowned health sciences university and medical center that happens to be very important to the overall mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It's also a major employer for southern California's Inland Empire—to scores of Adventists and non-Adventists alike. As such, it's a special place with a huge potential for witness. And that is not lost on the spiritual leaders who minister to it.

With LLU's students and employees coming from an immense diversity of ethnic, socioeconomic, and religious backgrounds, how do you create one single, homogenous, familiar spiritual home for all?

You don't.



An open, inviting space provides the best backdrop for well-attended Praxis gatherings.

PRAXIS

Prak-sis: practice, as distinguished from theory; application or use, as of knowledge or skills. A set of examples for practice!

Tyler Stewart ministers to young adults for the Loma Linda University church. If you are a student or working in the medical center, you see the church, or will pass it, in your daily crisscrossing of the campus. That makes it ideal for Stewart's mission to young adult students and working professionals who spend time on this campus.

As part of a campus-wide renovation effort, a courtyard—just adjacent to the entrance to the church, and a short walk from the medical center and its parking garages—now provides a special opportunity for the community Stewart seeks to engage. There is patio furniture, tables, and a classroom with a garage door that opens up on nice days to create a more open space. "The idea was



Dialogue is a central focus of a Friday night Praxis gathering.

just that when I step outside of my church office, I like to be within arm's reach of the varied population and demographic that I'm responsible for ministering to on this campus," says Stewart.

Stewart's young adult ministry has also taken advantage of a new and innovative way to open itself to the university community. Loma Linda's Boba Tea House (boba are tapioca balls included in iced fruit-flavored teas that one slurps through a large straw) was invited to set up a little shop in the courtyard. During the week, as students and professionals pass through, they can pick up a refreshing drink, relax in the space, and get acquainted with the church in the most informal way.

"It was the opportunity for ministry to happen here, and for the entire church to feel more welcoming," says Stewart. "I think some students used to walk by the church and they didn't even know much about it. 'Is that a place I'm allowed to be? Is the church kind of off limits?' And now, by adding this and putting signage out there, it's spreading the word. I get to be up at chapel and let them know about what's happening [here], and they go, 'Oh. This space is for us!'"

And that is key for what the space is used for come Sabbath. A key piece of Stewart's ministry is Praxis. When he first came to University church, the church ran a young adult service called ReLive, which took the second service of the three offered every Sabbath morning. Sensing a need for a new and different missional community, Stewart and a few leaders

began meeting on the rooftop of the parking garage adjacent to the church on Friday evenings for dialogue, sundown singing, and worship. "We began discussing the felt needs of our spiritual experience, being on this campus and as young professionals. What are we missing? What are we craving?" says Stewart. It started with personal invites and word of mouth to the rooftop gathering.

The crux of Praxis, which now meets in the courtyard area of the church, is this: "The impetus behind the gathering of our community has



Service is a prime component of the Praxis Ministry.

These informal activities and fellowship opportunities naturally segue into places for witness.

PHOTOS BY DARCIE MONINGKA

always been 'How are we coming together to push ourselves to say we're not just navel-gazing over our theology or theorizing about how practical Christianity should look?'" says Stewart. "But how are we pushing ourselves and providing accountability to put into practice what we talk about, speak about, hear preaching about, sing about—all that kind of stuff. This is what drives our community."

Praxis gathers more than 100 LLU young adults on Friday night to welcome in the Sabbath in a way that is very accepting and open for people who may not even know what the Sabbath is. That's how the weekday tea shop/courtyard helps. After being in that space informally during the week, anyone interested would be comfortable with an invitation from a fellow student or peer to come back on Friday night to discuss faith, culture, careers, spirituality, etc.

But it's not over on Friday night. "Scripture is usually a part of Friday nights," says Stewart. "But we never assume that everyone coming is Adventist, let alone Christian. So we want to keep it open-ended enough for it to be engaging and to empower people to dialog." Then there is Sabbath morning Praxis Bible study. Friday nights involve the introduction of a topic that attendees are encouraged to dialog about and share thoughts on. Then it goes further.

"So we do a follow-up," he adds. "We use the same topic for a discussion base, but say, 'OK, for those of you who want to come back Saturday morning to look specifically at what Scripture says about, say, revenge or whatever we're talking about, or to look to a specific passage on what Jesus had to say about this, that presents a great opportunity to tackle something from a biblical, verse-by-verse approach.'" Praxis groups round out another component of the ministry, where individuals connect with others for daily/weekly interaction on varying topics, ideas, etc.

