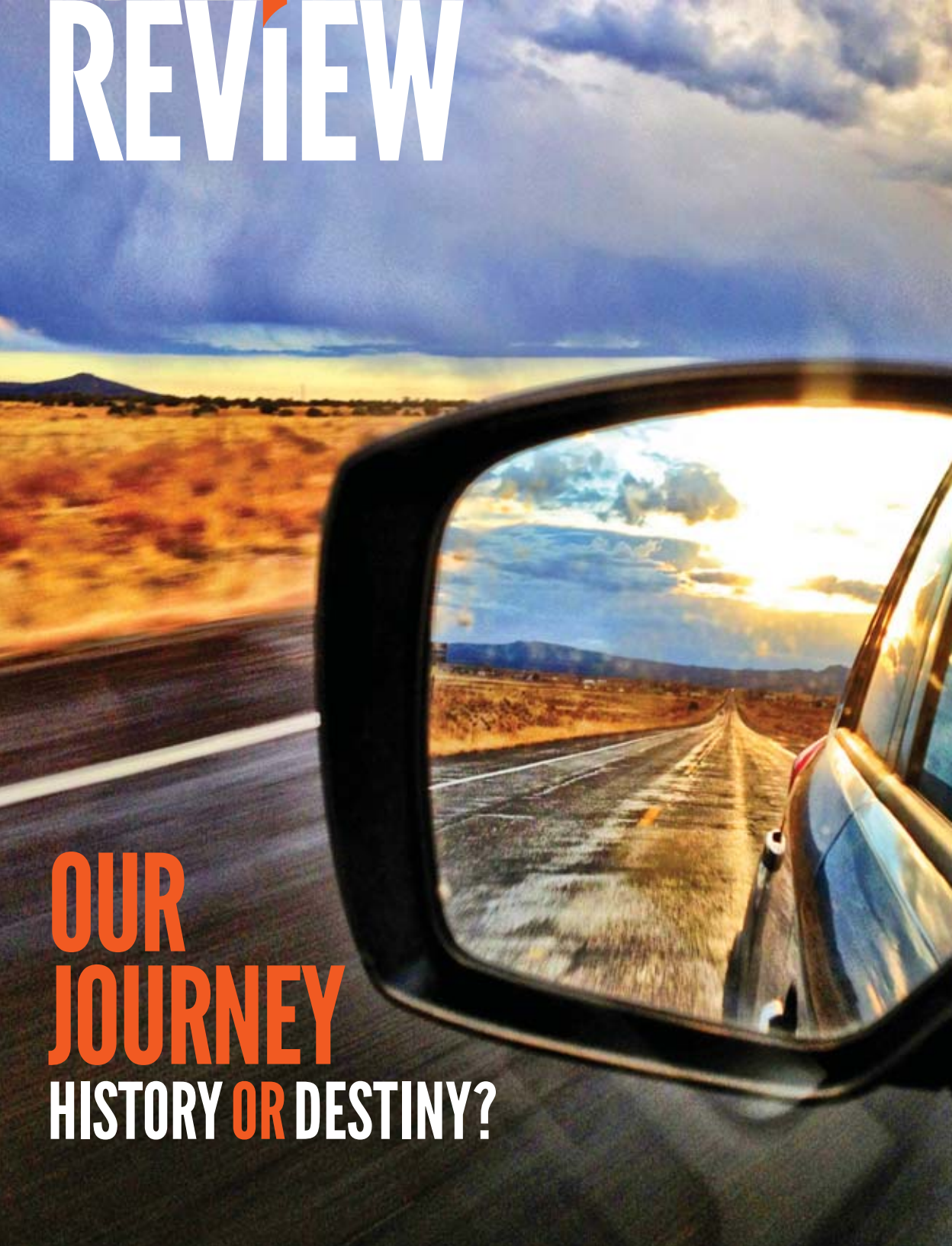


# ADVENTIST REVIEW

**OCTOBER 2016: BETWEEN YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW + SELF-CARE FOR CAREGIVERS + COMFORT, CONTEXT, AND CONVENIENCE + LET'S CELEBRATE OPTIMISM + VINTAGE VALUES**



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**E-mail:** [revieweditor@gc.adventist.org](mailto:revieweditor@gc.adventist.org).

**Web site:** [www.adventistreview.org](http://www.adventistreview.org).

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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.

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Twelve issues of the monthly *Adventist Review*, US\$26.95 plus additional postage outside North America. Single copy US\$5.00.

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

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# TRENDING

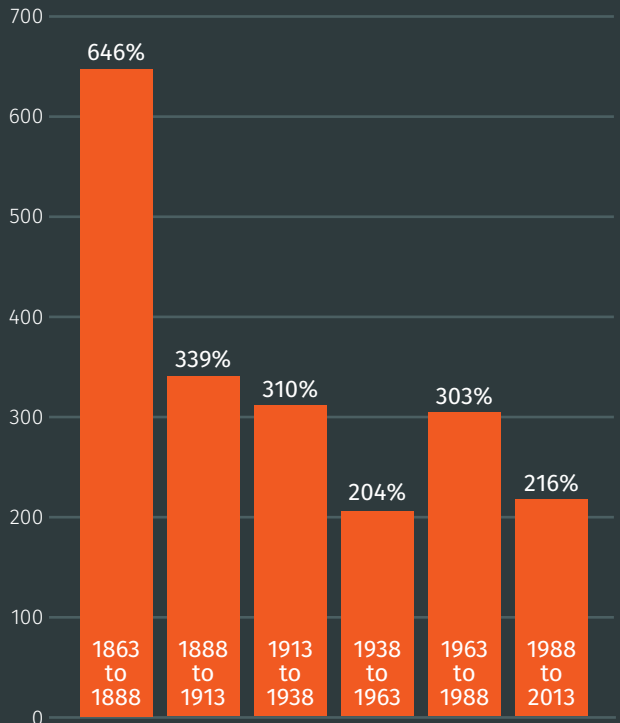
THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:



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## CHURCH GROWTH THROUGH THE DECADES

The Seventh-day Adventist Church experienced its largest percentage growth during its first 25 years of existence. Percentage growth since then has been steady, but has not matched those first 25 years.



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BILL KNOTT



*We needn't choose between the seventh and the Saviour.*

## Peripateia

It's still the most valuable book I've ever found on the bargain table.

Idling away an hour at an outlet mall bookstore, I turned over a hardback copy of Mark Buchanan's now-celebrated *The Rest of God*, marked down to \$5.95 less than a year after its publication. Among the dreamy romance novels and cheap editions of O. Henry already much mauled, I was first caught by the delightful puzzle of its title.

Was Buchanan actually writing about the rest God gives the weary—specifically, the Sabbath? Or was he writing about some aspect of our grasp of God that is unfinished, unfulfilled?

The answer was “Yes.”

I opened to Buchanan's introduction, and found myself uncomfortably described:

*“I became a Sabbath-keeper the hard way: either that or die. Not literally die—at least I don't think so—but die in other ways. It happened subtly over time, but I noticed that the harder I worked, the less I accomplished. I was often a whirligig of motion: my days were intricately fitted together like the old game of Mousetrap, every piece precariously connected to every other, the whole thing needing to fit together for it to work at all.*

*But there was little joy, and stunted fruit.”*

I started reading *The Rest of God* slowly, savoring the lyrical words of a gifted author who saved his finest syllables for

Sabbathkeeping. Within a week, I found a satisfying rhythm: I read Buchanan's book only one chapter per week—and only early on Sabbath morning, propped up on the family room couch while the house was peaceful and dark.

Two months later, I sat in his church office on Vancouver Island, absorbing the gentleness of a man who cheerfully admitted he was still learning much about the Sabbath. No, he didn't celebrate his Sabbath on the seventh day, as I did, though he was open to it. And no, I didn't celebrate the Sabbath so well as he did, though I had claimed to do so all my life.

“You Adventists have thought much more about the Sabbath than I have,” he murmured as he thought about the cascade of my questions. “I've only been a Sabbathkeeper for six years. I can see I have much to understand.”

Inwardly, at least, I blushed, knowing that his corporate compliment was sometimes undeserved.

For we are often restless people—we who carry Sabbath truth. Beset by urgencies we sense in the other half of our denominational name, we hurry men and women toward the seventhness of Sabbath, as though that were the only good. The Lord who bids us find His rest is bypassed by believers who forget to stop and savor grace—the sweet, slow resto-

ration of our souls that is His other goal for Sabbath.

We want His peace, we say, so long as we can have it *now*—without the long Emmaus walk, without the midday at the well—a pill we crave for anxious minds and knotted muscles. And so we fill the day we call “the Lord's” with things that must make Jesus weep—with controversies; gossiping; with surly elders' meetings; with digital diversions that keep us from the One who offers rest to those who know to offer time; with tight-wound homilies that stress our duty, not His graciousness.

*“So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God”* (Heb 4:9, NRSV\*)—awaiting our discovery. The rest of God—all that Christ is; all that He offers us—is just as much the truth we ought to carry—and to live—as on which day to do so. We needn't choose between the seventh and the Saviour, any more than we must choose between the fact of His soon coming and our friendship with the One who has loved us from all eternity.

Great joy is coming—now, and then. And He arrives each Friday in the west at sundown just as He will surely arrive some glorious morning in the east.

\*Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

Human trafficking alone is a cancer that affects millions of people around the world and causes physical, emotional, and spiritual damage that is impossible to calculate.

**SOPHIA BRADLEY**, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

## THE LEAST OF THESE

I was so pleased to see an issue almost completely devoted to serving society's marginalized (August 2016). Human trafficking alone is a cancer that affects millions of people around the world and causes physical, emotional, and spiritual damage that is impossible to calculate.

I'm so proud of the efforts our church has put forward to address this issue around the world. Thank you for including contact information about organizations that work to save the poor individuals caught in this web.

**Sophia Bradley**  
San Diego, California



speaking and one of our brothers' phone rang. He likes to sit in the front row because of hearing problems, and proceeded to answer the call! The pastor's sermon was about comedy in Scripture, and so he paused for a moment, smiling at the incident, and said to the brother, "Tell them hello for me." It brought down the house, for the brother never heard the pastor's remark. Some may handle this differently, but our pastor is a real champion!

But what if on Sabbath (or any other day) the phone would bring about onscreen that Jesus was in such and such a place, and take the viewer to a live report so you'd be able to watch Him interacting with others. Would we have enough of a quick reaction and hit the off button?

I was once told by George Vandeman when he spoke at an Oregon camp meeting that just seeing the image would enthrall you so much that you may want to stay with the report. He continued to say emphatically, "Turn it off, don't watch; it will be that deceptive." So best turn them off, at least on the Sabbath.

**Robert Rouillard**  
Lakewood, Washington

## WHAT TO DO?

Thank you for the article "What I Can Do" (August 2016). I often see people at intersections with their cardboard signs, the same people, week after week. They must get enough to get by, but I've often wondered if giving them money is the best way to help.

I appreciate the practical suggestions offered in this piece. They may take a little more time and effort, but I imagine the long-term effects will be worth it.

**Ruth Ellis**  
Orlando, Florida

## SERVICE

Thank you for "The Power of Culture and/or the Culture of Power," by Thomas Lemon (July 2016). I am reminded of former General Conference president William Spicer's remark: "There are no posts of honor, only of service."

**Bill Krick**  
Clovis, California

## SMARTPHONE MANNERS

Reading the July 2016 article "Smartphone Church Manners": I was reminded about a recent Sabbath when our pastor was



## When shopping, we should consider more than the price tag.

J. W. WATTS, SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

### FAIR TRADE

Nathan Brown's article, "A Fair-trade Faith" (August 2016), was an eye-opener. Like most consumers, I like to search for bargains. That often means buying products that are manufactured in developing countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Somalia. And while it's good that trade provides people in those countries with employment, that employment is often well below standards we consider humane. When shopping, we should consider more than the price tag.

**J. W. Watts**  
South Bend, Indiana

### YOUR TURN

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

### IN A FEW WORDS...

#### HER INFLUENCE TURNED 10 PERCENT OF UKRAINIAN TOWN INTO ADVENTISTS

This is such a powerful story with the principles of how to live the "Acts experience" in a simple way that will bring real joy to our lives and grow our churches too! Much prayer and members involved, loving and meeting the needs of those around them, just like Jesus. With Him living in us, we will impact our world! When we live the upper room experience, the explosion that happened in Acts will happen again. Jesus, help us to not just talk it, but live it!

**Jerry Page, via Web**

#### GRACE IN THE CRUCIBLE

Of the thousands of premed students I taught over my three decades at Andrews University in the Department of Biology, Andrew Roquiz was one of my best. A scholar in the highest sense of the word, he was never impressed by his own intellect or achievement. He was always thoughtful, humble, kind, compassionate, and helpful to others, truly a man seeking God's will in his life. I was blessed to catch up with Andrew's latest happenings through the skillful writing of Bill Knott. Thank you for taking the time to share this beautiful story of God's marvelous grace. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

**David Steen, via Web**

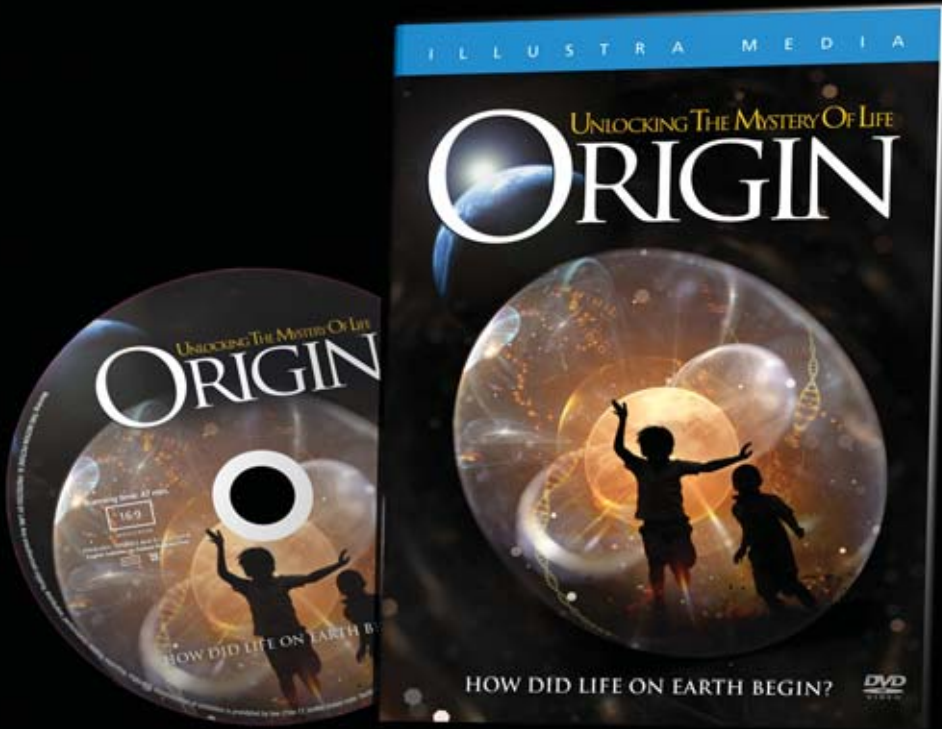
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Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation of the *Adventist Review*, published monthly at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, and coordinating editor are: Publisher: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Editor: Bill Knott, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Coordinating Editor: Stephen Chavez, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. The owner is the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, a nonprofit, charitable corporation. There are no bondholders, mortgagees, or other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities.

	Average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Single issue nearest to filing date
Total number copies printed	23,737	34,238
Paid circulation to term subscribers	18,978	16,161
Free distribution	3,613	17,415
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I certify that my statements above are correct and complete.  
Juan Prestol-Puesán, Treasurer of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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People attending the dedication of a new Adventist church in Kaping, Nepal, in April 2016.

UMESH POKHAREL

## NEPAL BANS EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH

**NEW APPROACH NEEDED TO SHARE GOSPEL**

**T**he leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nepal has called for prayers amid a state clampdown on evangelistic outreach, including the distribution of religious literature and even having a Bible in a Christian orphanage.

All evangelistic activity is prohibited under a new Nepalese Constitution that came into force in September 2015. Article 31(3) of the constitution says that “any act to convert another person from one

religion to another, or any act or behavior to undermine or jeopardize the religion of another, [is] punishable by law.”

“It is time to reconsider our approach toward reaching other communities with the gospel,” said Umesh Pokharel, president of the Adventist Church’s Nepal Section.

The constitution does not spell out what constitutes “any act to convert,” but the authorities have started to interpret the law. The Social Wel-

fare Council, the government agency responsible for approving foreign aid used to conduct local programs, has stopped approving Christian activities, Pokharel said. Distributing Christian literature invites punishment, and the authorities have warned the leaders of Christian boarding schools and orphanages that they face large fines, the confiscation of property, and closure if a single piece of literature is found on their premises. The government



## 749 BAPTIZED IN GHANA

A two-week evangelistic series at 74 sites in Ghana's capital, Accra, and Tema, a city located 15 miles to the east, ended with 749 baptisms, a result that local church leaders credited to the active engagement of church

members in Bible studies and neighborhood outreach. More than 600 non-Adventists attended the nightly meetings, a high turnout that church leaders attributed to Total Member Involvement.

also has banned adults for praying with children and giving them Bible studies.

The clampdown could expand even further, Pokharel said. "Holding church services accessible to all or organizing events to help underprivileged and disadvantaged people could be interpreted as evangelistic and considered a violation of the law," he said.

The Adventist Church has about 9,000 members worshipping in 26 churches and 16 companies across the country of about 28 million people.

Nepal's restrictions came as Russia also banned evangelistic outreach under new legislation. Adventist leaders in Russia have expressed hope that the vaguely worded law, part of anti-terrorism legislation that came into force in July, would not be used against Adventists, but said they were ready to assist church members accused of violating it.

Pokharel said Adventist believers have experienced challenges for decades in Nepal, a predominantly Hindu nation that has never officially recognized Christianity as a religion.

"But Christianity has been increasingly under threat in recent times," he said.

"In this difficult time for Christian community in Nepal, we kindly solicit your sincere and continuous prayer for all our believers, evangelists, pastors, and coworkers serving in parts of this country," he said. ▀



Parliament building in Abuja, Nigeria

SHIRAZ CHAKERA CC BY-SA 2.0

## NIGERIA ASKED TO STOP SABBATH ELECTIONS

**CHURCH SAYS MEMBERS DEPRIVED OF VOTING RIGHTS.**

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY

**A** Seventh-day Adventist Church leader has appealed to Nigerian authorities to stop holding elections on Saturday, saying the arrangement is disenfranchising Adventist voters.

Nigeria has scheduled local and national elections for Saturdays for years despite repeated pleas from the Adventist Church, which has about 223,000 members in the African country of 174 million people.

Oyeleke A. Owolabi, president of the Adventist Church's Western Nigeria Union Conference, said Nigeria offers religious freedom in recognizing the church's obser-

vance of the Sabbath from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, but it is depriving members from their right to vote.

