

APRIL 2024: NOT ALONE + LIAR, LIAR + POTLUCK IS THE POINT + SEARCHING FOR STABILITY + FINDING FORGIVENESS + TRUTH MATTERS

ADVENTIST REVIEW



SEEING
POSSIBILITIES

Carol

is 80 and living with gratitude every day.

She had a friend tell her about ways to take advantage of new tax benefits so that she could help in a greater capacity. She is as excited as ever to help the youth program at her church continue to grow. But Carol still has questions.



To learn more about Carol's journey—
scan the QR code, or visit willplan.org/Carol



Planned Giving
& Trust Services

Experience
the Joy of Giving

willplan.org



FEATURES



18 **A MOSAIC OF GIFTS** | BETH THOMAS
No matter one’s abilities, all gifts are welcome.



20 **THINK DIFFERENTLY. THINK POSSIBILITY.** | LARRY R. EVANS
Seeing beyond, visualizing potential, proving opportunities

22 **“I WILL BE HANDSOME”** | SIKHULULEKILE DACO
Down syndrome hasn’t lessened his witness.



24 **NOT ALONE** | BECKY ST. CLAIR
Acknowledging sorrow is often the first step in the grieving process.

28 **MINISTERING TO THE UNFORTUNATE** | ELLEN G. WHITE
God is testing our characters. How are we doing?

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor.

28

ARTICLES

- 32 **LIAR, LIAR**
JOHN PECKHAM
Slander and lies have been with us since the beginning.
- 36 **TRUTH MATTERS**
JOHN WESLEY TAYLOR V
There is such a thing as absolute truth.
- 40 **SEEKING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THE LIFE OF CHRIST**
RONNY NALIN
Our understanding grows when we focus on Jesus.
- 44 **TOO MUCH INFORMATION?**
MARINA F. GARNER
Learning how to filter is key to understanding truth.
- 48 **SEVEN PHASES**
ALMIR MARRONI
The *Review* isn't the only one celebrating a birthday.
- 53 **17 YEARS LATER**
ALMIR MARRONI
One piece of literature went a long way to make a big difference.
- 54 **SEEKING WISDOM**
TIMOTHY G. STANDISH
There's a place for education in sharing the gospel.
- 56 **SEARCHING FOR STABILITY**
MERLE POIRIER
Older pioneers are replaced with a new generation.
- 60 **A SAVING MESSAGE**
W. W. PRESCOTT
There's only one message the world needs.
- 62 **GRANDMA GRAY'S LESSON**
LILLIAN D. AVERY-STUTTLE
A witness from the front porch
- 64 **THE SMALL BOY IN THE HOUSE**
MARGARET E. SANGSTER
While the language may have changed, little boys have not.
- 72 **THE LEGACY OF MAUD SISLEY BOYD**
MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL
God asked; she was willing.

NEWS | OPINION

- » AdventHealth University Inaugurates Third Leader in Its History
- » Adventist Church in Cuba Responds After One in Three Pastors Leaves Since 2021
- » Adventist Church Calls for Safeguarding Orphans and Vulnerable Children
- » Women in Ministry Are "Called, Chosen, and Faithful"
- » Endowment Will Contribute to Black Adventist Research
- » Adventist School in Myanmar Offers Education to Diverse Communities
- » *The Rescue* Series Introduces Children to the Great Controversy



32



EDITORIAL

- 5 **JUSTIN KIM**
WHEN SOMEONE PACKS YOUR PARACHUTE

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 **LETTERS**
- 67 **HOUSE CALL**
- 69 **EDITOR'S PICKS**

COLUMNS

- 31 **CLIFF'S EDGE**
CLIFFORD GOLDSTEIN
- 43 **PRACTICALLY SPEAKING**
DELBERT W. BAKER
- 47 **REIMAGINING FAITH**
SHAWN BRACE
- 65 **JOURNEYS WITH JESUS**
JILL MORIKONE

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

PUBLISHING BOARD

Ted N. C. Wilson, *chair*
Guillermo Biaggi, *vice chair*
Justin Kim, *secretary*
Audrey Andersson, G. Alexander Bryant, Williams Costa, Paul H. Douglas,
Mark A. Finley, James Howard, Erton Köhler, Peter Landless,
Geoffrey Mbwana, Magdiel Perez Schultz, Artur Stele, Ray Wahlen,
Karnik Doukmetzian, *legal advisor*

EDITOR Justin Kim

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Sikhululekile Daco, John Peckham

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR Greg Scott

COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR/NEWS EDITOR Enno Müller

DIGITAL PLATFORMS DIRECTOR Gabriel Begle

ASSISTANT EDITOR Beth Thomas

FINANCE MANAGER Kimberly Brown

MARKETING Jared Thurmon

ART DIRECTION AND DESIGN Brett Meliti, Ellen Musselman/Types & Symbols

LAYOUT TECHNICIAN Fred Wuerstlin

COPY EDITOR James Cavil

OPERATIONS MANAGER Merle Poirier

EDITORIAL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste

SENIOR ADVISOR E. Edward Zinke

AD SALES Glen Gohlke

CIRCULATION/DISTRIBUTION Rebecca Hilde, Sharon Tennyson

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

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

Web site: www.adventistreview.org.

Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this issue are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. All rights reserved. Bible texts credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. 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. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked ESV are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise noted, all prominent photos are ©Getty Images 2024.

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

Copyright © 2024, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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

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

ADDRESS CHANGES AND SUBSCRIPTION QUERIES:

adventistreview@pacificpress.com or call 1-800-545-2449

ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES OFFICE: support@adventistreview.org

TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:

1



Adventist Church in Cuba Responds After One in Three Pastors Leaves Since 2021, by Ireydis Pita and Libna Stevens

2



Adventists in Venezuela engage in 5K Walk to Promote Healthy Lifestyle, by Steven's Rosado

3



How I Became an Adventist Teacher, by Herssel Shaira A. Capobres

4



Adventist University in Haiti Reopens as Church members Fast and Pray, by Jean Carmy Félixon and Libna Stevens

5



Special Offerings Will Help Overcome Shortage of Pastors in Papua New Guinea, by Juliana Muniz

Book Your Flight!



YOUR NEXT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Flight 3:16 is a complete VBS kit. Includes all the supplies needed to host 14 children*



\$30 OFF

COUPON CODE **VBS30**
VALID UNTIL JUNE 30, 2024

Regular Price **\$289.99**
Free Shipping**

Exciting 5 day journey around the world through Bible study, Scripture songs, games, and crafts. Preparing children and families for the ultimate destination –**Heaven!**



iiw.us/flight316ar

Visit itiswritten.shop

Call 888-664-5573

Contact your local ABC 800-765-6955

* 4 children, ages 4-6, and 10 children, ages 7-12

** in the United States





Let us offer our abilities, disabilities, possibilities, availabilities, and capabilities to the responsibilities given to us by Jesus.

When Someone Packs Your Parachute

Charles Plumb was an American jet fighter pilot during the Vietnam War. He was shot down on his seventy-fifth mission over North Vietnam. He parachuted into enemy territory, where he spent 2,103 days in prison. Plumb survived and flew planes a couple more years before retiring.

One day a man said to him, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk*. You were shot down!" Confused, Plumb asked how the man knew that.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied.

"I guess it worked!" Plumb responded. "If the chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Not only in the military, but also in the church, many individuals make a mission successful. Churches are not run by lone rangers, cowboys, or solo warriors doing their own ministry, even if called by God to do it. We are all part of a complex, complicated, and multifaceted operation, coordinated by God.

One ministry that exemplifies this cooperation is Adventist Possibilities Ministries (APM). On the surface it reaches out to the blind, deaf, the physically immobile, orphans, widows, widowers, caregivers, and those with mental health challenges. This is a crucial ministry that harks back to Jesus' message of reaching out to those in need.

Underneath the surface, APM reveals a larger lesson. Yes, everyone must be reached, but reached for what? Second Timothy 2:2 says, "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." We reach out to many so that the many will reach even more.


APM does not reach out merely to their constituents. They "reach out" to them so that they may realize their full discipleship potential and thus reach out to others. This is the core principle of "possibilities." What was once considered a weakness is now an advantage for the gospel.

Men's and women's ministries are not just about reaching men and women, respectively, but inspiring them to reach other men and women. Youth and children's ministry is not just about reaching young people, but discipling youth leaders (of any age) to reach youth and children. Family ministries doesn't treat family issues only, but inspires families to use the medium of the family to reach other families. Personal ministry is not a selective few "advanced" lay members doing the work of one-to-one evangelism, but every member educating all to do the work of Jesus. Even pastoral ministry is not the work of the individual, but the potential multiplication of the

pastor's work in every worker. The list can go on.

Our current approaches to ministry have become simplistic. If there are children, we triage them to children's ministries; if there is an Asian, we point them to Asian ministries; if there is a widow, we look toward APM. After years of preaching about individual passions, gifts, and unique interests, we have created silos in our departmental ministries. As a result, we pack parachutes only if we are good at it and understand it as the final objective in ministry.