"With the younger generation, there's this real sense that we need to actively engage, dialog, discuss, and not just plop down to listen to a 25-minute didactic teaching, get up, and leave," says Stewart. "They want to be able to explore, interact, participate. So that became the core part of our identity and is kind of our calling card. The literal definition of praxis is practice over theory."



Connections hikers on a favorite outing—Oak Glen, California!

CONNECTIONS

*Kuh-**nek**-shuh-ns: the act or state of connecting.²*

We felt a strong desire to reach out to young adults of various faiths, especially since, on this campus, the majority of students are of other faiths, even though this is an Adventist campus," says Doug Plata, leader of the Connections ministry at LLU.

It's true that LLU is filled with students from many faith backgrounds, even those who don't subscribe to any at all. Thus Plata, who served as Student Association president during his time there, understood the unique spiritual needs and opportunities that presented themselves on campus. "We have people here from all over the world. In fact, we have people who come to our campus who are from countries where it's illegal to send Christian missionaries there. Yet they send their sons and daughters here. It would be sort of sinful to not take advantage of that situation," he says.

Connections as an outreach ministry goes about things in a practical and fun way, given the students it attempts to engage. While it started out traditionally with a vespers and Bible study model, it has evolved over time. One of the methods that



Connections Bible Study is an integral part of the ministry.

has proved very effective with students is staging activities. “Because our mission is to reach out to friends of other faiths,” says Plata, “we have different sorts of levels of activity. Really easy entry activities, which include hikes.” Plata grew up in the area and professes to know the best hiking locations around. Especially for LLU’s many international students, the opportunity to see the best of southern California’s natural beauty with someone who knows where to find it is not one to pass up. These informal activities and fellowship opportunities naturally segue into places for witness.

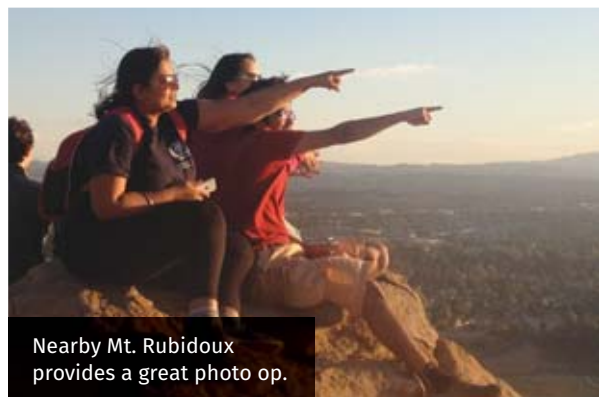
“Basically, we were doing experimental religion, and when we found out what worked, we sort of doubled down on that. And our hikes are definitely that sort of thing. We have identified the 11 best hikes in the area, and we schedule these every two weeks,” says Plata. Additionally, there are also occasional Saturday night socials, trips to places such as the Getty Museum or Griffith Observatory, Fourth of July fireworks at the University of Redlands, and even a four-day spring break excursion through the Southwest. One favorite is a hike to nearby Oak Glen, which always includes a visit to LLU president Richard Hart’s home and his pet llamas!

The Sabbath hikes provide a springboard to Connections’ Friday night Bible studies, which have proved to be a great setting for giving interested students the opportunity to go deeper. Dinner is usually offered before the group transitions to a Bible study that is often young adult-led. “We do want to make these Bible studies a place where it’s not just Adventists talking to Adventists, but a place where all can feel comfortable,” says Plata. For non-Adventist students seeking to understand what Adventists are about through Connections activities, these studies can be a catalyst.

Brittany Juergens, a recent graduate of the School of Nursing, wasn’t a church member when she

started coming to Connections activities. But when she became intrigued enough to ask questions, Connections Bible study helped her delve into what the Word of God had to say, something she found herself deeply craving. “I really think Connections is a great ministry to reach out to different people of different faiths because I feel as though people from different faiths can appreciate Bible-based studies. You can prove things through the Bible and ask questions,” she says. Juergens was baptized a day after she graduated from nursing school.