"We are being disenfranchised," Owolabi said at a news conference in Ado Ekiti, a major city in southwest Nigeria. "We have written many letters to the INEC [Independent National Electoral Commission] on the need to shift elections from Saturday, and I know that it will accede to the request one day."

Owolabi, speaking at the opening of a five-day men's conference organized by the church in late August, said Nigeria's traditionally low voter turnout improved



Rosalie Adams being sworn into office by judge Nicola Bye, right. IAD

significantly when a recent gubernatorial election was held on a Tuesday instead of the usual Saturday.

“We have seen a situation whereby a gubernatorial election was conducted in the country on Tuesday, and I think the country recorded the highest turnout in history,” he said, according to the *Daily Trust* newspaper. “So we are begging the INEC to put the interest of our people at heart.”

Adventist Church leader Ted N. C. Wilson, during a visit to Nigeria in 2014, personally asked then-president Goodluck Jonathan to avoid holding both elections and state exams on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, thereby allowing Muslims and Christians of all faiths to worship as they wished.

The next year Nigerian church leaders appealed to the Independent National Electoral Commission to change the 2015 presidential vote, which Jonathan lost, from Saturday to another day of the week.

In other remarks, Owolabi called on Nigerians to work together to eradicate corruption and urged the government not to levy taxes on churches and mosques, which he said are not profit-seeking ventures.

He also said the Adventist Church would establish a college of medical sciences in Otun Ekiti to train health professionals and provide health-care services to the community, *The Nation* newspaper reported. ▀

## ADVENTIST GETS TOP POST IN BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

SHE THANKS GOD AND CHURCH.

BY ROYSTON PHILBERT, WITH ADVENTIST REVIEW STAFF

**A** Seventh-day Adventist has credited God and the Adventist Church with her appointment as the deputy governor of the British Virgin Islands, a top position in the British overseas territory.

Rosalie Adams became the first Adventist to hold such a high government post on the British Virgin Islands, with her appointment by Queen Elizabeth II through Britain’s foreign minister, Boris Johnson. Among other things, she will function as acting governor when the governor is away.

“This appointment reminds me of many persons God placed in my path to nurture me, including my late parents, my family, and those in the church and the community,” Adams said. “This high and significant recognition without question must be attributed to God and by extension His church.”

Adams, a public servant since 1968, recalled how she accepted the Adventist message 16 years ago after hearing a sermon by evangelist C. D. Brooks over the radio.

“I was listening to Pastor Charles D. Brooks on WGOD radio when he preached a message titled ‘God in Bad Company,’” she said. “The Holy Spirit spoke to me at that time, and after 40 years of service to the Methodist Church, I reached out to God for salvation.”

A local church member, Antoinette Skelton, arranged for her to take Bible studies, leading to her eventual baptism in 2000.

Skelton, director of the government’s Social Security Board on the British Virgin Islands, described Adams as a faithful Adventist. “She is true to what she says and what she believes and does not compromise,” she said. “We can be assured that she will always count on God.”

Adventists have assumed senior government posts in the past. Notably, Fiji’s first Adventist president, Jioji Konousi Konrote, was sworn into office on November 2015, about four years after his baptism.



**LLU ICON DIES**

Raymond E. Ryckman, a leading expert on Chagas disease who helped begin a long history of research endeavors at Loma Linda University, died July 18, 2016, just a month after turning 99. His 1950s

research determined how to protect U.S. soldiers from disease in plague-infested parts of the world, including a U.S. Army flea control program in Vietnam. Full story: [bit.ly/ryckman](http://bit.ly/ryckman).

**JUDGE REFUSES TO WORK ON SABBATH**

**NOT YOUR TYPICAL JOB INTERVIEW IN KENYA**

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY

A judge said during vetting for the post of chief justice of the Supreme Court of Kenya that he is a faithful Seventh-day Adventist who will not work on Sabbath.

Court of appeals judge David Maraga told the Judicial Service Commission, which is responsible for nominating Supreme Court of Kenya candidates to the president, that he would not enter the courtroom on Sabbath, even in a presidential election dispute.

“It would be very difficult for me to sit on a Saturday to hear a case,” Maraga said in reply to a commission member’s query about a hypothetical situation, local media reported. “I would rather talk with my colleagues in the court to accommodate me and exempt me from sitting if the hearing extends to a Saturday.”

Identifying himself as a staunch Adventist, Maraga said his practice was to worship God in church on Saturdays.

“According to the judge, only a matter of life and death can make him miss church on Saturday: for instance, an accident happening on his way to church, in which case he would stop to help the victims,” Kenya’s Standard newspaper reported in an article

with the large headline “I Will Not Compromise Church for Work, Says Judge.”



Judge David Maraga pictured in the Sept. 1, 2016, edition of the Standard newspaper.

JAMES OMWENGA / FACEBOOK

The Judicial Service Commission, which is comprised of Supreme Court of Kenya judges and other legal experts, interviewed Maraga as it sought to fill three openings

in the African country’s seven-member supreme court. Three judges, including the chief justice and deputy chief justice, retired earlier this year.

The commission’s recommendations are forwarded to the president, who, after endorsing them, sends them to the parliament for final approval.

Maraga’s stance won praise from Kenyan Adventist believers on Facebook.

“Wow, [I] am encouraged to trust and believe in Him more,” said Janet Michira, a sales and marketing worker in Nairobi.

“I love the fact that there are still men walking in true honesty,” said Phyllis Karimi.

Facebook user Erick Ruto added, “May God help us all to stand for Him in every situation that He may be glorified.”

Maraga is a longtime judge who currently serves as chief judge of the court of appeals in Kisumu, Kenya’s third-largest city.

He told interviewers with the Judicial Service Commission that he is independent and not influenced by outside forces, the Standard reported.

He also described himself as a “time stickler unafraid to make tough calls,” the Capital News newspaper reported.

“I write judgments very fast, and in Kisumu, where I’m the presiding court of appeals judge, we apologize if court starts even 10 minutes late,” he said. 🍌



## FAITH AND SCIENCE

Seventy-five mostly European delegates converged on Hlíðardalsskóli, Iceland, for the European Faith and Science Conference organized by the church's Geoscience Research Institute. Hungarian geologist Judith Horvat said she was grateful to attend

because she has little opportunity for such interactions in her home country. "I think it is really important to see that as a geologist you can be a Christian," she said. Watch video: [bit.ly/SDAiceland](http://bit.ly/SDAiceland).

## NEWS BRIEFS

1



**NEARLY 27,000 ADVENTIST VOLUNTEERS** assisted more than 771,000 people in 50 Venezuelan cities with the distribution of food baskets, free medical checkups, repair of recreational areas, and more, in a single week. Church leaders said the effort is the biggest since the outreach program began in the eastern part of the economically struggling country in 2012.

2



**STENIO GUNGADOO**, who served the Adventist Church for 47 years as a pastor, evangelist, and administrator, died of an apparent heart attack shortly before preaching on Sabbath, August 20, 2016, in the Kenyan city of Kisumu. He was 71. Australia's Victorian Conference, where Gungadoo most recently worked, said many lives were influenced through his "preaching, teaching, pastoring, administering, mentoring, and leadership."

3



**JOSEPH GURUBATHAM**, a former president of Griggs University and vice president of academic affairs for Washington Adventist University, died at 74. Gurubatham had retired as senior vice president of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools in Washington, D.C., just weeks before his death on August 9.

4



**ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES** volunteers worked double-duty to provide relief to communities affected by flooding in Louisiana and a fire in California. Authorities in Louisiana, where devastating floods have killed at least 13 people and destroyed 40,000 homes, asked Adventist Community Services Disaster Response to open a multiagency warehouse in the state's capital, Baton Rouge, to accept donated goods for flood survivors.

5



**MORE THAN 3,000 YOUNG ADVENTISTS** from 250 churches marched through the center of the Dominican Republic's capital, Santo Domingo, to discourage drug use and to point their peers to Jesus. Participants in the four-hour march also carried banners promoting the Bible, the family, and good health practices, and distributed religious literature and prayed with passersby and drivers.

6



**THE GENERAL CONFERENCE** has updated the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* after finding that part of an amendment voted at the 2015 General Conference session was unintentionally excluded. "It has come to our attention that there was omission on page 127 of the current *Church Manual*. The correction has been made, and a statement has been issued," said General Conference associate secretary Hensley M. Mooroooven. Full statement: [bit.ly/SDAchurchmanual](http://bit.ly/SDAchurchmanual).

7

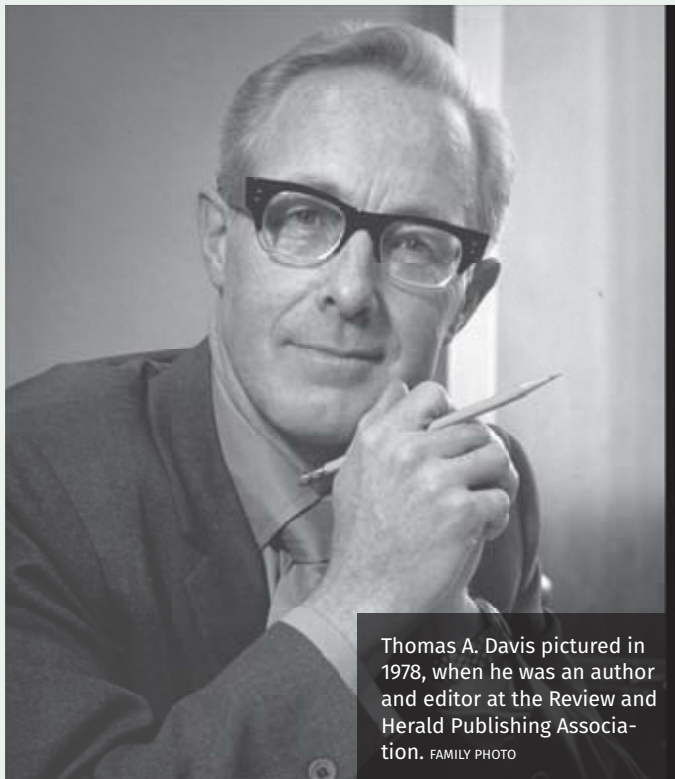


**ADVENTIST RISK MANAGEMENT** has issued guidelines on how churches and schools should respond to Pokémon Go players, advising them to avoid overreacting and to seek opportunities to leave a good impression about Adventists. The church insurer said it had received inquiries about "what to do when trespassers come onto church or school property in search of virtual reality characters such as Pokémon." Read more: [bit.ly/SDApokemon](http://bit.ly/SDApokemon).

## MISSIONARY FINDS JESUS AFTER MISSION SERVICE

REMEMBERING THOMAS DAVIS, A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR AND EDITOR

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY



Thomas A. Davis pictured in 1978, when he was an author and editor at the Review and Herald Publishing Association. FAMILY PHOTO

**T**homas A. Davis grew close to Jesus reading *Steps to Christ* as a Canadian medic stationed in England during World War II.

By all appearances, the relationship flourished as he went on to become a Seventh-day Adventist pastor, editor, and missionary in the Philippines and India.

But Davis realized—at first reluctantly—that he had lost that intimate walk with Jesus when he returned home from the mission field in 1970, and his wife, Margaret, immersed herself in a search of the Bible and the writings of Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White.

The couple went on seek an abiding connection with Christ that forever changed their lives, and led Davis to write the best-selling book, *How to Be a Victorious Christian*. Davis, a former associate editor of the *Review and Herald* (now *Adventist Review*), died on July 30, 2016, in Kelowna in Canada's province of British Columbia. He was 96.

“Throughout his life as an editor and pastor, Thomas Davis was faithful to his Savior. Above all else, he sought to prepare others to meet Jesus in peace,” said Mark A. Johnson, president of the Adventist Church in Canada, who officiated at Davis’ funeral.

“He influenced many in their walk with Christ,” Johnson told *Adventist Review*. “I was one of those.”

Thomas Atwood Davis was born on February 9, 1920, in Safe Harbour, Newfoundland. His parents joined the Adventist Church when he was 11 and enrolled him in an Adventist school, a decision that he later said set the course for his life.

During World War II Davis was drafted into the Royal Canadian Air Force while studying at Oshawa Missionary College (now Kingsway College) in Oshawa, Ontario. Two of his three years of service were spent as a medic in England.

Davis soon realized that he needed to spend time in God’s Word



if he was going to maintain his relationship with God and escape the temptations of enlisted life, said Lorna Dreher, Davis' daughter. Other than the Bible, his favorite books were Ellen White's *Messages to Young People* and *Steps to Christ*.

"His close walk with God showed, since many of the enlisted men began calling him 'preacher' and would come to him for counsel and encouragement," Dreher said. "But after returning to college, he relaxed in the Adventist environment, neither realizing his need nor understanding how to stay connected with God."

## 20 YEARS OF CHURCH SERVICE

Davis met and married his wife, Margaret Penner, while studying theology at Canadian Union College (now Burman University) in 1949. He graduated in 1951, working first as a singing evangelist and then as a pastor.

He left pastoral ministry in 1958 when he moved to Washington, D.C., to become editorial assistant for the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, which was being prepared by the Review and Herald Publishing Association as part of *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* series. "Though Dad trained in theology and became a pastor, he was really a writer at heart," Dreher said.

With the dictionary project finished two years later, Davis accepted the post of editor in chief of the Philippine Publishing House. In 1965 he was called to take the same position at the Oriental Watchman Publishing House in India.

His daughter Cheryl Dunn recalled his love for music and travel during those years. "While we lived in India he decided to make a recording of the songs he loved," she said. "I practiced the piano for hours, and then we recorded his songs on reel-to-reel tapes. Dad also loved to travel. On our first furlough from

the Philippines in 1964 our family toured through India, the Middle East, Egypt, and Europe before visiting family in Canada."

After five years in India, Davis was invited back to the Review and Herald Publishing Association to become an associate editor of *Review and Herald*, a position he held for three years. That was when he discovered that his walk with Jesus was not as close as he had thought.

"After our family returned from the mission field in 1970, my mother, Margaret, went through an experience that caused her to feel a need for something real in her Christian walk, and so she started a search in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy as never before," Dreher said by e-mail.

"As she grew closer to God, she couldn't help sharing with Dad. At first he was resistant—after all, he was the minister of 20-some years, the theologian, and the studier in the family!" she said. "But as my mother shared more about what she was learning, he conceded. In the back of his mind was the realization that though he studied the Bible a lot, he'd lost the close walk with God, his first love, that he'd had in the air force, and he wanted it back, though he didn't know how.

"So both my parents started studying together, and gradually they grasped the experience of the abiding connection with God, which changed their lives."

## BEST-SELLING BOOK IS BORN

Out of that experience came Davis' 1975 book *How to Be a Victorious Christian*, which received a strong endorsement from then-Adventist world church leader Robert H. Pierson.

"In a simple, yet forceful, manner he [Davis] places before his readers the way to live the Christian life as a true overcomer," Pierson wrote in the book's foreword. "Step by step he makes the way inviting and very practical. Jesus

will live again in your experience as you see Him lifted up in all His beauty and loveliness in every page."

Pierson also appealed to attendees of the General Conference session that year to read the book, Dunn said.

"We were told that Elder Pierson held it up at the General Conference session in 1975 in Vienna, Austria, stating that every Adventist family should have this book in their home," she said.

Davis went on to write other books on practical Christian living, including *Of Course You Can Walk on Water; Was Jesus Really Like Us?; Conscience, Your Inner Voice;*

//  
**THOUGH DAD  
TRAINED IN  
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HE WAS REALLY A  
WRITER AT HEART.**

//

*Laodicea, the Church That Doesn't Know; and Coming: The Latter Rain.* He also wrote award-winning poetry and *Preludes to Prayer*, a daily devotional book for 1967 that was later reprinted by Quiet Hour Ministries and translated into several languages.

Davis remained at the Review and Herald Publishing Association from 1970 until his retirement in 1985, working also as book editor and editing the health magazine *Your Life and Health* (now *Vibrant Life*).

He is survived by his wife, Margaret; a son, Arlen Davis; daughters Cheryl Dunn and Lorna Dreher; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. He also is survived by two brothers, Kenneth and Edward Davis; and a sister, Irene Town. ▀

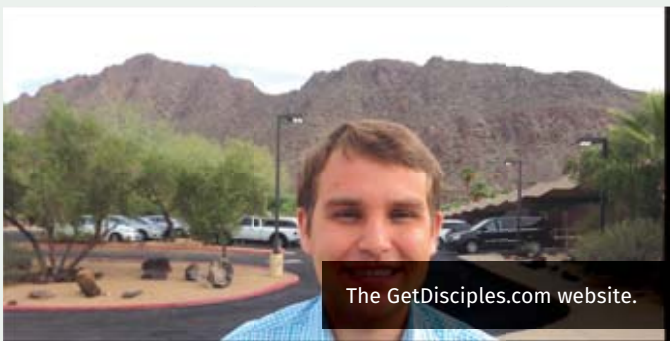
# APP AIMS TO MAKE EVANGELISM EASIER

**DISCIPLES SEEKS TO EMPOWER LOCAL CHURCHES.**

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY



Thomas Beihl speaking in an interview on the sidelines of the ASI convention in Phoenix, Arizona, in August.



Thomas Beihl didn't get the desired response when he went door to door at the men's residence hall at Southern Adventist University, asking fellow students whether they had conducted Bible studies.

About 150 students had signed up to conduct Bible studies during a 2006 evangelistic series in Tennessee. Beihl, a freshman at the time, had agreed to track their progress on an Excel spreadsheet.

"I didn't even have a cell phone back then," Beihl said. "So I would go knocking on doors in the dorm and say, 'Hey, how'd your Bible study go?' As you can imagine, that flopped tremendously."

Beihl never forgot the experience. Two years later he began to write the software for *Disciples*, an organizational tool that allows local churches to track mailings, Bible studies, and attendance at meetings. "It's basically a digital interest list for the local church," said Beihl, now 28 and the founder and chief executive of *Disciples*. He also owns a Web design company in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

*Disciples*, available as a desktop app at GetDisciples.com, was used by churches across North America and beyond to track more than 100,000 Bible studies last year, Beihl said. *Disciples* debuted as a mobile app on iTunes in September.

## JARED'S STORY

Beihl told of a young man named Jared, whom he met on the street

while serving as a Bible worker for his local church. He entered Jared's contact information into *Disciples* and sent him an invitation to attend an upcoming evangelistic series. Jared attended only two meetings, Beihl said in an interview, looking up the password-protected data on his laptop.

The next year Beihl sent Jared another e-mail: "We see you came out to the prophecy series last year, and we'd like to invite you to the prophecy series this year. It's going to be at a different location."

This time Jared missed only two meetings, and he signed up for Bible studies. When the evangelistic series rolled around the next year, Jared had already been baptized, and he brought five friends and his parents to the meetings.