While a relatively small ministry, Plata really believes in the mission of Connections and its potential. “I want to introduce people to Christ, share with them the beliefs for the end-times, and

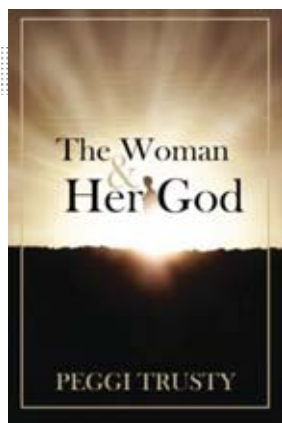


Nearby Mt. Rubidoux provides a great photo op.

the truths the Lord has given to us,” says Plata. “This is very much experiential religion, and it is about asking, ‘Lord, how can we better reach students of various faiths?’ I’m open to where the Lord would lead us.” 🏹

¹ dictionary.com
² Ibid.

Ardent Californian **Wilona Karimabadi** is an assistant editor of *Adventist Review*. She is deeply involved in the young adult ministry of her local church, Southern Asian Seventh-day Adventist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland.



THE WOMAN AND HER GOD

The Woman and Her God: Understanding God's Insistent, Extravagant Love, Peggi Trusty, Whole Heart Media Publications, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, 2016, 144 pages, US\$10.95. Reviewed by Stephen Chavez, assistant editor, *Adventist Review*.

I've had this on my "Books to Read" list for almost a year. And now that I've read it, I'm sorry I didn't read it sooner.

What the author does with this book is retell about a dozen stories about women in the Bible. Nothing remarkable there. These are stories we've all heard dozens of times (with a couple notable exceptions).

What was astonishing to me was to read them from a woman's perspective. The author's obvious affinity with women's emotions and sensibilities enables her to reveal a treasure chest filled with rare, polished gems.

To add to the narrative she weaves, Trusty has interspersed each chapter with Bible promises particularly apt for each story. As I said, we know these stories, but rarely with the impact they have here.

Also included in each chapter is a series of thought questions that helps readers not only identify the issues described in each story, but also see how those issues intersect with their own lives.

Peggi Trusty, a chaplain, instructor, and creative arts director at Pine Forge Academy, has produced a book worth reading and rereading. 📖

THE CASE FOR GRACE

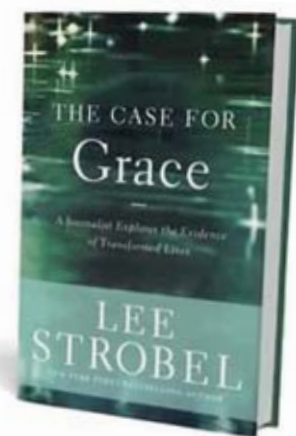
The Case for Grace: A Journalist Explores the Evidence of Transformed Lives, Lee Strobel, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2015, 230 pages, hardcover, US\$22.99. Reviewed by Stephen Chavez.

Lee Strobel is a familiar name among Christian authors. His books, *The Case for a Creator*, *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith*, and *The Case for the Real Jesus*, address topics so popular among Christians and those who are searching for something to believe in that his books regularly spend time on the list of *New York Times* best sellers.

In *The Case for Grace* Strobel profiles several individuals (including himself) and how their lives were changed by experiencing God's amazing grace. This book is easy to read and hard to put down; the stories are so . . . mysterious, improbable, inspiring, and breathtaking.

The reality of God's extravagant grace is on display in every story, every chapter. A discussion guide for each chapter is an added bonus, as is an appendix with more than 60 biblical passages specifically about grace, and a list of 20 books about grace by other prominent Christian authors.

The Case for Grace does readers the favor of taking something often spoken about in the abstract and making it undeniably tangible. 📖





AdVENTURE
FUND Global

(FORMERLY ICC AUSTRALIA)



A Microfinance
loan changed
my world...
but Jesus
changed my life.

Joanna
Philippines

GET INVOLVED
SHARE HOPE
www.avfg.org/ar

AdVenture Fund Global (formally ICC Australia) is a recognized supporting ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the SPD, SSD, NAD and is a member of ASI and OCI. AdVenture Fund Global funds 134 staff in six countries. Joanna was empowered by a microloan, started a small business, repaid her loan and heard the Good News of Jesus Christ's soon return.

Sponsoring microloans is a wonderful way of providing a hand-up, not a hand-out, for impoverished mothers like Joanna. Hearing about the Hope in Jesus, is transforming lives, while their small business is supporting an education and nutritious food for their children - giving them a bright future.

www.avfg.org/ar



THE FACE OF GRACE

We asked our readers to share with us a name (other than Jesus) who comes to mind when they think of grace. Here are some of their responses.