Church management software is available from other companies. But Beihl said only his is geared toward Adventist evangelism, with specialized features such as the ability to track those who have made a decision to keep the Sabbath. *Disciples* is free if used on one computer and has a US\$10 fee if connected to multiple devices.

Church workers spoke highly of the software on Beihl's Web site.

"*Disciples* is by far the most comprehensive, yet intuitive, interest-tracking software," said Brandon Schroeder, a Bible worker with the Cornerstone church in British Columbia. "It's one of the best organizational tools I use."

Royce Snyman, ministerial director for the Adventist Church's Michigan Conference, said he had looked for an interest-tracking program for 20 years and even tried to develop his own. "Finally someone has gotten the job done with a quality, feature-rich product at a very fair price," he said.

## MEASURING INTEREST

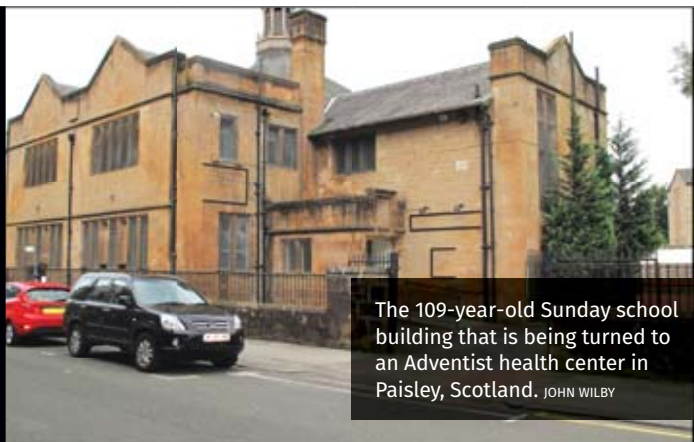
*Disciples*, like software used by many marketing companies, not only follows contacts but also detects a recipient's possible level of interest.

Beihl spoke of a man in his 20s who received the book *Steps to Christ* during a church mailing in 2012. The man did not respond, and church included him in an e-mailing ahead of an evangelistic series a year and a half later. "He opened the e-mail like 15 times," Beihl said. "He was either opening it or forwarding it to his friends. You cannot tell the difference, but it was clearly exciting to him."

Beihl acknowledged that some people might feel uncomfortable that software offers that amount of information. "But, he said, "just about any e-mail these days lets you know that it has been opened. That's what marketers do."

Such information could be useful for a local church wondering how to best direct its resources, he said. "While God is working in everybody's life, some people are really responsive and at a place where God is really trying to bring them in," he said. "Would you rather be spending your time with someone who is less interested in spiritual things or somebody who is potentially more interested?"

The man who opened his e-mail 15 times ended up becoming the first person to make a decision for Jesus during that evangelistic series, Beihl said. He is now training to become a Bible worker—and will use *Disciples* in his work. ▀



## 109-YEAR-OLD SUNDAY SCHOOL TO BECOME ADVENTIST CENTER

SCOTLAND EARMARKS \$139,000 TOWARD PROJECT

BY MARK A. KELLNER

**A** 109-year-old Sunday school building in Scotland is being turned to a Seventh-day Adventist health ministry and outreach center with the aid of a government grant.

Historic Environment Scotland, a government agency that helps renovate historic buildings, has allotted £104,280 (US\$139,000) toward the future Hope Healthy Living Center in Paisley, a city located just seven miles east of Glasgow and 50 miles from Edinburgh.

John Wilby, treasurer of the Paisley Seventh-day Adventist Church, said that the new center could potentially serve 25 percent of Scotland's population of 5.3 million, and that the church was actively seeking to raise the remaining \$470,000 needed to make that happen.

"Scotland is the most secular part of the United Kingdom, where 52 percent claim they have no religious affiliation and two thirds say they never, or rarely, go to church," Wilby said, citing a recent survey. "Our approach to outreach follows Christ's example: He mingled, identified needs, and helped their healing. We truly believe, as Ellen White said, that health ministry is the right arm of the gospel."

The two-story Hope Healthy Living Center, which is scheduled to open in 2017, will have a reception area and office, auditorium, 128-seat activity area, and kitchen and café on the first floor, the local *Daily Record* newspaper reported this week. The second floor will have an auditorium with 230 seats and a separate room with seating for another 40 people.

The Adventist center will offer health screenings; stop-smoking and healthy cooking classes; workshops on nutrition, drugs, and alcohol; and exercise and foot-care courses in partnership with local health authorities, the newspaper said.

Community leaders back the project. "We recognize the need, from our tenants and the wider community, for more services and facilities for people to help improve their health and well-being," Adele Fraser, chief executive of the Linstone Housing Association, said in a letter of support. ▀



# TELL *the* WORLD

The Inspiring Story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

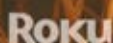


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- » LET'S CELEBRATE OPTIMISM

# DISCOVER



## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

*In search of present truth*

**A**n article in the early nineteenth century decried the invention of the stovepipe. The author predicted that this new contraption would almost certainly bring about the dissolution of the family. Simply put, the fact that families huddled together around the family hearth (or candles) in the evening was being eroded simply because tight-knit families could now spread out through any number of heated rooms in the home. Such new, modern technology was initially considered a threat, although this first major domestic appliance was quickly adopted throughout America. After all, it saved time and energy. Doom-sayers had to look elsewhere to find reasons for the breakup of American families.<sup>1</sup>

In today's world it's easy to pine after an earlier, simpler time. One must, at times, wonder if some of today's problems could simply be alleviated, or even eliminated, by simply going back to a more pristine time. Such notions are evident within mainstream culture with television shows that feature a return to the wilderness, the



**MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL**

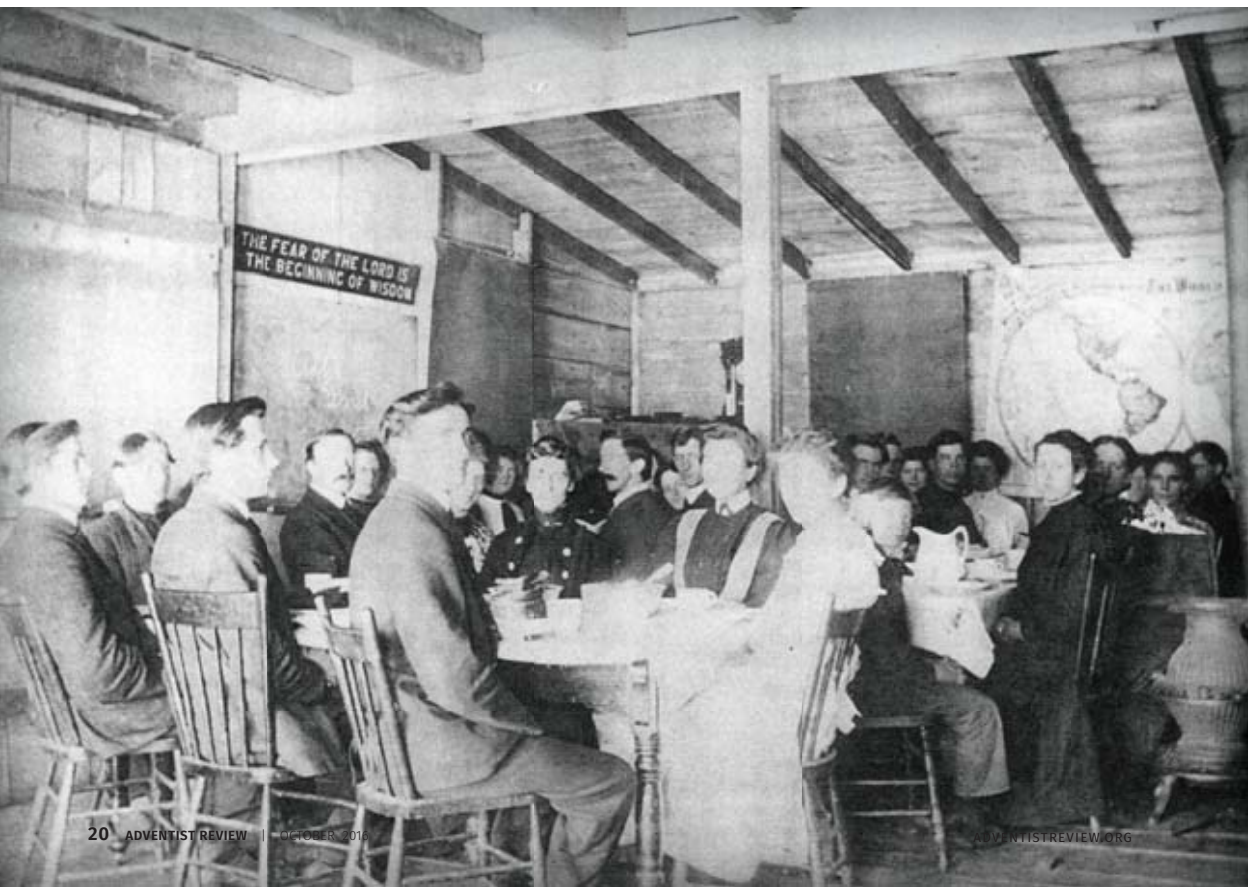
many books by Laura Ingalls Wilder, or the promises of politicians. So what would it be like to go back in time? Let's imagine living in the days of the early Adventist pioneers.<sup>2</sup>

#### DAILY LIFE

Dirt was the most obvious feature of daily life in antebellum America.<sup>3</sup> The potent mix of constant fires, trash, and refuse could rankle the nose. Americans tended to put up white picket fences around their houses—not to keep pets inside their yard, but rather to keep street animals out! It was just difficult to stay clean. Since local modes of transportation required mostly the use of horses, this meant that roads were very dirty places. Any significant rain could mix mud with manure to create soggy filth, resulting, at times, in roads that were downright impassable.

America was largely composed of rural farms. A step back in time would undoubtedly reveal that most daily conversations revolved around the rhythms of agriculture. Since books were

So what would it be like to go back in time? Let's imagine living in the days of the early Adventist pioneers.





Many people today  
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expensive, most people owned only (in addition to the Bible) a copy of the *Farmer's Almanac*—the best-selling book in pre-Civil War America.<sup>4</sup>

Agriculture dominated daily life in many other profound ways. Even the planning of weddings was timed to coincide with agricultural rhythms (most often conducted in the farmhouse of the bride's family—it was not until the later Victorian period that people adopted the fashion of wearing a white wedding dress with a minister officiating at a church). People tied the knot in the early spring or late fall, because of planting or harvesting. The preferred nuptial time was around Thanksgiving.

Historians have noted a significant spike in the birth of children in late winter or early spring that corresponds with the early stages of planting—the time when most adults had the least amount of work on the farm.<sup>5</sup> Children typically received an education during the coldest weeks of winter in “reading, writing, and arithmetic.”<sup>6</sup> Most children had only a few years of education before their labor on the farm outweighed their “school learning.”

If farm life was difficult, American health care

was positively dangerous. In perhaps the most striking divide between past and present, illness “was a matter of virtually certain occurrence but uncertain outcome.”<sup>7</sup> Virulent diseases swept across America with very few cures available. Malaria, yellow fever, and the dreaded consumption (tuberculosis) ravaged homes. Most parents expected that at least one or more children would not survive to adulthood (the child mortality rate was 10 times what it is today).<sup>8</sup> Adults fared not much better, with the danger of accidents, and, for women, the high mortality rate associated with giving birth.

“Most people did not survive much past the beginning of today’s retirement age.”<sup>9</sup> Many marriages were torn asunder, not by divorce, but by premature death. In a time of heroic medicine, as people looked to restore balance to the body, most treatments were downright dangerous. It is no wonder that the life span of people during this time would remain constant until the adoption of public health and antiseptic measures still decades in the future. Adventist historian George Knight remarked that no person in their right mind would choose to be born in the nineteenth century!<sup>10</sup>

## DIET AND DOCTRINE

Despite such travails, what if one could belong to an earlier and somehow purer version of Seventh-day Adventism—a time during which the early pioneers thrived and held the leadership of the movement?

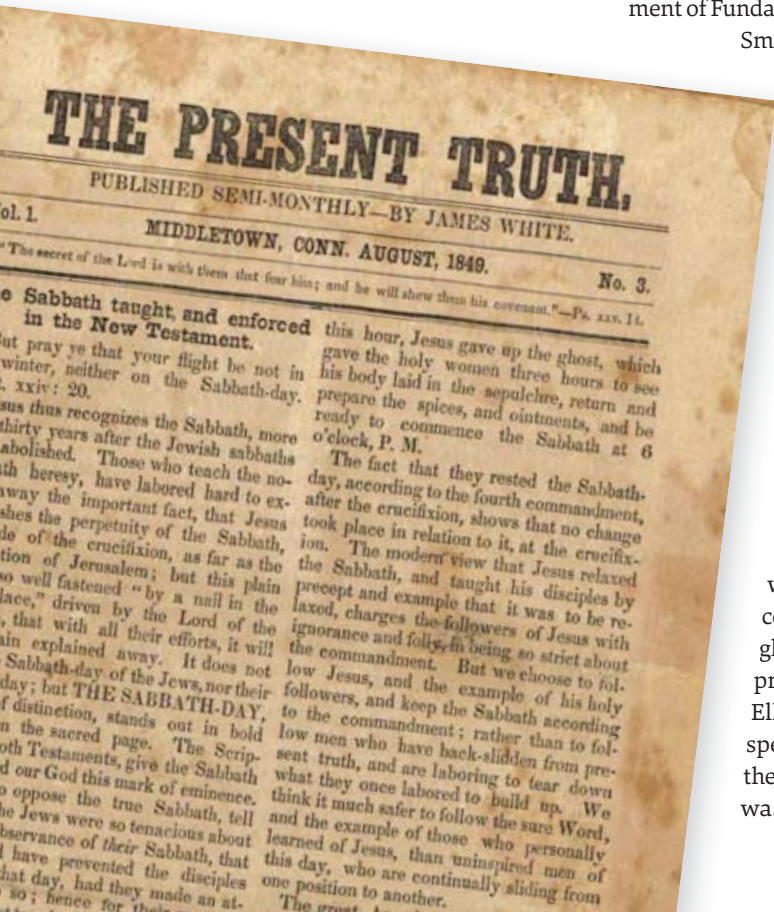
Unfortunately, most people today would scarcely recognize the world of the early pioneers. Ellen White was rather hesitant when she first heard about Joseph Bates and the seventh-day Sabbath. She thought he “erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than upon the other nine.”<sup>11</sup> After intense Bible study she adopted the same position.

Similarly, the diet of most early pioneers consisted of lots of grease, spice, and meat. Even the position on clean versus unclean meats did not really develop until the 1890s. Not until this latter period did Ellen White finally adopt a completely vegetarian diet. Many people today might feel rather uncomfortable if they could go back in time to share a meal with these early believers.<sup>12</sup>

Conversely, many early pioneers would similarly be uncomfortable with today’s current Statement of Fundamental Beliefs. Some, such as Uriah Smith, had trouble with belief 5, about

the personhood of the Holy Spirit. In the first portion of his long career, Smith not only denied the Trinity and the eternity of the Son (like many of his fellow believers), but he pictured the Holy Spirit as “that divine, mysterious emanation through which they [the Father and the Son] carry forward their great and infinite work.” On another occasion Smith pictured the Holy Spirit as a “divine influence” and not a “person like the Father and the Son.”<sup>13</sup>

This wasn’t the only position with which pioneers would sense discomfort. Early on, the pioneers struggled with the “shut door” theory that probation closed after October 1844. Ellen White initially shared this perspective, but later repudiated it. Even the time for when to begin the Sabbath was open to debate. Some (like the





seafaring Joseph Bates) advocated for a set time (6:00 p.m.), but it was only after a detailed Bible exposition by J. N. Andrews that the church eventually adopted the position of sunset to sunset as the only biblically defensible position.<sup>14</sup>

From the very beginning, the pioneers who eventually formed the Seventh-day Adventist Church adhered to the conviction that truth is progressive. The very name of the Sabbatarian Adventist periodical, the precursor to the *Adventist Review*, was titled *The Present Truth*. Adventists upheld a dynamic concept and commitment to biblical truth as expressed in the Bible. It was such a spirit that caused J. N. Andrews, after his discovery of the Sabbath truth, to exclaim that he would gladly “exchange a thousand errors for one truth.”<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that pillar doctrines established through Bible study would erode away, but instead it was through careful Bible study that the denomination would continue to grow in its understanding of truth. In fact, God’s truth as manifested in the person of Jesus Christ and revealed in His Word will be a topic that God’s people will study throughout all eternity!

## HISTORICAL MYOPIA

A favorite book of mine is titled simply *The Good Old Days: They Were Terrible!* Life was tough in nineteenth-century America. The early Sabbathkeeping Adventists who eventually formed the Seventh-day Adventist Church faced incredible challenges, both in terms of the development of their theology as well as lifestyle. No person aware of all of these challenges would willingly go back!<sup>16</sup>

George Knight points out that all societies suffer from, what he calls, “historical myopia.”<sup>17</sup> People romanticize the past, whether it is certain people, events, or places from “long ago” and “far away.” They dream about the “good old days” when life was simple and unspoiled. Unfortunately, such a time never existed. In fact, such a mythology distorts truth.

So why do people suffer from “historical myopia”? The answer is simple. The human mind plays “tricks” on us “through the psychological process of repression. Repression allows our minds to forget the unhappy events of the past while remembering much of the good.”<sup>18</sup> Such a view of the past is particularly destructive because it does

not deal with the stark realities of the past and present, or the challenges of today or tomorrow. It has a tendency to create a view of the world, the church, or even lives that everything is “going to pot” despite our best efforts.<sup>19</sup>

What is the greatest danger that Adventism faces today? Ellen White admonished, in the wake of the Minneapolis saga of 1888, that it is “if we are not constantly guarded, of considering our ideas, because long cherished, to be Bible doctrines and on every point infallible, and measuring everyone by the rule of our interpretation of Bible truth. This is our danger, and this would be the greatest evil that could ever come to us as a people.”<sup>20</sup>

A careful study of the past reveals the need for a candid appraisal of both the challenges as well as an admiration for the Adventist commitment to “present truth.”

<sup>1</sup> Based upon my reading of historical newspapers. For a larger discussion of the cookstove in American history, see Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life 1790-1840* (New York: Harper, 1988), pp. 52ff.

<sup>2</sup> I use the expression “Sabbathkeeping Adventist” pioneers to refer to the formative time after the Great Disappointment in 1844 up through the time of the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1863.

<sup>3</sup> Larkin, p. xv.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 67.

<sup>6</sup> The phrase, also known as the “three R’s,” refers to basic education that goes back at least to 1818.

<sup>7</sup> Larkin, pp. 72, 73.

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

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>10</sup> George R. Knight, *Myths in Adventism: An Interpretative Study of Ellen White, Education, and Related Issues* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1999), p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview, see “Vegetarianism,” in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 2013), pp. 1246-1248.

<sup>13</sup> See 1891 *General Conference Bulletin*, p. 146; *Review and Herald*, Oct. 28, 1890, p. 664. I am indebted for these examples to George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 2000), p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Knight, p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> In Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, Mich.: James White, 1860), vol. 2, p. 117.

<sup>16</sup> Larkin, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup> Knight, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Ellen G. White, *The 1888 Materials* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1987), vol. 2, p. 830. I am indebted for this citation to Nicholas P. Miller, *The Reformation and the Remnant: The Reformers Speak to Today’s Church* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2016), p. 61.

**Michael W. Campbell, Ph.D.**, serves as an associate professor of Adventist Studies at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

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# ASSESS YOURSELF

There is a distinct, dynamic, and indissoluble connection between one's physical and spiritual health.

John referred to the physical-spiritual connection when he wrote: "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well" (3 John 2). Ellen White further illuminated this principle when she wrote, "The body is a most important medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers."<sup>1</sup>

As we understand this connection there is wisdom in periodically doing a personal physical-spiritual checkup.

## PHYSICAL CHECKUP

Health-care professionals agree: wellness checkups, preventive care, and regular physicals are helpful to good health. Indicators of good health include healthy cholesterol levels, good blood pressure, healthy weight, healthy skin and hair (to the extent that one has hair), clear vision, mental alertness, restful sleep, good muscle tone, and healthy bones. These health indicators don't happen by accident.

Ellen White identifies how good health is obtained and maintained in what are widely known as the eight natural remedies: "pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness [temperance or self-control], rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power."<sup>2</sup> If we practice these habits, whatever our health status, we will realize improvement.

There is little debate that these factors are important. In fact, even without tech-


nical medical input, one can informally assess health habits by doing a simple, self-conducted 1-5 self-evaluation (1 being poor or nonexistent and 5 being regular or habitual).

## SPIRITUAL CHECKUP

In counsel to the church in Thessalonica (2 Thess. 1:1-4, 11, 12) the apostle Paul offered three simple indicators of one's spiritual health. Normally he began his letters by giving thanks for the congregation to whom he was writing. But in this letter he uniquely expresses his thanks via affirmation of essential indicators of spiritual success in the life of a Christian.

First, one's faith should consistently grow. Progress should be measurable; not a perfectly upward line but a gradual progressive movement as one daily relates to God, His Word, and dependence on the Spirit (verse 3). Second, love and goodwill, shown in actions for members in the body of Christ and people in the surrounding community, should abound; increasing love (verse 3). Third, in addition to believers' faith and love, Paul emphasized the necessity of endurance in persecution and tribulations, steadfast endurance (verse 4).

Assessing one's spiritual growth is necessary for ascertaining whether one is progressing, maintaining, or declining spiritually.

By examining ourselves physically and spiritually, progress, or the need for it, can be maximized through personal effort combined with divine assistance. 

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1917), p. 488.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 127.

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TRANSFORMATION TIPS  
DELBERT W. BAKER



THERE IS WISDOM  
IN PERIODICALLY  
DOING A PERSONAL  
PHYSICAL-SPIRITUAL  
CHECKUP.

# IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF IT



*How Ellen White engaged in  
social and political issues*

## CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

For many of us who have grown up with great stories of our church founders, the beginnings of Adventism seem blurred into unreal, mythic proportions. Living your faith in everyday life seemed to be easier back then, but was it really?

Early Adventists did not live in a vacuum. Life was filled with many social changes and thorny political issues. Things were changing rapidly. The United States was moving fast from a farm-based, rural society to an industrial, urban-centered society. These changes came with nasty side effects. Urbanization brought congestion, poverty, and pollution.

Then there was the slavery question that was tearing at the fabric of the nation. This was followed by women's rights, temperance, and race relations, all controversial topics that were discussed in newspapers and fought over in the streets; topics that made or broke political careers, and even found their way into Adventist churches, schools, and pulpits.

### ADVENTIST ENGAGEMENT

So how did early Adventists engage with the issues of their day? Some became passionate advocates for different causes, while many others tried to ignore what was going on and concentrate exclusively on in-house Adventist issues. Others, such as Ellen White, chose another route.

Even a cursory reading of Ellen White's books, letters, and diaries shows that she was aware of and engaged in current issues. She was a strong supporter of the temperance movement,<sup>1</sup> and very vocal about the abolition of slavery.<sup>2</sup> She was not afraid to disturb the status quo and make a stand in these causes that were stirring the nation and dividing communities in the nineteenth century.

While she spoke and wrote about these issues, she did not wholeheartedly endorse or support *everything* these reforms advocated. Many women involved in the temperance and abolition movements went on to fight for the right of women to vote. Surprisingly, Ellen White did not endorse or use her influence to promote the women's suffrage movement. Although she herself had broken the mold by preaching and speaking in public, and though she encouraged and affirmed women in their work for God, she did not embrace this seemingly important cause. Why?<sup>3</sup>

### TO ENGAGE, OR NOT TO ENGAGE?

Ellen White used causes to further God's agenda and never let herself be used by a cause to further its agendas. The Great Controversy theme was always at the back of her mind. For her, this theme was so much more than a theory, or a way of organizing her writings. It helped her to identify the areas in her society in which she could choose sides and promote God's agenda.

Her understanding of humanity's creation in the image of God with the freedom of choice made her vocal in her support of slaves being freed and having the freedom to choose their own eternal destiny.<sup>4</sup> She believed that alcohol destroyed people and deprived them of their freedom of choice, so she supported the temperance movement. As far as women's suffrage went, she personally supported the treatment of women as equals but she saw no reason to spend her time, effort, and personal influence in a cause that would not directly build God's kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

Even though times have changed, her writings show a timeless relevance in finding our way through the maze of being involved in the issues of our communities and country without letting causes force us to take on agendas that are not kingdom-building. 🌿

<sup>1</sup> Ellen White wrote strong denunciations of alcohol use. For some examples, see *Counsels for the Church* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1991), pp. 101-103.

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of Ellen White's stance on slavery and race relations see Ronald D. Graybill, *E. G. White and Church Race Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1970).

<sup>3</sup> In an article in the influential church paper she points out that a woman has more important work to do than trying to gain the vote: "I do not recommend that woman should seek to become a voter or an officer-holder; but as a missionary, teaching the truth by epistolary correspondence, distributing tracts and soliciting subscribers for periodicals containing the solemn truth for this time, she may do very much. In conversing with families, in praying with the mother and children, she will be a blessing" (in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 19, 1878).

<sup>4</sup> Ellen White made no concessions for the practice and writes, "The whole system of slavery was originated by Satan, who delights in tyrannizing over human beings" (*The Southern Work* [J. E. White, 1898, 1901], p. 61).

<sup>5</sup> While some women suffragettes claimed that the world would be a better, more peaceful place if women had the vote, Ellen White had no such illusions: "There are inborn tendencies in men and women that are not developed until some temptation assails them, when, instead of resisting the temptation, they fall. They do not preserve truthfulness, strict, straight dealing" (*Counsels to Physicians and Medical Students* [pamphlet 167, 1885], p. 41).

Chantal J. Klingbeil serves as an associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference.

*Christ's choir  
is holding open  
auditions.*

# HOW TO HARMONIZE WITH THE LAMB

JOHN MCVAY

Some years ago, while hard at work on my doctoral dissertation, I was to meet with my dissertation supervisor on a southern California campus. With a few minutes to spare, I went to the campus bookstore.

While there, I took a look at the textbooks my professor had required for the course he was teaching, a class on early Christian worship. One of the required texts was a book by Barry Liesch titled *People in the Presence of God: Models and Directions for Worship*.

I came across a couple pages that have been important to me ever since. Liesch writes, "Although the book of Revelation has been widely studied . . . as a book of prophecy, what it says about worship has been widely neglected. Yet at least fourteen of the twenty-two chapters deal with worship. Worship is depicted as going on unceasingly before the throne. It is not an 'interlude' between a sequence of dramatic scenes, as some have termed it. The reverse is true.



## A CLOSER LOOK

“In the deeper structure of the book, revelatory events [prophetic events, the stuff that happens down here on Planet Earth] themselves are the interludes that break up the practice of continuous worship before the throne of God. Moreover [and here this Evangelical author really starts to sound like a Seventh-day Adventist], worship in the last days becomes a strategic issue. The book unveils overall a cataclysmic conflict being waged across the expanse of heaven and earth as to who is to be worshiped, Satan the deceiver or the Lord God.”

In that light, let’s look at Revelation 15. Let’s look at the beginning and the end, the introduction and the conclusion:

The introduction: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished” (Rev. 15:1).<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion: “After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, and out of the sanctuary came the seven

The frame of our story—its introduction and conclusion—is frightening, intriguing, apocalyptic!

Not long ago Pam and I had the privilege of visiting the National Gallery in London. We stood together looking at one of the world’s great masterpieces, the painting *Sunflowers*, by Vincent van Gogh.

I’m reading the information placard, trying to grasp the features and importance of this work, when Pam taps my shoulder and exclaims, “Wow! Would you look at that frame!”

Note to Pam: Sotheby’s wouldn’t be interested in the frame! It’s not the frame that’s most important; it’s the masterpiece within it.

According to Liesch, it’s not the stuff that happens down here—including the seven last plagues—that’s most important. It’s the acts and deeds of worship that occur up there, at God’s throne.

In the context of Revelation 15:1-8, it’s not the frame of the seven last plagues that is most important—it’s the masterpiece of worship at the heart of the passage. That masterpiece consists of a description of the choir, the choir directors, and the choir’s song.



## The original “Song of Moses” is a hymn of profound praise and thanksgiving to the Lord.

angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever, and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished” (verses 5-8).

Revelation 15 describes the seven last plagues, God’s final judgments on a rebellious globe bent on destroying His people.

We watch the drama. The doors of the heavenly sanctuary are thrown open. Seven linen-garbed, gold-sashed angelic warriors emerge. Into their hands are placed golden bowls filled with God’s judgments. As the last bowl touches the hands of the last angel warrior, thick, dark smoke fills the sanctuary, a signal that its mercy-granting, forgiveness-bequeathing business is done.

### THE HEAVENLY ANTHEM

This is one of those so-called interludes, in which we are drawn back into that worship service continually conducted at the heart of the cosmos.

The choir: “And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands” (Rev. 15:2).

In that earlier, lengthy transcript of the heavenly worship service in Revelation 4 and 5 we find ourselves worshipping before the throne of God. John describes that throne: “From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal” (Rev. 4:5, 6).

Now, in Revelation 15, in anticipation of the conflict and fury yet to come, that placid sea of glass is mingled with fire. The members of this

# If you wish to harmonize with the Lamb, I point you to these four essential habits of heart and mind.

massed choir are themselves veterans of great conflict, victors in many battles.

The narrator offers high praise for this choir. They have “conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name” (verse 2). They have vanquished the consortium of evil at the end of time.

The choir directors: “They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (verse 3).

Moses, you will remember, leads the children of Israel out of Egypt in Exodus. At a crucial point in the story, he becomes the conductor of a mass choir. As he directs, he sings in full voice: “Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord” (Ex. 15:1).

So how is it that this song is both the Song of Moses and—simultaneously—the Song of the Lamb? Jesus is the new Moses.

Moses had said, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers” (Deut. 18:15).

The life of Jesus—His death, His resurrection, His exaltation, His intercession—represents the new Exodus. Jesus heads the quest for a new Promised Land. He steps to the fore as director of this choir, and with full voice leads them in their hymn of praise. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb because they are the choir’s directors conducting the chorus.

As we prepare to listen to the anthem, we need to poke around in the music library, to search the archives. We find the original, the first “Song of Moses.” Listening to it prepares us to hear this new composition, “The Song of Moses and the Lamb.”

That original “Song of Moses” rings out at the close of a dramatic day. The massed forces of the empire of Egypt hunt down the long-enslaved and recently freed people of Israel. Defenseless, these Israelites are trapped between Egypt’s high-tech

military and an uncrossable body of water. The only future they can envision is thousands of graves in the desert.

But God makes a way through the sea. Then comes the song: “Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, ‘I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him. . . . Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?’” (Ex. 15:1-11).

In what key do they sing? Do they boast of their own accomplishments? of their own moral qualities? of their sinlessness, perhaps? Do they sing their song in the key of self-congratulation?

This original “Song of Moses” is in the key of praise. It is sung “to the Lord” (Ex. 15:1), and it is all about the Lord: about His power, His deliverance, His mercy upon the unworthy.

And when, by His grace, we make it to that grand baccalaureate on the other side, our song will have in it not a word of boastfulness, not a phoneme of pride. It will be an ode of praise to “the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb” (Rev. 5:13, NRSV).<sup>2</sup>

Any song of ours, offered in the key of self-congratulation, rings hollow. It dies on our lips. It isn’t about our accomplishments. It isn’t even about our failings, many as those are. It simply isn’t about us. The original “Song of Moses” is a hymn of profound praise and thanksgiving to the Lord.

It is just such a song that these victorious ones now sing in our heaven-sited liturgy. They are praised by the narrator: they have “conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name” (Rev. 15:2).

They are victors, winners in the culminating



scenes of salvation history. They overcome the massed forces of evil at the end of time. High praise indeed!

But their song has in it not a syllable of self-congratulation. It is a song offered only in the key of praise and thanksgiving.

### THE CHOIR'S SONG

"And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed'" (verses 3, 4).

This hymn offers a powerful message. In this anthem we have access to the set of convictions that has equipped the members of this choir to navigate the worst of times. We have here the essential mind-set for Christian disciples who await Christ's return. We have exemplified the core convictions, the essential intellectual habits, of true victors.

### FOUR ESSENTIAL HABITS

**1** Thankfulness for what God has done: "Great and amazing are your deeds" (verse 3). "For your righteous acts have been revealed" (verse 4).

**2** Wonder at the unlimited nature of God's power and domain: "O Lord God the Almighty," "O King," "Lord," "O King of the nations." This choir, in this moment of supreme, apocalyptic victory, wonders at the unlimited nature of God's power and domain.

**3** Adoration for who God is: "Just and true are your ways" (verse 3). "For you alone are holy" (verse 4).

**4** A settled belief that God's side is the winning one; that whatever the outlook of the moment, God will be victorious. To cast one's lot with God is wise, for He will reign forever. "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? . . . All nations will come and worship you" (verse 4).

If, in this moment of great victory, you wish to harmonize with the Lamb, I point you to these four essential habits of heart and mind:

Thankfulness for what God has done.

Wonder at the unlimited nature of God's power and domain.

Adoration for who God is.

A settled belief that God's side is the winning one.

### PLAYING IN THE KEY OF PRAISE

Our daughter has taken many music lessons. She has practiced with a reasonable degree of dedication. And she has made good and measurable progress in her skill.

And all the while she has saved: birthday checks, babysitting money. The amount of the required investment being considerable, two grandmothers have willingly contributed. Mom and Dad dug deep.

The appointed day arrives to make the wintry pilgrimage from Berrien Center, Michigan, to Ogden Avenue in Chicago. When we arrive, we find the exterior of the building understated at best: industrial, an urban backstreet.

Then we travel by freight elevator up a couple floors and are led into a gorgeous room with large picture windows opening on the Chicago skyline. That room is filled with tight rows of large, beautiful instruments. The Lyon and Healy showroom is full of harps, beautiful harps, scores of them. And one of them is to be ours, hers.

I pulled out the receipt this week. It is dated January 8, 2006. I'm still impressed by the amount of money it takes to purchase a quality harp. After careful shopping, and a lot of questions to the saleswoman, we buy a used harp bearing the serial number 51325.

The logo in the background of the receipt is a stylized "L," a curly ampersand, and an artistic "H," accompanied by this slogan: "Harpmakers to the world since 1889."

Somewhere in the heavenly courts a showroom opens onto the skyline of the New Jerusalem. Its paperwork bears the motto "Harpmakers to the cosmos since time immemorial."

This showroom, too, is filled with harps—handcrafted, hand-carved, gold-encrusted harps. Myriads of them, gleaming in that showroom. They are all tuned up and ready to play in the key of praise. They don't have serial numbers, but artistically engraved into each harp is a name. And one of those names is yours. ♣

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**John McVay** is president of Walla Walla University. This article is based on his baccalaureate address at Andrews University April 30, 2016.

# CELEBRATIONS

## LET'S CELEBRATE OPTIMISM

**O**  
IS FOR OPTIMISM,  
THE JOY IN LIFE.

## THE OPTIMISM OF HOPE

PETER N. LANDLESS

**S**uddenly they were unable to see. Thick dust not only blocked the artificial light but irritated and burned their eyes for hours. It was shortly after lunch when the routine of the day changed—and so has the story of history.

On August 5, 2010, a rockfall in the Chilean Copiapó copper mine trapped 33 miners 2,300 feet underground. Uppermost in their minds was the need to survive and escape. The shift leader, Luis Urzúa, immediately took charge and organized the men into a team that made all their decisions on a democratic basis; majority votes carried each action and plan. Their two- to three-day emergency supplies were stretched to last two weeks. Careful rationing, strict discipline, social support, and camaraderie all came into play.

On August 22, using a drill, rescuers bored their eighth hole and broke into a shaft close to where the trapped miners anxiously anticipated rescue. For days the miners had heard the drills and prepared notes to attach to the drill bit. The now-famous paper was attached with the words: “We are well in the shelter, the 33.” Joy and excitement broke out both above and below ground level; however, there was uncertainty as to how the rescue would be executed, and concern that it could take many months to complete.

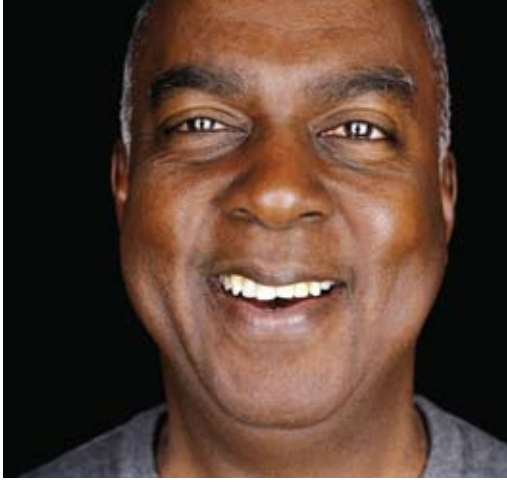
During this time a tent city sprang up in the desert near the mine entrance. At first, family and friends slept in cars and waited and prayed. Friends then brought tents and other supplies to help those keeping vigil to survive the hostile desert environment. The settlement was appropriately named Campamento Esperanza (Camp Hope).

Multicultural collaboration, engineering ingenuity, careful planning, and dogged determination led to the miners emerging one by one, safe and alive, 69 days after being trapped. The date: October 13, 2010.

What kept the men going? Social support, leadership, collaboration, discipline, a sense of humor—all these played vital roles. Most important, however, were optimism and hope.