My brother, Isdar, is always ready to help me, my family, our friends, and others.

BACHIR, THEOLOGY MAJOR, LEBANON

When I hear the word “grace,” I immediately think of my favorite aunt, Grace. She endlessly encouraged me during my childhood and teenage years. Throughout my adult life she always treated me as a peer, though I was far from her equal. She died several years ago, but her influence endures.

BERT, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, CALIFORNIA

I think of my little girl, Belita Grace. She will soon be 3 years old. She has a doll that she takes everywhere. For the longest time, when people asked what the doll’s name was, she would answer, “Baby.” When she reached the developmental milestone of naming things, her doll was the first thing she named. Now, when people ask what the doll’s name is, she answers, “Gracie.”

CHONGO, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, MICHIGAN

While on an errand, I crashed the Volkswagen van that was his pride and joy. His response was gracious: forgiveness and acceptance.

Lester Cushman, physics professor, La Sierra University. He changed my grade from a failing C– to a passing C+ and blamed himself for scoring me wrongly when I plainly missed the mark as a math-challenged artiste.

CHRISTY, AUTHOR AND MUSICIAN, ARIZONA

At age 18 I met a distant uncle, Noel. During summer vacation he gave me a job, and lodging in their home. He blessed me with an income. Then, while on an errand, I crashed the Volkswagen van that was his pride and joy. His response was gracious: forgiveness and acceptance. An indelible influence of grace.

DAVE, CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR, SOUTH AFRICA

I think about my friend Fady. He assists me whenever I am in need.

DANIEL, THEOLOGY STUDENT, LEBANON, 20.

I think about my friend Jem Barintos. I have never heard him say no to anyone. He is always willing to help anytime you approach him.

DILIP, THEOLOGY STUDENT, LEBANON

Austin, my statistics teacher, College Place, Washington. The last time I took statistics class was in college 28 years ago. I studied hard, but my best was not good enough. I deserved to get a B– from his summer intensive class, but he gave me a B. That’s grace!

FERDINAND, PASTOR, TEXAS

I think of Sharon. Other than my parents, no other human being has been more patient, more forgiving, and more merciful to me. She has seen me at my worst and loved me anyway. She has seen me fall and helped me get up. Whatever successes I’ve had in life, I owe to the grace of God and the support of Sharon.

GLENN, ACADEMIC, MICHIGAN

Susie Henseler personifies grace to me. When I asked her for some [constructive] criticism, she replied that there were enough people unjustly finding



fault with me. So she told me only encouraging things.
KAREN, PASTORAL SPOUSE AND MOTHER, OREGON

When I say “grace,” my friend Stefano comes to mind. He has helped me like no other friend ever did. He stood by my side by opening his home and supporting me financially during my transition from Dubai to Lebanon to study theology.
KARIM, THEOLOGY STUDENT, LEBANON

Iadmire how my husband, Stephen, always has his antenna up to other’s needs. People don’t have to earn his kindness by knowing him. He sees strangers and seeks to meet their needs.
KATHLYN, HOMEMAKER, NEW YORK

Ithink of Silvana. She speaks gently to children and to those who are elderly. She smiles even when her eyes betray how tired she is. As a missionary, even though she is far from home, she always opens her loving heart to generously serve the needy.
MARIA, UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION, LEBANON

When I think of grace, my friend Bill comes to mind. He constantly helped the needy and always allowed Jesus to shine through him, even to those who mistreated him. Bill always looked for the good in everyone. In his eyes no soul has fallen beyond God’s grace.
MICHAEL, THEOLOGY STUDENT, LEBANON

My friend Ric. In whatever situation he is in, he responds in a way that reminds me of Christ.
MICHAEL, ESL TEACHER, LEBANON

My friend David comes to mind. Since high school he has possessed a servant’s heart and maintained a spirit of compassion for family, friends, even strangers.
RICHARD, PASTOR, VIRGINIA

My friend Dilip is always ready to help with his whole heart—me, my family, his family, the church community, friends, and others who don’t know him and don’t know Jesus.

SAHIN, PASTOR, LEBANON

She has seen me at my worst and loved me anyway. She has seen me fall and helped me get up.

Our dog, Autumn Grace, nicknamed “Gracie,” is whom I think of. We dish out a lot of grace when we come home and find out what else she has destroyed!