### DEFINING OPTIMISM

Many words are related to optimism: “happiness,” “hope,” “joyfulness,” “positive attitude,”



“high spirits,” and “cheerfulness,” among others. Optimism has been defined as an enduring tendency to expect good personal outcomes in the future. This fits with the Oxford dictionary definition, which describes optimism as an inclination to “hopefulness and confidence.”

Optimism is the face of our faith, and it is built on hope and trust in God and the belief that He can work things out for our best (see Rom. 8:28 and 1 Cor. 10:13).

Optimists may have peace and even joy when things do not turn out the way they wanted. In this life we experience brokenness, sickness, even death; yet through all this we may know an equanimity and peace that are beyond human understanding or expectation. By exercising the choice to be optimistic, we can enjoy wholeness even in our human brokenness.

### HOPE WITHOUT HEALING

Particularly under difficult circumstances, such as not being healed from a disease, many of us need help making the choice to be optimistic. Family and other social support are essential in this process. Pessimists tend to believe that bad events will last a long time, and they often relinquish the idea that situations will improve. The approach of optimists, on the other hand, is to view a negative event as a temporary setback and be spurred on to try harder. Sometimes the realistic approach, which takes challenges and problems into account, may be viewed as pessimism; at the same time, a realistic optimist nurtures hope and perseverance, choosing to believe and work toward the improvement of circumstances and situations.

Research demonstrates that hope and optimism are associated with better mental and physical health and more effective coping mechanisms.<sup>1</sup>

### LAUGHTER IS GOOD MEDICINE

Much research has focused on the positive effects of genuine, relaxing laughter showing significant benefits to health, including an increased pain tolerance.<sup>2</sup> Laughter triggers an uptake of endorphins, one of the brain chemicals responsible for the feeling of well-being as well as reducing pain.

No wonder the Bible says: “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones” (Prov. 17:22).

We can especially be happy and experience genuine laughter when we completely trust God, knowing that He is in control of our lives no matter the circumstances. Other studies have shown that nurturing positive thoughts and emotions about people and situations impacts our own personal well-being.<sup>3</sup>

### SUMMING UP OPTIMISM

We may choose to be optimistic, especially as we recall the wonderful promises of Scripture, such as Lamentations 3:21-23: “Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for His

**Genuine laughter shows significant benefits to health, including an increased pain tolerance.**

compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

With such assurance we may celebrate life and enjoy wholeness, even in our present brokenness. Optimism and hope are truly the joy in life!

*This article is a condensed chapter taken from the GC Health Ministries book CELEBRATIONS (healthministries.com).* ♣

<sup>1</sup> Harold G. Koenig, Michael E. McCullough, David B. Larson, *Handbook of Religion and Health* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> R.I.M. Dunbar, Rebecca Baron, et al., *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 279, no. 1731 (Mar. 22, 2012): 1161-1167.

<sup>3</sup> C. Conversano, A. Rotondo, et al., *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health* 6 (May 14, 2010): 25-29.

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# IMPACT YOUR WORLD

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# CONNECT

**“As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”**

Ellen G. White, *Looking Back, Looking Forward*, p. 44



CONNECT

# BETWEEN YESTERDAY



# AND TOMORROW

J. HAROLD ALOMÍA

A view  
from a  
university  
campus

Where I grew up, we had the following saying: “*Todo tiempo pasado fue mejor.*” Freely translated, it means, “Things were better in the past.” This saying elicits the same sentiment as the phrase “the good old days” conjures up in English. I often heard this saying growing up, and I wondered if the past had really been better. Most times it was uttered by an older adult. Funny enough, the older I get, the more the saying makes sense to me, and I find myself saying it more frequently than I’d like to admit.

The saying speaks to the idea of past times being better than present times. Perhaps it’s because we look at the past with a nostalgic sense of security that counters the foreboding of the unknown future. The past also seems more comforting than our present, especially considering our fast-paced and ever-changing reality. While we still struggle to understand our present, we find ourselves trying to figure out the next social media fad or the latest revolutionary feature on our smartphones.

Harkening to the past elucidates feelings of easier and more comfortable times. “Today” means “not an ideal time” at best, while the past becomes the key to greater times and a better future.

There are, however, some complications with this way of thinking. First and foremost, it is based more on feelings than on actual facts. This nostalgic sentimentalism looks at the past, and, blinded by this sentimentality, plunges us into an ideological current that ultimately attempts to escape the present. This romanticized ideal often prevents a closer look at the factual negatives of the past. It is also blind to the reality that the past at some point was also the present, requiring the same hard effort to figure out what today’s present necessitates.

So pointing blindly to the past and making it

the benchmark of virtue that the present should follow really becomes an elusive task, something like finding a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

### WHAT DO THEY THINK?

Some weeks ago I had a conversation about the “good old days” with several groups of young adults when I preached in the youth tent of the Wisconsin camp meeting. I asked them how they felt about the past, particularly Adventist history, and what significance the past had for them. Many of these young adults, varying from ages 16 to 25, felt that Adventist theology and doctrine was closely linked to Adventist history.

Many of them were open and interested in learning about the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I was surprised by this openness because of the popular stereotype that young people don't really care about history in general,

**Truth is an advancing truth, challenging us to walk in the increasing light.**

much less church history. When I asked the same questions to the youth group of the College View church in Lincoln, Nebraska, I heard similar answers (even though the group was slightly younger, spanning the ages of 13 to 18). Again, a link between doctrine and history emerged, together with a clear interest in knowing more about the pioneers and their times. This, of course, was not a very scientific survey, but I found the results surprising.

### LEARNING FROM THE PAST

There is something positive about our willingness to learn from the past. The idea that a correct understanding of doctrine and history are at the same level of importance, however, requires a closer, clarifying look. By making an unbreakable connection between Adventist history and Adventist doctrine, we might be creating a roadblock to what the Lord of the church may wish it to learn.

As important as it is to be aware of the past and understand it, tying doctrine only to history might hinder the spiritual development and theological understanding of the church. If we insist that God's truth can only be equivalent to what we believed in the past, we are giving this past a power it cannot have, one that will leave us with an unbalanced approach. By elevating the past to the primary role, we might be going against the wise counsel Ellen White penned when she warned, “We must not think, ‘Well, we have all the truth, we understand the main pillars of our faith, and we may rest on this knowledge.’”<sup>1</sup> Truth is an advancing truth, challenging us to walk in the increasing light.

An unhealthy preoccupation with the past, and making it the sole benchmark for a correct understanding of doctrine, counters the notion of present truth as a growing light and exchanges it for the romanticized mirage of “past times were better.” It undervalues present truth as a dynamic force by which the Spirit guides the church into the future.

It is difficult to move forward when we walk backward. The opposite is also true. Dismissing the past as useless and thinking that our present understanding is more advanced than that of those who came before us results in a loss of identity and an arrogance based on a fatal self-centered notion that ignores the importance of history. In the same book Ellen White offered the brilliantly balanced counsel of looking at the pillars of our faith with confidence, while not disparaging the notion of embracing and engaging the future as we continue to grow.

The past is important. The decisions and actions of our present also affect our future; and by informing our present in a balanced way with the past, we will be able to heed the clear apostolic admonition of “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith” (Heb. 12:2). As we express our gratitude for “His leading in our past history,”<sup>2</sup> we focus on the One Who transcends time, Who lives in our present, and Who will finish writing history in a mind-blowing future I cannot wait to see. 🍌

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 29, 1893.

**J. Harold Alomía** is lead pastor of the College View church at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska.



# “SO OTHERS MAY LIVE”

It's a familiar feeling: boarding an airplane, wondering who will be sitting next to you. I have decided it's best to be surprised, so I read while people pass by. Then I hear it: "Hi, I'm sitting there," the gesture always pointing at the seat next to mine.

This time I have a quiet one. His sweatshirt frayed at the cuffs, he reads. Our destination hours away, dinner is served. The flight attendant holds up two trays and says: "I have a chicken or cheese lasagna. You two are my last meals; the flight is full!"

My travel companion asks, "Would it be OK if I take the chicken? I need protein, for training." His voice trails off, and I smile as the flight attendant places the trays in front of us. Once settled, we open our entrées to realize we have the incorrect ones. We casually exchange trays, and I am amused at his apologies: "I apologize about that, ma'am." And: "Would you like any extra fruit, ma'am?"

So the conversation begins. His name is Jeremy. He is headed to Canada to begin Coast Guard training. He wants to be a Coast Guard rescue swimmer. I listen as his voice fluctuates in excitement. He is reading through homework to prepare for the first day. He will do well. He wants this bad enough.

As I pick through a questionable salad, he asks what I do for a living: college professor and volunteer hospital chaplain. He nods, yet seems unwilling to accept my answer: "If I may ask, which one is your real calling, ma'am?"

What? I look at him in surprise. Is he

trying to make sense of my life choices?

"Does one have a stronger motto that inspired you?" A motto? Both have mission statements. I tell him that both professions give me tools to deal with the other.

He pulls out a small, laminated card from his jacket pocket: "So Others May Live." This is a motto for rescue swimmers: "It reminds me why I will be in the water helping others; reminds me of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for me. You and I, we have an awesome opportunity with those we meet." Even at his young age, he knows the motto of life, the duty of Christians. He, too, has searched the obvious.

As the lights dim, I pull out my Bible and read through the Gospels. "So others may live." I wonder if it is a real motto, a reminder of what needs to be done.

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Five hours later I reach my destination. Jeremy still has a way to go. I wish him well and promise to keep him in my prayers.

As I wait for my ride, I pull out my Bible. There's another bookmark in the gospels. I carefully open the Bible to where the small bookmark is. I recognize it. Underlined in the page is the section: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

I flip the small bookmark over and read the words that now have a new meaning: "So others may live." ♣

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Dixil Rodríguez lives in Texas.

SEARCHING  
THE OBVIOUS  
DIXIL  
RODRIGUEZ



JEREMY PULLS OUT A  
SMALL, LAMINATED  
CARD FROM HIS  
JACKET POCKET.

# SELECTIVE MEMORY

GERALD A. KLINGBEIL

“I wish I could get my hands on some leeks and onions.”

“Yeah, do you remember the huuuuge melons we used to eat every week?” another voice said wistfully.

“I hope I’ll soon get some meat between my teeth,” opined a deep male voice. “This fluffy white stuff is getting to me.”

“Pots of meat, fish, fruits, and plenty of water. I just don’t get it; why are we sitting in this God-forsaken wilderness again?” piped a loud female voice. “Egypt was so much better than this dreary, dry, and dusty place.”

Silence. Sighs. More silence.

As we imagine similar conversations of those who had been saved for freedom, we may wonder why in the world Israel, God’s covenant people, suffered from the selective memory syndrome. Yes, terror and angst may have played a role. Just imagine yourself standing at the shore of the sea with hundreds of Egyptian chariots and thousands of elite troops thundering toward you. We can

(Ex. 16:3). A death wish, following directly after the “near-death” experience at the shores of the sea where they had seen God’s mighty salvation in action. I always imagined that I would still be floating on cloud nine after such a mighty miracle, but would I?

#### WHEN WE DON’T SEE CLEARLY

We run across Israel’s selective memory again and again in the annals of their history. They don’t like manna and long for meat (Num. 11:4-9); they doubt God’s conquering power and prefer death in Egypt or the wilderness over conquest and settlement (Num. 14:1, 2); they want to go back to Egypt—again and again (verses 3, 4; cf. Lev. 18:3; Deut. 17:14-20). Their murmurings betray their lack of faith—and their short memory.

Forgotten were God’s mighty signs and wonders in Egypt; forgotten were the rushing waters at the sea that had vanquished the elite army units of one of the most powerful nations of the ancient world; forgot-

## *Grace triumphs over our worst fears*

understand their cry to Moses: “What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt?” (Ex. 14:11). Fear makes us wish for strange and irrational things.

But fear could not have been the only reason. As we continue to read Israel’s story, we hear God’s people exclaim: “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death”

ten was God’s thunder and fire at Sinai.

We often forget reality and remember fiction. Israel’s fiction sounded like liberating slavery or prosperous poverty. It’s nonsensical to those reading from the outside; apparently, it made perfect sense to Israel in the wilderness.

In fact, Israel’s prophets consistently urged their audiences never to return to Egypt. “Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the mul-

## Israel's fiction sounded like liberating slavery or prosperous poverty.

titude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord" (Isa. 31:1; cf. Isa. 30:1-5; Eze. 17:15). Often their calls fell on deaf ears. It seems that we live in a different, parallel universe when we indulge in selective memory. Reality becomes fantasy world and dreams transform actuality—at least in our minds.

### THE OTHER SIDE

There is, however, another side to the issue of selective memory. I recently came across it when I read Hosea 2:14, 15: "Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt."

God is speaking here through His prophet to His bride, Israel, anticipating Israel's return to Him. Considering Israel's attitude to Egypt and the reality described in the Pentateuch, what shall we make of the second half of verse 15? Why would God want Israel to respond "as in the days of her youth"? Is God suffering from selective memory? Does He view Israel's time in the wilderness uncritically, forgetting the reality of murmuring, golden calf worship, and near-constant rebellion?

Hosea 11 may offer a helpful clue. Right from the outset God makes sure that we know His take on human history. "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (verse 1). God's love begins every human journey—including also Israel's sojourn in the wilderness. His compassion brought them out of Egypt; His power defeated their enemies; His grace forgave their murmurings and rebellions. Hosea tells us that God is aware of our wanderings and bad choices, but that as we run to Him He chooses to forget the past.

Instead of running to God, however, Israel chose Baal and other images (verse 2); they didn't recognize the One who taught them how to walk and healed all their infirmities (verse 3); they didn't like

His "cords of human kindness" (verse 4) and were determined to turn from the Most High (verse 7). Yet with all of this, listen to this timeless promise: "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not a man—the Holy One among you" (verses 8, 9).

Even more, the prophet Micah tells us that God will not remember our iniquities, because they have been disposed off in the deepest part of the ocean. "You will tread our sins underfoot," writes Micah, "and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). God's selective memory meant unmerited favor and unwarranted grace for ancient Israel. It means the same for us.

### LEARNING FROM THE PAST

I love history. I love looking back and seeing the impact of human choices. But there is more to history than endless lists of important dates, well-known names, and significant documents. In the midst of human history I discover God's presence in surprising places. He is not far removed and busy in another far-flung region of our universe (or another, for that matter). God is at the center of our history, because it is His history too.

When humanity messed up—God was there (Gen. 3). When Israel cried for delivery—God heard their cries (Ex. 1-3). Throughout history, God has been at work—visibly and behind the scenes. He knows our reality and doesn't turn a blind eye to our bad choices. He is a realist when it comes to the all-pervasiveness of sin on Planet Earth. And yet, when we move to Him and run into His arms, He breaks the cycle of self-destruction that has become our *modus operandi* for millennia. He takes our sins, covers them in the blood of Jesus, and then dumps them in the deepest sea—and forgets. That's one type of selective memory I can live with. 🌱

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**Gerald A. Klingbeil** is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* who enjoys discovering God's hand in history—on the grand and on the personal scale.



PETER N. LANDLESS

## Do Vegetarians Get Enough Protein?

**Q:** I worry that a vegetarian diet will not provide adequate protein for the daily needs of my family, especially my teenage children. Is it reasonable and safe for the Adventist Church to require its adherents to be vegetarians?

**A:** Proteins are one of the nutrient food groups essential to the human body. They are building blocks of human tissue and can also serve as a source of energy. Proteins are made up of chains of amino acids. During digestion, proteins are broken down into their constituent amino acids and absorbed into the bloodstream. They are then used in the body's growth processes, the repair of body tissues, the production of enzymes, and the breakdown of foods. There are 20 amino acids; nine are termed essential because the body is unable to synthesize these and they must be present in the food we eat.

Although animal proteins are regarded as more complete because they contain all the essential amino acids, vegetarians and total vegetarians (vegans) are readily able to get enough essential amino acids by eating a variety of plant proteins. Plant sources of dietary protein are easily able to supply the nutritional needs of growing children, those who are physically active, and even seniors. The key is to eat a variety of plant proteins each day. If we do that, it is no longer considered necessary to pair proteins (e.g., beans with rice) at a particular meal.

Nonmeat sources of proteins include beans, peas, lentils (legumes), processed soy/grain products (meat alternatives), nuts, seeds, and dairy (eggs and milk). In order to maintain a consistently healthful diet, one should limit high-fat and salty protein dishes such as highly seasoned entrées, meat analogs, and deep-fried foods. Teenage boys (14-18 years) require 6.5-ounce equivalents of protein per day, and girls in the same age group require five-ounce equivalents per day. Generally, an ounce equivalent of protein may be obtained



in a quarter cup of cooked beans, a teaspoon of peanut butter, a half ounce of nuts or seeds, or one egg.

The August 1, 2016, issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association Internal Medicine* reported that a high intake of proteins from animal sources, especially processed and unprocessed red meats, was associated with an increased mortality rate. An increased intake of protein from plant sources was associated with a lower death rate. The data was drawn from two large studies representing 3.5 million person-years (very robust numbers). The conclusion of the researchers is that people should eat more plant proteins than animal proteins, and if animal proteins are consumed, red meat should be avoided. We recommend that total vegetarians (vegans) should supplement vitamin B12, vitamin D, and, where needed, calcium. Lacto-ovo vegetarians should also supplement vitamin B12 as they age because absorption becomes less efficient. Additionally, dairy should be used sparingly.

The Adventist Church does not “require” but rather “encourages” a balanced vegetarian diet.

The science, not surprisingly, fits in perfectly with the legacy of the Adventist health message. We are blessed to have this knowledge. But even more blessed if we apply it! 🍌

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



## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

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*God has blessed our past,  
but now we have to go forward.*

**ELLEN G. WHITE**

**O**ur work was not sustained by large gifts or legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of organization has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into according to the Bible plan. The body "has been compacted by that which every joint supplieth." As we have advanced, our system of organization has still proved effectual.

## **AVOIDING THE PERILS OF DISORDER**

Let none entertain the thought that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study and many prayers for wisdom that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled. At God's command, "Go forward," we advanced when the difficulties to be surmounted made the advance seem impossible. We know how much it has cost to work out God's plans in the past, which have made us as a people what we are. Then let everyone be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing His cause. . . .

Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with Heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and perfect discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from Heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God, and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality. . . .

## **WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?**

In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.

We are now a strong people, if we will put our trust in the Lord; for we are handling the mighty truths of the Word of God. We have everything to be thankful for. If we walk in the light as it shines upon us from the living oracles of God, we shall have large responsibilities, corresponding to the great light given us of God. We have many duties to perform, because we have been made the depositaries of sacred truth to be given to the world in all its beauty and glory. We are debtors to God to use every advantage He has entrusted

**We have been made the depositaries of sacred truth to be given to the world in all its beauty and glory.**

to us to beautify the truth by holiness of character, and to send the messages of warning, and of comfort, of hope and love, to those who are in the darkness of error and sin.

Thank God for what has already been done in providing for our youth facilities for religious and intellectual training. Many have been educated to act a part in the various branches of the work, not only in America, but in foreign fields. The press has furnished literature that has spread far and wide the knowledge of truth. Let all the gifts that like rivulets have swelled the stream of benevolence be recognized as a cause of thanksgiving to God.

We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor. . . .

As the disciples of Christ, it is our duty to diffuse light which we know the world has not. Let the people of God "be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Timothy 6:18, 19, KJV.

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This excerpt is taken from *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1999), pages 197-205. Seventh-day Adventists believe Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.



**TURN YOUR  
RADIO UP AND  
YOUR TV ON**

**A LOOK AT THE LEGACY OF  
ADVENTIST MEDIA MINISTRIES.**



**WILONA KARIMABADI**

**T**here was a time when families gathered together to listen.

They listened to music. They listened to stories. They listened to news. And suddenly, with this new thing called radio, people were connected to and through people they couldn't see. Through the radio came the stories of war and of victory or defeat. Through it came tunes that mothers and fathers would hum to themselves long after the box was switched off. And through these radios came messages that would inspire, educate, and change hearts.

For the times, radio was revolutionary, and Adventism recognized an immense opportunity. This new media (as it was then) provided a way for the gospel to travel as it never could have before. Years after that, television entered in, again changing the world: now the Word could go out with a face attached to the message. Later still, the Internet has now forever linked the world and the church's ability to reach even more with programming available on devices as small as the size of a hand, available anytime, anywhere.

**POTENTIAL**

Not all programming available on radio and television in those early days was appropriate. That certainly has not changed today. Many faithful Adventists, both leaders and lay members, struggled against using the same modes of communication that may have provided questionable content to then deliver the good news of Christ and His second coming. But the reach of this type of media was unquestionable. So yes, perhaps the "devil's box," as my grandmother used to call it, caused many a family to lock it out of their homes altogether. But think about it: Where would we be today without Faith for Today, Voice of Prophecy (VOP), Breath of Life, 3ABN, Hope Channel, and

others? Could Adventism have made such strides during the past century without embracing the media of the day?

James Aitken, secretary of the Radio-Television Department of the General Conference, said this back in 1968: "When I say that television is a God-given instrument to bring a message of hope to the multitudes, I am speaking of the individual or family which needs help. How can they be reached behind the fortress walls of the high-rise apartments and the sprawling residential districts and across the vast and mighty plains, where individuals and families often live isolated?"<sup>1</sup> Those words ring true even today, nearly 50 years later.

**ROOTS TO GROWTH**

Once the church harnessed this technology, radio and television became a huge game changer. This era in church history saw remarkable inroads into previously difficult-to-reach groups because of it, and it caused growth—both in membership and in the church's ability to produce quality programming for these modes. Faith for Today, for example, as the church's first televised media ministry, continues now with what it started then. "Faith for Today is a 'first contact' ministry," says Mike Tucker, speaker/director. "Few people today will be baptized without first forming a relationship with people in the church. Faith for Today helps form these relationships by creating television that focuses on areas that matter to secular people, such as relationships and health."

While not owned or operated by the Church, 3ABN is a supporting ministry whose humble roots have grown into something much greater, providing a platform for other media ministries as well. "The world has greatly changed since 3ABN began broadcasting on satellite television more than 30 years ago," says Danny Shelton, founder

	General Conference Headquarters*	Adventist News Network*	Pastor Ted Wilson*	Adventist Review Ministries*
FACEBOOK	439,069 fans, started July 2009	123,228 fans, started August 2011	68,082 fans, started September 2015	141,384 fans, started August 2010
TWITTER	59,424 followers, started April 2009	41,043 followers, started July 2009	11,678 followers, started September 2015	27,800 followers, started July 2009
INSTAGRAM	23,045 followers			
PINTEREST	started mid-2013			

\*current at time of writing

and president. “I thank the Lord that He has used 3ABN as the catalyst for many other Seventh-day Adventist television networks and media groups. In 2016 there is no way we could fulfill the gospel commission without using the avenue of media and broadcasting. Praise God for what He’s doing through each one!”

Adventist.org*
212,968 sessions
176,082 users
435,335 pageviews
2.04 pages per session
2:03 minutes per session
54.81 percent bounce rate

\*the statistics at the time of writing

goes about finding information these days. It is now a significant part of their operations.

Broadcast content, whether through television or radio, is often archived on ministry Web sites, making it easy to stream or download programming for sharing. Web sites increasingly generate traffic through the use of social media in a variety of platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc. A strong social media presence is a crucial part of any reputable organization seeking to make a mark in the world, and it is no different for ministry. The ability for anyone, regardless of who they are or where they are, to create video and post it instantaneously with nothing more than a smartphone has created an unparalleled explosion of information accessibility.

What does this mean for the church? Everything,

### THE NEW MEDIA OF THE DAY

While the power of television and radio have not been diminished with new media developments, they have certainly increased in strength—just think of satellite radio and Internet-based streaming services. Everything televised can now easily be found on the Internet through Web sites such as YouTube and Vimeo, among so many others. Adventist media ministries would be inadequate without a solid Web presence, as that is the primary way Western society

goes about finding information these days. It is now a significant part of their operations.

To better understand what God has done and continues to do, just consider the following timeline of Adventist media ministry:<sup>2</sup>

1929

H.M.S. Richards begins a radio ministry with other Adventist ministers in the Los Angeles, California, area.

1937

The first broadcast of the *Voice of Prophecy* radio program debuts. J. L. Tucker begins a daily devotional radio program out of Portland, Oregon. Called *Quiet Hour*, it is now based in Redlands, California.

1942

VOP launches its first national Adventist Bible correspondence school and Braulio Perez Marcio started *La Voz de la Esperanza* (“Voice of Hope”) in Spanish.

1950

William Fagal begins broadcasting *Faith for Today* in New York City on May 21. By December it has become the first national religious telecast.

1975

*Breath of Life* joins the new media center, with Walter Arties as director and C. D. Brooks as speaker.

1984

A carpenter by trade, Danny Shelton founds Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN), a 24-hour television and radio network. Today it has expanded to include several networks.

1994

The church forays into satellite ministry with Mark Finley preaching out of the Home Shopping Network studio in Los Angeles to five churches.

1995

With Mark Finley speaking, the first national NET event is broadcast from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to 650 churches in the United States and Canada. More national and international NET events follow.

because the message now goes faster and farther than ever before, only building as time goes on.

### AN ENDURING LEGACY

Radio and television in the early days of its influence were undoubtedly cutting edge. And if you think about what is said in Matthew 24:14—“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (KJV)—media evangelism is a natural progression.

“Every day our Hope Channel team is reminded of the global impact of our media ministries,” says Derek Morris, Hope Channel president. “The words of Jesus are true: the harvest truly is great.” Today we can Snapchat stories out to the world in seconds. We can build Pinterest boards focused on so many aspects of the Adventist message. We develop and post short videos available to download within minutes of release that are then shared through any number of social media out-

lets. What was started all those years ago has endured and become something much greater than anyone could have foreseen. And it’s a mind-boggling fulfillment of prophecy.

“I personally believe we now have the technology in place to take the story, the saving, life-transforming story of Jesus to the entire world,” says Connie Vandeman Jeffery, daughter of *It Is Written* founder George Vandeman and former associate manager of the Adventist Media Center. “Through the Internet; through mobile phone technology; through traditional media of radio and television; through social networking. And through traditional evangelism. We need every tool—traditional and new—to tell the story.

“That’s the enduring legacy of all Adventist media ministries.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Columbia Union Visitor*, Jan. 11, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> Time line adapted from <http://www.adventistmediacenter.com/article/22/about-us/history> as well as other mentioned ministry Web sites.

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1956

George Vandeman founds *It Is Written*. It is the first televised religious program to broadcast in full color.

1965

*Amazing Facts* is started by Joe Crews in Baltimore, Maryland, as a radio idea to attract new listeners from all backgrounds. It expands to television programming in the mid-1980s. Now based in Sacramento, California, it features Doug Batchelor.

1971

The church leases short-wave airtime in Portugal, and Adventist World Radio is born. AWR now operates a comprehensive podcasting service. Today all programs in more than 100 languages are available online to listeners worldwide.

1972

The General Conference establishes the Seventh-day Adventist Radio Television and Film Center in Newbury Park, California (north of Los Angeles). *Faith for Today* and *It Is Written* relocates there. *Voice of Prophecy* joins them in 1978.

1996

Loma Linda Broadcasting Network (LLBN) launches. Based in Loma Linda, California, the network is 100 percent viewer-supported and features programming in multiple languages via seven networks.

2003

Hope Channel North America is officially established specifically for the United States and Canada. Esperanza TV also launches, aimed at North and Central America.

2013

The board of the Adventist Media Center votes to sell the facility and calls for its six media ministries to relocate.

Present

While no longer based in California, Adventist media ministries such as *Faith for Today*, *Voice of Prophecy*, *It Is Written*, *Breath of Life*, and *La Voz de la Esperanza*, along with newer ministries *LifeTalk Radio* and *Jesus 101*, continue on.



## SELF-CARE FOR CAREGIVERS

*Avoiding burnout!*

The challenges of being a caregiver can be overwhelming, especially if you feel you have little control over the situation, or that you're in over your head. If the stress of caring is left unchecked, it can take a toll on your health, relationships, and state of mind. So taking time to rest, relax, and recharge isn't a luxury—it's a necessity.

Caring for someone can be a rewarding yet stressful experience; it involves many responsibilities and pressures. Some causes of stress include changes in the family: household disruption,

financial pressure, and added workload, which is why caregivers can be more susceptible to burnout.

"The most effective means of preventing caregiver burnout is taking care of the caregiver," says Joan Lunden, author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Family Caregivers*, and caregiver to her mother before her mother's death in 2013. Lunden offers these tips to avoid caregiver burnout:

- Reach out to others for support.
- Uphold your friendships.
- Take time to exercise.

BY JULIE GUIRGIS

- Share the role with family and friends.
- Keep your medical appointments.
- Eat a healthful diet.
- Talk to a professional.
- Take a break from caregiving.
- Engage in pleasant, nurturing activities such as reading a good book or taking a warm bath.
- Attend to your own health-care needs.
- Get proper rest and nutrition.
- Take time off without feeling guilty.<sup>1</sup>

## SELF-CARE

A common question caregivers ask is “How can I take care of myself when I’m exhausted from taking care of my loved one?” Understandably, the thought of taking care of anyone or anything else can be draining.

Jennifer Loudon, personal growth pioneer and author of *A Year of Daily Joy*, gives sage advice on the importance of self-care: “Self-care is not selfish or self-indulgent. We cannot nurture others from a dry well. We need to take care of our own needs first, and then we can give from our surplus, our abundance.”<sup>2</sup>

Taking care of yourself involves spending time, energy, and money to ensure that your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs are being met, and engaging in self-directed activities that nourish your mind, body, and spirit.

Jesus promises that He will bring rest and refreshment to the weary. He says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

But when we neglect to surrender our cares to God, Ellen White says, “Your trouble comes because you are so anxious to run things yourself that you do not wear the yoke of Christ.”<sup>3</sup>

So as we make resting in God’s presence a regular practice, He is faithful to refill our tanks and equip us with strength to meet the challenges of each day.

## ASKING FOR AND ACCEPTING HELP

When people have asked if they can be of help to you, how often have you replied, “Thank you, but I’m fine”? A caregiver’s reluctance to seek help stems from their belief of being a burden to others or appearing incapable.

Prepare a list of ways others could help you. For example, someone could take the person you care for on a 15-minute walk a couple times a week. Your neighbor could pick up a few things for you at the grocery store. A relative might fill out some insurance papers. When you break down the jobs into very simple tasks, it is easier for people to help. And they do want to help. It is up to you to tell them how.

Use other resources. Ask friends, family members, and professionals for suggestions. If nothing helps, accept that the problem may not be solvable right now. You can revisit it at another time.<sup>4</sup>

## MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH

Exercise promotes better sleep, reduces tension and depression, and increases energy and alertness. If necessary, do frequent short exercises instead of those that require large blocks of time. Find activities you enjoy.

Walking is an easy exercise to do and a great way to get started. Besides, its physical benefits help reduce psychological tension. If you find it difficult to fit in the time, try incorporating it into

**When people have asked if they can be of help to you, how often have you replied, “Thank you, but I’m fine”?**

your everyday life, such as walking to the shopping center, a nearby park, or around the block with a friend.

## TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR

As well as taking on the household chores, shopping, transport, and personal care, you may also give medications, injections, and medical treatment to the person you care for. This, of course, is based on medical care and advice from your doctor.

While you may discuss your loved one’s care with the doctor, however, remember that your own health is just as essential. Building a partnership with a doctor who addresses the health needs of both you and your loved one is important.



## TIPS TO AVOID BURNOUT

Here are a few ways to fend off burnout when caring for a friend or loved one:

- **Speak up.** Don't expect friends and family members to read your mind about what you need and how you're feeling. Be honest about what's going on with you and the person you're caring for. If you have concerns or thoughts about how to improve the situation, express them, even if you're unsure how they'll be received.
- **Set aside at least 30 minutes every day for yourself.** Do whatever you enjoy, whether it's reading, working in the garden, knitting, doing crosswords, or playing with the dogs.
- **Spread the responsibility.** Try to get as many family members involved as possible. Even someone who lives far away can help. You may also want to divide caregiving tasks. One person can take care of medical responsibilities, another can help with finances and bills, and another with groceries and errands.
- **Find ways to pamper yourself.** Small luxuries can go a long way in relieving stress and boosting your spirits. Light candles and take a long bath. Book a massage. Get a manicure. Do whatever makes you feel special.

The responsibility of this partnership ideally is shared between you as the caregiver, the doctor, and other health-care staff.

## DEALING WITH EMOTIONS

Your emotions are messages to which you need to listen; they exist for a reason. Even if they are negative or painful, your feelings are useful tools for understanding what is happening to you. Learn from them, and take suitable action.

**What's important to understand is that all your emotions, whether positive or negative, are valid.**

Caring for someone can invoke various feelings and emotional reactions. What's important to understand is that all your emotions, whether positive or negative, are valid. Some common emotions you may experience as a caregiver are anxiety, sadness and depression, anger, frustration, and grief. When you find that your emotions are intense, that might mean the following:

- You need to make a change in your form of caregiving.
- You are grieving a loss.
- You are experiencing increased stress.
- You need to be assertive and ask for what you need.

It's easy to pour so much energy into caring that it becomes your whole life. But regularly taking time out to attend to your needs and health is an important aspect of being an effective caregiver.

Remember to value yourself and all that you do. 🌱

<sup>1</sup> J. Lunden and A. Newmark, *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Family Caregivers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> J. Loudon, *A Year of Daily Joy* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, "The Cause of Perplexity," *The Gospel Herald*, Apr. 23, 1902.

<sup>4</sup> Taking Care of You: Self-care for Family Caregivers (prepared by Family Caregiver Alliance, 2012), [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org).

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**Julie Guirgis** is an international freelance writer based in Sydney, Australia. She cares for her intellectually challenged brother and her father, who has dementia.

**ALSO IN THIS SECTION:**

- » VINTAGE VALUES
- » CRITICAL CARE
- » THE WAY WE WERE
- » COMFORT, CONTEXT, AND CONVENIENCE
- » YESTERDAY'S DATES

# ENGAGE

## FUTURE REALITIES

*How to stay credible in a changing world*

In 1905 an amateur physicist in Bern, Switzerland, wrote four papers that stunned the world and changed how we view the universe.

The patent office clerk with basset-hound eyes and unruly hair explained how molecules move and why light appears as a wave of energy or a beam of tiny particles. His paper on the theory of special relativity outlined a world in motion, positing that when we approach the speed of light, time slows and aging stops. Later he theorized that gravity is a curving of space, like a bowling ball on a soft mattress, that affects nearby objects.



**CHRIS BLAKE**



Albert Einstein was describing universal truths. So it is with us. As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, our high calling is to describe universal realities that exist beyond what anybody believes.

We describe these realities best with our lives. How we choose salad dressings and soul mates, our responses toward people who are disagreeable, whether we float on the surface of confirmation bias or swim against the current, our decisions and actions matter. Yet it seems our world is changing so fast that we can't keep up.

How can Adventists move into the future with a credible influence in today's society? Here are three paths.

### **FOCUS ON OTHERS' POSITIVES**

Today's atmosphere in Adventism is too frequently one of unveiled distrust. We hear sinister motives projected onto presidents and pastors, elders, and earliteens. *They* have agendas; *we* have standards. Guardians and seekers both fervently warn about the mounting influence of "those others."

In reality, the world divides us much as Jesus' garments were at the cross. What plays best on CNN/FOX/MSNBC is conflict. Black versus White. Rich versus poor. Jews versus Muslims. Conservatives versus liberals. U.S. versus the world. We are being played.

Unless we battle against it, conflict language forms a corrosive worldview. For example, our lesbian and gay friends are not "problems" or "issues"—they are family, children of God with faces and names. People who believe differently about women's ordination are actually not the spawn of Satan; they are friends with varying viewpoints.

Whenever we condemn others, we step onto the dark accuser's turf. With that step our joy drains and our witness to the world evaporates, for no witness is attractive without joy. We support the accuser by demonizing and complaining. Whenever we defend others, we steer to the side of the Great Defender.

My friend Becky, age 32, raised her eyebrows. "I can count on one hand the people in my class who are devoted to the church," she said. "It's the spirit of criticism that drives the others away. They love God; they *are* spiritual; they do agree with Adventist values, just not with the politics and criticism they find in the church."



Sadly, the scarred walls of memory imprison many of Becky's peers. To experience freedom and hope, they turn to virtual communities in coffee shops and on glowing screens far from the madding congregation.

"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood," the apostle Paul points out, "but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12). Our enemies are not Iranians or Russians or Muslims. We wrestle not against the mythical *theys* of "conservatives" or "liberals." Our enemies are the principalities of darkness. Period.

The rotten fruit of evil's seed are fear, pride, and a critical spirit. Tendrils spread through churches in lurid animosities and petty tyrants. Universal truths twist from "God is a sovereign of infinite, infinitesimal order" to "God frowns when you wear faded blue jeans to church." We lose track of priorities. One gorilla is deeply mourned while thousands of desperate refugees are abandoned.

The angels weep.

But the best way to eliminate a bad habit is to develop good ones. To eradicate weeds, grow a robust lawn. To keep children out of trouble, engage them happily in healthful activities. To minimize destructive behaviors in a church, involve all members in risky, joyful, productive ministries. Evil is best squeezed out, not tweezed out.

Philippians 4:8 expresses this proactive approach: Whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, praiseworthy, *think about these things*. Amidst a broken and toxic world, focus on the positives. Wherever we are, whomever we're with—*think about these things*. That's what Jesus did and does continually. His isn't a sanitary attitude of avoidance; it's a liberating emphasis on preemptive healing.

This outlook is as sweet as a crisp watermelon heart. Some time ago, I saw a statement in a Hallmark store: "Home is where we laugh the most and are loved the best." Can we say that truly about our home church? The mass of churches lead lives of quiet desperation.