SHERYL, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, MARYLAND

Madelyn Haldeman, Greek professor at La Sierra University. When I flunked my final Greek exam my senior year, she said, “Will, I will not let Greek keep you out of the ministry. Retake this test. I don’t care how you get the answers; open your books and find the answers.”

WILL, PASTOR, CALIFORNIA

Ithink of my friend, Juliana. Whatever happens, she always comforts my heart with positive words. Sometimes she gives me something to make me feel better

YECHAN, THEOLOGY STUDENT, LEBANON

Gerhard and his wife, Maureen, come vividly to my mind. They have shown me grace every day. The love they have exhibited throughout the years is unique; for that reason, they have made me feel unique. Their many sacrifices to train me are remarkable.

YOUSRY, PROFESSOR, THE PHILIPPINES

The Making of a Miracle

Imagine yourself as one of Jesus' disciples.

Jesus has quietly invited you and the other eleven to a peaceful place to rest and recuperate. It's been a stressful month considering John the Baptist's horrific death and the recent mission trip.*

Yet the best-laid plans for rest would never materialize. The locals have overheard, and before long about 20,000 of them have gathered in the sanctuary of solitude.

So much for the retreat.

Jesus, moved by compassion, begins to do what He does best. He teaches, heals, and listens, all day long. Late in the day, you approach Jesus with a reasonable suggestion: send everyone home, or at least to the nearest village for dinner. "I have an even better idea," Jesus responds. "You feed them."

I've often thought about that moment. Did Jesus really think his disciples could do this?

Consider two realities.

First, Jesus knew that they had something to start with. "How many loaves do you have?" He asked. Regardless of the size of the challenge, Jesus focuses on the resources at hand. It sounds implausible to approach such a large task with such meager means, but it's also a divine pattern.

Recall the moment in which God speaks to Moses out of a burning bush. Moses is in a similar predicament, asked

to do something vastly beyond his perceived ability. Moses panics. God listens patiently, then simply asks, "What's that in your hand?" It turns out to be a common staff that becomes a powerful sign to Pharaoh that Moses serves no ordinary God.

Now return to the disciples. Jesus knew that they had something in their hand: five loaves and two fish. It wasn't a lot. But then, neither was a shepherd's staff.

The idea of beginning by starting small is a powerful concept; however, by itself the initial portion of bread and fish could never have served thousands. There is a second but primary reality that gave Jesus confidence in his followers' ability to meet the challenge: Jesus knew that His disciples had access to *Him*.

Jesus never said, "Go figure this out by yourselves." Rather He said, "Whatever you have in your hand, whatever you find to start with, bring it to Me." Miracles happen at the intersection of our ability to recognize what we already have and God's ability to increase its effectiveness supernaturally.

In other words, as you reflect on this story, be encouraged. Don't let the size of your challenge discourage you. Consider God's question: What do you have in your hand? What resource, skill, knowledge, relationship, or tool has God already provided? Once you've identified it, present it to Him and watch the miracle unfold.

*See Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9 John 6, and Exodus 4.

Costin Jordache is communication director and news editor for *Adventist Review Ministries*.

MIRACLES HAPPEN AT THE INTERSECTION OF OUR ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE AND GOD'S ABILITY TO SUPERNATURALLY INCREASE ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE
PRESENTS



SOQUEL CAMP MEETING

INTERNATIONALLY BROADCAST 10-DAY EVENT

FEATURED SPEAKERS MARK FINLEY AND DEBLEAIRE SNELL FEATURED SPANISH SPEAKERS ROGER HERNANDEZ AND
ARNOLDO R. CRUZ FIGUEROA FEATURED CONCERTS BY MICHAEL CARD AND BREATH OF LIFE QUARTET

JOIN US, JULY 13-22, 2017

ON HOPE CHURCH CHANNEL OR LIVESTREAM AT SOQUELCAMPMEETING.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONTACT 559.347.3000 OR EMAIL COMMUNICATION@CCCSDA.ORG
1931 OLD SAN JOSE ROAD, SOQUEL, CALIFORNIA 95073



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
Central California Conference



STACK & SAVE!

THE MORE CASES YOU BUY, THE MORE YOU SAVE!

SEE YOUR LOCAL IN-STORE OR CAMP MEETING FLYER FOR SPECIFIC STACK AND SAVE PROMOTIONAL WEEKS THIS SUMMER

3+ CASES



7+ CASES



5+ CASES