What matters in the end, and in the beginning, is love. Love is the only legacy that lasts. The world's greatest lover proclaims, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35).

## EMBODY HONESTY AND RESILIENCY

Christianity is more experiential than propositional. Though we hold universal realities to be self-evident, they evidently need to be written out.<sup>1</sup>

But God is infinitely more than 28 beliefs, as Jupiter is more than the written formulas that enabled the probe *Juno* to reach it. God and the world are more interested in our honesty than in our immaculate perceptions. In a land drowning in lies, the ninth commandment is equally important today as the fourth.

When I hear claims that some have attained character perfection, I consider how we drive. Have you ever halted even one inch over a crosswalk? turned into the far lane? accelerated one click above the speed limit? arrived at a stop sign without making a complete stop? Honestly? Some drivers have yet to be introduced to their own turn signal.

Our son Geoffrey failed his first driving test. He told me he flunked the test five seconds after starting the car.

"Wow. How did you manage that?" I asked.

He said, "I pulled through an empty parking space in front of me."

*Ah, no, I recalled with shame. I know where he saw that maneuver modeled.*

So, flawless perfection? I am chief of imperfect sinners, and that's just driving a car. Don't get me started on the big four temptations of sloth, lust, egoism, and deception that leer at us in the mirror. I fight the good fight of faith, I trust my Savior to save me *from* my sins, and I also confess my infinite need of His grace.

Frankly, we need articles and books and blogs by Adventists about our messes. The Bible is full of human frailties, bravely transparent, on display through history, epistles, and poetry. God and the

**UNLESS WE BATTLE  
AGAINST IT, CONFLICT  
LANGUAGE FORMS  
A CORROSIVE WORLDVIEW.**

# HUMANS TEND TO BE AS INCONSISTENT AS A STRING TRIMMER: TO STAY PRODUCTIVE WE HAVE TO BE BUMPED.

world know we make mistakes—and also willful, destructive sins—you and I. When I hear people sunnily observe, “I wouldn’t change a thing about my life,” I think, *I’d change 10,000 things I’ve done and haven’t done.*<sup>2</sup>

Humans tend to be as inconsistent as a string trimmer: To stay productive we have to be bumped. The most profound lessons are learned after we have messed up and resolve, *Never again.* World-weary watchers hunger for honest, raw, resilient stories of hope.

When, not if, the world’s currency collapses (see Rev. 18), God’s realities will remain. Our resilience will also be tested, especially at the end of time: “Because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved” (Matt. 24:12, 13).

After last summer’s tragic headlines of “lawlessness,” we witnessed love calcify and die in streets, posted comments, and convention halls. When Jesus says “stand firm to the end” His meaning is clear: *Do not let your love grow cold. Fight against diminishing others. In the face of wickedness, keep your resilient love warm and nourishing, for you will need it forever and now.*

## LIVE WITH HUMBLE ASSURANCE

Ellen White observed, “When we seek to gain heaven on the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress.”<sup>3</sup> We do not fear the future or worry about our salvation; we embrace the Lifegiver.

Jesus maintained, “Let your light so shine before people that they will see your good works and give glory to the *Seventh-day Adventist Church.*”<sup>4</sup>

Well, no. He didn’t say that, because it’s not about us. Church is not God, never was and never will be. The Advent movement of the 1830s and ‘40s began with a misunderstanding—a mistake

of biblical interpretation, which the Spirit graciously later corrected. That bit of history ought to make us especially humble.

Humility does not sacrifice principles; it does change its mind if evidence warrants. The answers we were comfortable with 10 or 20 years ago may no longer be satisfactory. We carry many names for this process. *Education. Present truth. Adaptability. Wisdom.* Staying credible in a changing world requires all of these.

Jesus describes the reality of His self-forgetful lovers. “When did we see You in need and we helped You?” they exclaim. “When did we see You excluded on the margins and we gladly welcomed You? We were merely living our lives by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly” (see Matt. 25:34-40; Micah 6:8).

Jesus smiles. “I know,” He says. “That’s what I loved.”

For the Master it was always about us. For us it is always about the Master. Focusing on the positives, we stay honest and resilient, all the time pointing to our Savior.

Humble assurance enables us to be both teachable and tough. Jesus poured Himself into our world, and we drink the Living Water with deep gulps. We realize that freedom is found only in following Him closely. We risk our comfort to stand up for those on the margins, the ones Jesus stood up for and stood up for until He stood up on the cross. We know grace—forgiving, accepting, and sharing—is as much a universal law as is gravity.

With full-throated lives we discover the God who invented strawberries, sex, thunderclouds, joes in pouches, music, and pelicans gliding along curling waves.

Is that a reality worth experiencing? Will it play in the future?

We don’t have to be an Einstein to know the answer. 🔥

<sup>1</sup> We call these written universal truths *commandments*—and there are far more than 10. For examples, Jesus commanded us, “Do not fear,” “Love your enemies,” and “Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’”

<sup>2</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson wrote, “The cruelest lies are often told in silence.”

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 1, p. 364.

<sup>4</sup> Paraphrased from Matthew 5:16.

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# TOOLS OLD AND NEW

*Silent films are making a statement.*

**STEPHEN CHAVEZ**

The scene opens with a man, dressed fastidiously, patrolling the entrance of a church. A well-dressed couple approach as the man posts a sign on the front door: “No Smoking.” After a brief (silent) exchange, the couple, he smoking a pipe and she smoking a cigarette, walks away indignant.

A sign on screen reads “One Week Later.” The same woman and man approach the man in front of the church, who this time has posted a sign: “No Jewelry.” Again, the couple leaves annoyed.

The next week, after a third unsuccessful attempt to enter the church, the couple sit on a park bench opposite the church. “What do we have to do to get into this place?” they ask a man sitting on the bench.

“I’ve been trying to get into that same church for years now,” says the man on the bench. “They won’t let me in either.”

I won’t spoil the ending; you can watch it yourself.\*

This YouTube video, “Formalities,” is filmed in the black-and-white style of 1920s silent films à la Charlie Chaplain, Buster Keaton, and the Keystone Cops. The series, Vintage Values, is one of the video concepts produced by tedMEDIA, part of the Trans-European Division’s (TED) communication department.

Samuel Neves, now an associate director of communication for the General Conference, was one of the producers of the series, and is one of the handful of actors seen in the brief vignettes (three to four minutes each).

“In general, our attention span has been diminishing over the past few decades,” says Neves. “Each Vintage Values clip points viewers to a single principle, with which they probably already agree.”

A DVD containing the series of 10 Vintage Values is one of the Resources for Life produced by TED communication and is available at ResourcesforLife.eu. They are also available on YouTube and contain titles such as “Have Mercy,” “Priority Seating,” “Gold Digger,” and “Bake a Cake.” Each episode contains a modern moral, along with a Bible text that supports that particular lesson.

“Most of the people who are watching [Vintage Values] use them as a resource in their local communities,” says Neves. “We’ve heard many stories of pastors who [use them to] illustrate biblical lessons or parables.”

Vintage Values is a nod to our diverse society, and the necessity of having in our toolbox tools that are both old and new.

*\*Vintage Values is now available on ARtv. Search for ARtv on Apple TV, Roku, or Samsung Smart TV. You can also view these videos on the ARtv app, available for Apple and Android; or simply go to the Adventist Review Web site: [www.artv.adventistreview.org](http://www.artv.adventistreview.org).*

**Stephen Chavez** is an assistant editor of *Adventist Review*.

**EACH VINTAGE VALUES  
CLIP POINTS VIEWERS  
TO A SINGLE PRINCIPLE.**





## CRITICAL CARE

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*Doctors can do only so much.*

BY ERNEST A. JONES

**A**s I entered the intensive-care unit (ICU) in our rural hospital north of Spokane, Washington, I could tell it would be a busy day.

Three patients were in the ward; two were not critical and would probably be transferred to the medical ward later that morning. But the third one took

almost constant monitoring.

I was the lone nurse in the unit that day, and I was thankful that at least the two other patients were not in critical condition. I was pushed just to keep the one patient quiet, who was not mentally sound at the time. The doctor expected this patient to become more mentally stable as his physical condition improved, but in the meantime he needed almost constant attention. I had to stop him from pulling out his intravenous tubes or the monitor cables while making sure he stayed in his bed. Keeping track of all three men and their monitors was a challenge.

### OUT OF NOWHERE

“Ernie,” the hospital’s director of Nursing Services (DNS) said as she entered the ICU around 9:00 a.m., “your aunt is in the emergency room. She’s very ill. Your uncle’s asking for you. I’ll cover for you here while you check on your aunt.”

Fear struck my heart as I rushed down the stairs, not waiting for the elevator. My mind raced back to a year before when my wife, Dorothy, and I were expecting our first baby, only to suffer the birth of a still-born son. This year the doctor had told us not to risk Dorothy’s pregnancy by traveling to a family reunion.

I wasn’t going to go without her, so my mother’s siblings came to us. Dorothy had never met them, and I hadn’t seen them for decades. Uncle Ken and Aunt Bea had checked into a hotel the night before, phoning us to say that Aunt Bea was not feeling well and they did not

want to come to the house and expose Dorothy to whatever she had.

Aunt Bea looked so sick, so pale and fragile lying in the ER bed. I greeted her, but I wasn't sure she even knew me. Fear nearly overwhelmed me as I held her hand and tried to reassure both of us.

Uncle Ken, looking haggard from fear and lack of sleep, led me into the ER waiting room. "They tell me that your Aunt Bea is in a diabetic crisis. They're going to admit her to ICU."

"Lord," I prayed as I ran back to the intensive-care unit, "please be with her. She came to see me, and now she's sick. Heal her according to Your will. And please send me help. I can't care for all four patients alone."

### PRAYER SUPPORT

"Ernie, admit your aunt and stay with her," said the DNS. "Sister Mary and I will care for the three men."

Much relieved, I admitted my aunt to the ICU while the DNS watched the man who was so restless. Sister Mary took care of the other two men.

Aunt Bea's doctor, Dr. Lenny, was in frequent conversation with the diabetic specialist in Spokane. Aunt Bea's blood sugar level of 700 was dangerously high. Carefully following the specialist's instruction, Dr. Lenny kept increasing the insulin in her IV, but the blood sugar level remained dangerously high.

Drawing me aside, the doctor said, "Your aunt needs to be shipped to Spokane, but she's too sick to make the trip. Even to airlift her at this time would be too dangerous. I don't know what else I can do. Nothing seems to be working. I'm afraid we might lose her."

Concern showed on his face as he watched me. The doctor and I had always had a good relationship, and for a brief moment he laid his arm on my shoulder as we drew support from each other.

"At least I can pray," I replied softly, my voice breaking under the strain.

"Yes, pray. God can and might heal her. That's the only answer I can think of now," Dr. Lenny said.

### REINFORCEMENTS

I called Dorothy to tell her about Aunt Bea. "Should I come in?" Dorothy asked.

I started to tell her to stay home, but I broke down and couldn't speak.

Sensing my fear and frustration, and knowing my love for my family, Dorothy said, "I'm coming in right now. I'll get a ride with the neighbor."

"Call Pastor Ed first," I whispered, my voice again cracking.

About a half hour later I saw Dorothy and Pastor Ed coming down the hallway. I felt relief. Aunt Bea and Uncle Ken didn't belong to any church at the time, but when I introduced them to the pastor, they welcomed him willingly. Aunt Bea was only semiconscious, and seemed not to be fully aware of what was going on.

Pastor Ed spoke a few words to Uncle Ken before


turning to Aunt Bea. He took her hand and spoke softly to her, as a close friend might do. Her eyes seemed to shine a little clearer as he spoke. Then bowing his head, he spoke to our heavenly Father, pleading for Aunt Bea to be healed, ending with the words "Thy will be done."

Something like an electrical charge filled the room.

The change was dramatic and almost instant. The nurses, doctor, Dorothy, Pastor Ed, Uncle Ken, and I stood like we were glued to the floor as we stared at Aunt Bea.

My uncle said later that Aunt Bea's condition improved instantly. "Now I believe in God," he said reverently.

Dr. Lenny ordered more blood tests, which now showed the blood sugar to be in a normal healthy range. Aunt Bea was alert with a clear mind.

One hour after Pastor Ed's prayer the doctor said to me, "An hour ago your aunt was too critical to move to a better treatment center. Now she's well enough to transfer out of this unit. I'll keep her in the medical unit for a few days to get her insulin regulated. She is a fortunate woman. God healed her; I didn't." 

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**Ernest A. Jones** was the first male nurse hired at Mount Carmel Hospital in Colville, Washington. Now retired, he and his wife live near College Place, Washington.

Something like  
an electrical charge  
filled the room.



# THE WAY WE WERE

*A theology for understanding change*

**BY RICK LABATE**

**O**ur title is a nod to Barbara Streisand's song about past experience, with its penetrating question "Can it be that it was all so simple then?"

Memory can be selective. I think back to when my brothers and I used to go canoeing for one long weekend each summer down the Delaware River. One year the weather was extremely hot and humid, and the river was low so we had to work extra hard. We were complaining that our destination couldn't come soon enough. We wanted out!

But now when I think back to those canoe trips my mind doesn't go to the hard rowing in the hot sun. Instead, I remember the camaraderie we shared, the wildlife we saw, and the gentle sound of the river outside our tent as we fell asleep. In my memory the experience is more wonderful than it was at the time.

So the song asks, "Can it be that it was all so simple then?" That's a question to ask not only about canoe trips, but of our own Seventh-day Adventist denomination.



## YESTERDAY

There's an ache in many hearts for what used to be. Troubles seemed so far away from our yesterday. The older I get, the more nostalgia I harbor for simpler times gone by. Pictures of things and events from the days of my American boyhood in the 1960s, and my teenage years in 1970s, give me a warm feeling and tempt me to believe things were better then. Maybe there were things worth cherishing. But clear-eyed history shows the 1960s and 1970s to be turbulent times. The sexual revolution and the drug culture were in full swing. Civil rights battles were an ugly struggle. The assassinations of U.S. president John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Francis "Bobby" Kennedy first stunned, then fractured, and finally destroyed our sense of innocence, leaving us a deficit of national optimism.

## ADVENTISM YESTERDAY

When we think back to our own church history, we may be tempted to believe that things were simpler and better. The entire family went to church, and even arrived for Sabbath School in time to get their week of missionary work included in the class activity report. There was Uncle Arthur's *Bible Story* series, and his *Bedtime Stories* at bedtime; Ingathering on cold winter nights; King's Heralds music and the radio preaching of H.M.S. Richards, Sr. Back then we went from door to door on Sabbath afternoons handing out literature before returning to the church for Missionary Volunteer (MV) Society meetings. If you had children, they went to church school.

But all our memories are not quite as warm: dresses and skirts subjected to the kneeling test; guitars and their players—like the Wedgwood Trio—considered instruments of the devil; beards that got men dismissed from Adventist schools; and our defining lists of "don'ts" that measured the Christian walk. The times have surely changed, and faith and practice seem much different now.

But how comfortable are we about change? Do we see adjustment to technical innovation as a compromise of values? Do we hear new ideas as undermining the truths of our message? Or has the spirit of Athens become our own? The Athenians, you recall, "used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new" (Acts 17:21, NASB).<sup>1</sup> How can we know whether the next step takes us over a cliff to crash on the rocks below, or into God's wondrous plan for this church?

One thing is for sure: we don't have to be afraid for the future. Church cofounder Ellen White speaks confidently about tomorrow: "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us."<sup>2</sup>

## THERE'S AN ACHE IN MANY HEARTS FOR WHAT USED TO BE.

## THINGS WE FORGET

Unfortunately, we do tend toward rather tricky ways of forgetting. Either that, or we are tempted to a romanticism that glosses over our history of denominational and doctrinal development. As if the early pioneers of our faith passively sat around in full agreement with one another over all points of our denominational and doctrinal development. This, of course, is far from the truth.

The momentous significance of our movement to God's last-day purposes, and the rugged individuality of our pioneers, meant that the establishment of Adventist church structure and theology was no walk in the park, or season of peace and tranquillity. With regard to such theological issues as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personhood of the Holy Spirit, America's mid-nineteenth-century theological climate effectively mirrored the state of the Christian church in the fourth century. The emergence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from that climate could be expected to reflect the challenges and issues of the day.

By way of example, brilliant administrator and

theologian Uriah Smith, longtime editor of *Adventist Review*, progressed through multiple stages in his view of the nature of Christ, from basic Arianism (Jesus Christ was “not the beginner, but the beginning of the creation, the first created being”) to acceptance of His full deity. His positions on the atonement also migrated toward orthodox Christianity’s acceptance of Christ’s death on the cross as making full atonement for sin, though Smith, dedicated and godly, never seems to have arrived at that orthodoxy.<sup>3</sup>

### WHAT KEEPS US TOGETHER

Smith was one of several early Adventist leaders who were either dubious about or categorically opposed to the doctrine of God as three distinct persons of undivided and equal power and authority. Perhaps the principal force that held them together and guided them into the miraculous unity they came to experience was their faith in the authority of the Word of God.

The Sabbath Conferences between 1848 and 1850 demonstrated their commitment, and were a prelude to the church’s future commitment until today to prove all things, searching the Scriptures as the Bereans did, holding fast only to that which Scripture showed to be good (see 1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11). So while misunderstanding, prejudice and the climate of independence played their part, the pioneers were united in basing their arguments on Scripture. As long as their sincere recourse was to Scripture itself rather than to a creed as their rule of doctrine, they were bound to discover truth sooner or later.

Even when the issue of righteousness by faith became the focus of unseemly contention among them in the 1880s and early 1890s, the vehemence of their disagreements was over what the Bible says. The church’s ministers, theologians, and other leaders may have been divided in opinion, but they were all united in their devotion to the Bible, and their conviction that God would show them from His Word what they were to believe.

The progressive understanding of truth has always involved groping after it, documenting partial understandings that would be corrected and advanced by others afterward. In the growth and progress of our church we may observe a pattern of divine leadership. We see that God seldom gives light until His people have done their best to

investigate what the Scriptures have to say on the subject. Understanding and accepting their obligation to study to show themselves approved before God (see 2 Tim. 2:15), our pioneers were reluctant to make official statements of doctrine. They refused to vote a creed, and so do we today—because they recognized, as we still do, that there was more truth coming: the path of the just is like a light that shines more and still more until the light of day (see Prov. 4:18). None of us wants to hinder the sun’s advancing rays by sealing the doors and windows through which God shines His truth.

### WHAT WE CAN LEARN

Our history, we have seen, has been characterized by both division and unity, by the spirit of independence and the willingness to come together in the truth. Ours is a history of men and women willing to leave their established churches and ready to enlist in the vanguard of a new thing that God was doing. They could resist and rebel, and they could also conform and organize—eventually!

What does their example and our history teach us? I suggest at least two lessons.

First, much of what we believe today is the result of God choosing to lead through the process of theological debate. Second, knowing the difference between principles and policies is critical. Distinguishing between principle and policy is itself one hermeneutic rule or interpretive strategy among many. A principle is a fundamental truth that serves as the foundation for beliefs or practices. A policy is the local application of a principle that makes it right and true for certain times, places, or people. Sound hermeneutics, i.e., sound strategies of interpretation, will help us respond correctly to issues that confront us, distinguishing between fixed principle and variable policy.

God’s demand that Moses remove his sandals because he is standing on holy ground (Ex. 3:5) does not constitute a rule that I remove my shoes when entering a place of worship. The principle of respect should always apply. But policies on the practice of respect may vary from culture to culture. The hermeneutic principle involved here is that circumstances may alter either meaning, or requirement, or both.

Both Mark’s rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-21) and Paul’s Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30, 31) ask

what they must do to be saved. But Jesus and Paul provide very different answers. Whether geographically, politically, or spiritually, the jailer and the young ruler were in very different places. Their differences required different answers.

The challenge of correct interpretation is not going away this side of heaven: a car flashing its headlights at you at sunset may mean that you need to turn on your headlights; or that you do have your headlights on—on high beam; or that there is something to be cautious about as you approach the bend in the road—perhaps an animal, or an accident, or a radar trap. We will always need humility to acknowledge that there are answers we do not yet have—we have not yet gone round the bend; humility to concede that there are questions we have not yet heard; humility to admit our limitations before the challenge of new questions. Also, we will always need the wisdom of heaven to help us toward correct conclusions. And humility to grant that though we prayed and waited and listened, we may still not yet have come to the best of conclusions.

A third hermeneutic principle is the do-your-homework principle. It involves bringing together all the data available upon the topic before drawing a final conclusion. Isaiah's instruction is surely apropos: precept must be connected with precept, line must be added to line (Isa. 28:10). It's the connect-the-dots principle. Don't jump to precarious conclusions when you can get there safely and comfortably.

#### WHAT WE FEAR

The ultimate fear in some minds is that allowing change in our church means losing our identity as Adventists who faithfully follow God's will. But this is not a fear that we need to have.

Our history shows that God is fully capable of leading His church. Indeed, it is we who often get in His way, declaring ourselves the church's gatekeepers, armed with our lethal weaponry of criticisms. If we must be keepers of the gate, let us be there to keep them open that the world may know



## WE CAN TRUST HIM; THIS IS HIS CHURCH.

that all are welcome into the family of the people of God.

Open and welcoming arms are agents of change: they change the church's numbers; they show the passion of our compassion; they change our composition, and thus change onlookers' perspectives about us. Change based on constant, careful Bible study is fulfillment of God's promise already noted in Proverbs 4:18. Living organisms change as God constantly gives new life. We can trust Him; this is His church. And lest we forget, let us say it again: "We have nothing to fear for the future except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1923), p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> For the story of Uriah Smith's various theological blunders and improvements on the nature and divinity of Christ, the atonement, the Holy Spirit, see LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1971), pp. 158-166.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 196.

**Rick Labate** is an associate director of pastoral ministries for the Potomac Conference in Staunton, Virginia.

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# COMFORT, CONTEXT, AND CONVENIENCE

The crude cardboard sign was fashioned like hundreds of others stationed along Michigan Avenue.

Hi. My name is Cyrus.

I'm a veteran.

I need \$28 to buy a seven-day bus pass. Please help. God bless.

I began to formulate a plan. I would go to my hotel room, change out of my professional attire, and find Cyrus. The bus station was only a few blocks away. Perhaps I'd be able to encourage him or pray with him along the way. With temperatures soaring to a very humid 90 degrees, it would certainly be more comfortable in a T-shirt and shorts.

I was in and out of my room in less than five minutes. On my way out I stopped to buy Cyrus a bottle of cold water and jogged back to where he had been sitting.

He wasn't there.

I kept walking, hoping to see him somewhere along the Magnificent Mile. He was nowhere to be found. I hoped someone else had reached him first, purchasing the bus ticket he needed. But deep down I knew I'd put my own convenience ahead of helping him.

## AT YOUR CONVENIENCE

Unfortunately, I'm not the first Christian to make a decision based on comfort or convenience. In his book *The Tipping Point* Malcolm Gladwell described an experiment conducted by two Princeton psychologists at the school's Theological Seminary.

The premise was simple: Experimenters met with a group of seminary students individually, asking them to prepare a short talk on a biblical theme

and walk over to a nearby building to present it. Some students were asked to talk about more technical themes, like the relevance of professional clergy to religious vocation. Others were told to focus on the parable of the good Samaritan.

On the way to their presentations, each student would encounter a man slumped in an alley, obviously in pain. Which theology students would stop to help?

One more variable was introduced. Some students were told that they had plenty of time before their presentation; others were informed they were already late and had better hurry.

Most people would assume that those given the topic of the good Samaritan would be most likely to stop. But this was not the case. In fact, one of the experimenters noted that "on several occasions, a seminary student going to give his talk on the parable of the good Samaritan literally stepped over the victim."

The only factor that influenced behavior was whether or not the student was in a rush. Of those that were told they were late, only 10 percent stopped. Of the group with more time, 63 percent stopped to help. Gladwell calls this concept the power of context. I call it the power of convenience.

Despite our belief system, or how frequently we read our Bibles, each of us is capable of being selfish, of allowing our present situation to determine how and when we extend help to those in need.

We need to be aware of this so that we can make decisions that might conflict with our context, comfort, and convenience. Because when it comes to being the hands and feet of Jesus, good intentions aren't always good enough. ▀

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**Jimmy Phillips** is executive director of marketing at San Joaquin Community Hospital.

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THE WHY  
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DESPITE OUR BELIEF  
SYSTEM, EACH OF US  
IS CAPABLE OF BEING  
SELFISH.

## YESTERDAY'S DATES

We asked several couples about their memories of dating and courtship. These are their responses. —Editors

### George and Carla

In my college days socializing on campus was rare. The closest thing to it was at the cafeteria. Male and female students were randomly assigned to tables on a quarterly basis. I was delighted when a stunningly beautiful young woman from Suriname was assigned to my table. For some inexplicable reason we were assigned to the same table for two consecutive quarters. Our daily cafeteria encounter soon blossomed into friendship.

Moonlight hikes and Saturday night social programs were eagerly anticipated under the watchful eyes of faculty members. Dating was restricted to supervised parlor visits, a privilege extended only to seniors. During one of these parlor visits I proposed marriage. I was then a senior ministerial student. We were married on campus December 23, 1952. And yes, we are still happily married until death do us part!

**GEORGE W. BROWN** IS A FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION.

### Kari and Jan

You're becoming friendly with Jan Paulsen," the principal's wife said. "He's not the one for you."

I wasn't remotely interested in that kind of relationship. Jan and I just liked to talk. Then I learned that walking with him broke a school rule that said "Students should not associate with the opposite sex in an obvious manner."

We didn't mean to be rebels, but after a while we realized that neither of us wanted the talking to end. We got married on July 1, 1955, in Jan's hometown of Narvik, inside the Arctic Circle. Sixty-one years later I still say, "Boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance" (Ps. 16:6).

**KARI PAULSEN IS MARRIED TO JAN, A RETIRED GENERAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT.**

### Shirley and Roy

You are so proud. You feel you're better than others, so you don't talk to people!" It was a seemingly rude and unorthodox attention-getter.

"And what have I done to be accused like this?" Shirley asked Roy.

"Can we talk a little?" begged Roy. Thus went their first conversation, one rainy evening in Buxton, Guyana, May 1955.

Four hours stretched into 61 years. They're still talking.

**SHIRLEY AND ROY MCGARRELL, RETIRED EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

### John and Mary

Did that lunch invitation originate out of pity for the pastor who still remained single? Perish the thought and enjoy the lunch.

So I showed up at the mission leader's home. His wife welcomed me in. Soon she gave her command to someone in the kitchen: "Mary, serve that drink, please." As I reached out to accept Mary's glass of cool lemonade my hand accidentally touched her thumb. That touch seemed to release 440 volts of electricity into my nervous system.

Lunch over, my host heaved a sigh of relief: mission accomplished—for her. Three months later, with everything decided by family and friends, we were married.

Fifty-four years later Mary and I continue to wonder at the audacity of that arrangement, and the power of such union only because of those words of long ago, "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."

**JOHN FOWLER** IS A RETIRED ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.



## Leo and Lucila

I started attending Brazil College in 1949. The next year Lucila, daughter of R. M. Rabello, Voice of Prophecy (VOP) speaker for Brazil, came to finish her high school. She was walking to the dorm when I had a first glance at the lovely girl and fell in love. Her parents were in the United States recording programs for the VOP in Portuguese. They didn't approve of "teen dating," so it took us awhile—six years. But on February 20, 1956, we got married. Lucila means "light," and she has been the light of my life for more than 60 years.

**LEO RANZOLIN IS A RETIRED GENERAL CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT**

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## Julieta and Humberto

We met in Montevideo, Uruguay, in the summer of 1955. Humberto was visiting his parents, and a friend introduced us at an Adventist Youth meeting. Since Humberto was also studying humanities at a university, we had a lot to talk about. Our friendship grew during youth camp, and before returning to Argentina, he said, "Let's formalize our relationship." I happily agreed! Letters flew back and forth across the border, and the next summer we were together nearly every day. One evening Humberto asked, "Will you be my wife?" Again I said yes, and our parents agreed. With children and grandchildren we'll soon celebrate our sixtieth wedding anniversary. God is good!

**JULIETA RASI, WIFE OF HUMBERTO, RETIRED GENERAL CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR**

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## Gloria and Alvin

When I was a teenager, my prayer was "God, give me a husband who loves You first and me next." After graduating from Oakwood College and coming to Washington, D.C., I met that man at a party given by an Oakwood classmate. We became friends and attended several church activities together. People noted that he treated his mother like a princess. We were married on July 23, 1967.

**GLORIA JACKSON SINGLETON IS A RETIRED HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL.**

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## Artur and Emma

Artur noticed a shy blond girl with cute freckles at the Adventist church he visited that day. She sang in the choir and played the mandolin. He found out her name was Emma. She had lost her father at a young age, and her mother during her teen years. Her atheist brother cared for her until he learned of her plans to become an Adventist. He threw her out into the street, along with her belongings, the day she was baptized. Artur Sr. realized he had met an exceptional person. Right away he approached her. In response she said she needed first to seek advice from the Lord. Prayers and seeking the will of God not only brought them together but also marked their pastoral ministry and all 57 years of their marriage.

**GALINA STELE, ARTUR AND EMMA'S DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, IS A RESEARCHER AT THE OFFICE OF ARCHIVES, STATISTICS, AND RESEARCH OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.**

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## Elizabeth and Matthew

One day after church in August, 1966, my friend Opoku Boateng introduced me to Matthew, a ministerial student who was selling Adventist books in Kumasi, Ghana. Two weeks later, at a farewell party for the Owen Troy missionary family, Matthew sat at the head table where I served, and claims that I gave him presidential treatment.

I invited him and Opoku for lunch. Opoku stayed away. After that Matthew kept visiting my workplace until he had to return to school in Nigeria. When I mentioned that my prayer group was praying for people who were not married, Matthew responded, “You have your answer.”

Back in school, he wrote to thank me for wonderful hospitality, got no reply, and got on a plane to Ghana. Our number one agenda item became visiting parents, relatives, and friends. Finally, he asked, “Would you like to be a pastor’s wife?”

Without hesitation I answered, “Yes.”

BEFORE THEIR RETIREMENT, **ELIZABETH BEDIAKO**, AND HER HUSBAND, **MATTHEW**, SERVED AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

## John and Medina

I became a Seventh-day Adventist when I was 18 years old. At the time I worked in a printing house in Geneva.

After my conversion I became a student at the seminary. In the school magazine were pictures of a beautiful and special girl, Medina, my cousin’s best friend, from New Caledonia, near Australia. It took two years for us to become close friends. Then she was called to teach at our school in Rwanda, and I was called to military service and began my university studies.

We got married when she returned, August 4, 1968. Besides my conversion, it was the best thing I have ever done, and every day I thank God for it.

BEFORE HIS RETIREMENT, **JOHN GRAZ** WAS DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

## Imogene and George

It was Washington Missionary College in those days—1947, and the spring of George’s senior year. He had recently broken up with his girlfriend and learned that I, also, was no longer dating the fellow I had dated for some time.

He phoned to ask if I would accompany him to an outdoor Navy Band concert downtown. I politely declined because I was planning to attend a wedding that night.

George—never one to be shy—asked if it would be OK if he went with me to the wedding!

Since it was a large church wedding of someone he also knew, I agreed. We dated casually until he graduated in August and left for his first job in Arkansas. My family lived in Takoma Park, Maryland, so many of our activities were spent there: meals, walks along Sligo Creek, programs at the college or one of the area churches.

The next summer—1948—George thought it was a great idea for us to marry so he wouldn’t have to be a single dean of boys another year. But I was determined to finish my last year of college. Our lively discussions continued until he was reconciled to waiting another year for marriage.

Then I decided to make it a matter of prayer, asking God for a Gideon-type sign. What I thought was impossible happened. So in just three weeks I planned a small church wedding, with all my family and friends working feverishly.

On August 31, 1948, Imogene Allen became Mrs. George Akers.

AFTER A CAREER IN ADVENTIST EDUCATION, **IMOGENE AND GEORGE AKERS** ARE RETIRED, LIVING IN TENNESSEE.



# CLOSER LOOK

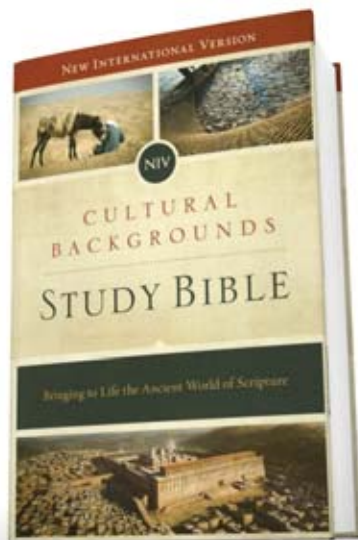
## NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS STUDY BIBLE.

Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016, \$49.99 hardcover. Reviewed by Gerald A. Klingbeil, associate editor of *Adventist Review*.

**S**tudy Bibles have proliferated significantly over the past two decades. If you are a teenager or a woman or a man, you can buy a study Bible tailored to your (perceived) needs. Some study Bibles engage archaeology or the Protestant Reformation, while others focus on discipleship, life applications, or apologetics. People preferring a charismatic focus in their reading of Scripture will find numerous options, as do Jewish readers, or those who enjoy a particular Christian author. Adventist readers can purchase a study Bible with Ellen G. White comments, or enjoy the notes written from an Adventist perspective in the Andrews Study Bible.

These diverse study Bibles all aim to make the Book of books more understandable and real. The *New International Version Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible* (NIVCBSB) continues this tradition, seeking to “increase [the] understanding of the cultural nuances behind the text of God’s Word” (p. iii). Like other study Bibles, the NIVCBSB includes an introductory section for each biblical book. Unlike other study Bibles, it focuses less on message or theology and more on historical and literary settings. Hidden throughout the volume are dozens of helpful charts and maps, as well as short notes and articles, often appearing together with color images from ancient Near Eastern artifacts, sprinkled throughout the textual notes. These notes and articles are indexed at the end of the NIVCBSB (pp. 2273-2284), which also includes a 2,474-word concordance based on the text of the NIV.

The two editors of the NIVCBSB, Wheaton College professor John H. Walton and Asbury Theological Seminary professor Craig S. Keener, provide a very helpful introduction, responding to a number of important questions (pp. viii-xi), such as “How was Israelite culture shaped by its surrounding culture?” or “How will understanding the Bible’s cultural background improve my faith walk?” The Old Testament chronology favored in the NIVCBSB suggests a fifteenth century B.C. exodus, a position that most Adventist scholars would agree with, and a rare position in contem-



porary scholarship. The introduction to the book of Daniel situates the book solidly within the Babylonian and Persian empires, even though the editors allow for possible later writing down of the oral tradition—possibly a nod to critical scholarship suggesting a second century B.C. date for the writing of Daniel.

The NIVCBSB includes an important three-page introduction, “Major Background Issues From the Ancient Near East” (pp. xxxix-xli), highlighting 12 key elements of cultural concepts of the ancient world that differ, often significantly, from people living in the twenty-first century. These include, among others, God’s presence in the material world, the focus on community (as opposed to individualism), the reality of the spirit world, the lack of clearly distinguishing between the natural and the supernatural world, the importance of creation, death, and memory, and the retribution principle. A careful consideration of this important note offers a good starting point for reading the Word that has been speaking throughout millennia and in different cultures—and continues to speak loudly and clearly. The NIVCBSB offers a useful amplifier for those who long to hear. 📖

## The Do-good Pilot

Everyone seems to complain about poor airline service. So here's the other side of the story: my experience on a recent United Airlines flight from Los Angeles to Dallas.

The plane arrived 30 minutes late from San Francisco, and the Los Angeles crew scrambled to turn it around for the trip to Dallas. But when I got to the bottom of the jet bridge, I found a woman in a wheelchair waiting to be allowed on board. I was first in line after the woman, and a crowd of people grew rapidly behind us.

The captain emerged from the plane door and, with an outstretched arm, helped the woman out of the wheelchair. The woman, elderly and frail, slowly stood on unsteady feet, a cane in one hand. The captain released her for a moment, picked up her carry-on bag and sweater, and guided

her past the flight attendant and onto the plane. Once inside, he stopped and asked me to wait a moment while he made sure that the woman was seated comfortably.

I was so moved by the pilot's unexpected kindness that I watched, transfixed. I only remembered too late that I had a cell phone that could capture this moment. I tried anyway to take a photo.

As soon as I sat down in my seat, I tweeted: "Impressed: @United captain helps frail old woman onto LAX-DFW flight. #HeroesInLife"

When the plane landed in Dallas two hours and 20 minutes later (11 minutes ahead of schedule), I saw that United had tweeted back for details. "We'd love to pass the love along," a representative wrote.

I wasn't sure which details United wanted, but I was determined to learn the name of this compassionate captain. At the plane's exit door, I asked the flight attendant, who smiled and motioned to the open cockpit door. "Why don't you ask him yourself?" she said.

Captain Tuong Nguyen looked surprised at my query. I thanked him for his kindness to the elderly woman and reached out my hand in appreciation. Captain Nguyen smiled, humbly, as he extended his own hand, the same one that had assisted the woman. I could see that he considered his good deed to be all in a day's work.

Is taking time to show kindness to a vulnerable person all in my day's work? "But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good" (2 Thess. 3:13, NKJV).<sup>\*</sup> Kindness is all in a day's work, even when we are running behind schedule. Kindness can have its own reward. Even though our flight was running late, the pilot took the time to assist the passenger, and we landed early.

Help me, Lord, never to grow weary in doing good. 🍀

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



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