The reality is that every follower of Jesus has been called to evangelism and service. The most zoomed-out perspective shows that our ministries work together. Ministry is based not only on individual passion, interest, and talent but also on the ability of the Holy Spirit to bless anyone. Sure, there are specialties and areas where we could work more efficiently. But we are all called to get involved in the work of mission, regardless of extroversion, introversion, temperament, or personality. Let us offer our abilities, disabilities, possibilities, availabilities, and capabilities to the responsibilities given to us by Jesus.

We work better when we work together. Just ask Charles Plumb. 

<https://medium.com/jacob-morgan/this-is-the-true-story-of-charles-plumb-5eeb7eba334e>

WE SHOULD DO BETTER

The topic of church discipline (March 2024) is a usually neglected, often unpleasant, and many times rejected obligation for church health. Once, when there was a great sweat in our church (in the 1980s) to “clear the books” (reduce), some desired to do so by letters. I insisted that such letters be carried in loving hands, and not by mail.

Can we have the loving nature that makes discipline effective? The supply of tares will not be exhausted by our efforts, and some of them will yet turn out to be wheat.

The “terrible ordeal” of *Selected Messages* (book 2, p. 380) will do its work, but we should try to do better before that.

Richard Burns



RIGHT ON

Ella Simmons’ article “In the Midst of Racism” (February 2024) was so right on in describing the lack of racial equality that has existed within our church in times past. As a young girl in the early 1950s, I had a wonderful loving Sabbath School teacher whose skin color was much darker than mine, but it went unnoticed by me because of her loving personality. One boy of light-skinned complexion caused her to cry. It seemed so wrong to the rest of us White

students that we met the troubler after class and informed him that we weren’t going to let that happen again. Our group ended up getting in trouble for the confrontation, but we still felt justified for doing it. The troubler never made trouble again. Equality is to everyone’s advantage!

Linda Everhart

KEEP THEM COMING

Like the best children’s stories we hear in church, Jo Ann Davidson’s article “Far More Than

Children’s Stories” (February 2024) revealed the unique miracle of Israel’s purpose and existence, otherwise unnoticed in its history; a story I assumed I knew. Her insight is much appreciated as it reminded me that the Bible’s power is most apparent when I pay attention to details while reading it as a whole. Please keep articles like this coming!

Gerhard Haas

A POWERFUL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

As Justin Kim points out in his editorial “The Third Greatest Sermon” (February 2024), Acts 2 chronicles a seminal event for which Jesus instructed the disciples to pray earnestly (Acts 1:4, 5, 8). Reflecting on the sound caused by a “rushing mighty wind” (Acts 2:2), I recall one breezy fall day when I was out walking, I heard a large banging sound. I looked around to see what had caused that sound. There was no large barn door near that could have caused that sound. But a gust of wind had come through and hit some tall trees in the area. The descent of the Holy Spirit was so loud that it caught the attention of people throughout Jerusalem, bringing them to congregate at the temple.

First, Jesus gave the disciples instructions that put them in the right place at the right time. The disciples were obedient to Jesus' instructions. Then God got the attention of the people through a supernatural phenomenon that brought them to the temple, where they could hear the disciples talking about how Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. Peter's sermon recalled well-known scriptural passages and presented the truths of Christ's resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. The Holy Spirit convicted the multitudes, and 3,000 repented and were baptized.

Connie Dahlke

MUCH NEEDED

We need the scholarly approach exemplified in John Peckham's "Is the Trinity Biblical?" (February 2024) promoted in Adventist media as well as from the pulpit in our churches.

Ovidiu Radulescu

John Peckham's article "Is the Trinity Biblical?" (February 2024) is clearly laid out! There are many, even Seventh-day Adventists, who preach and teach that the Trinity doctrine is wrong. Yet even in Genesis we read that the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. 1:2).

Chrissie

BIBLE TREASURES

In light of the article "Bible Study Gallery" (February 2024), I have to smile as I watch Mark Finley each week on YouTube discussing the adult Sabbath School lesson for the week and viewing the pages of his Bible as he searches the often ripped and many wrinkled pages with, of course, the many visible notes on their pages. I have often wondered, *Cannot someone give Mark a newer Bible?* Would it not be more impressive to see the gold shining edges on the new printed pages as he searches for apples of gold in pictures of silver?

Then I thought, *Some of his notes could go back to the days of his being the host of It Is Written many moons ago. Parting would be sweet sorrow.*

I also realize that I could not part with my own Bible from 30 years ago, which has many notes that I often refer to during Bible study week after week.

The galley was very impressive. Some individuals I knew well, while others were new to me. Given the opportunity, we could fill several reviews with pictures of our own favorite "Underlined Versions."

Robert Rouillard

In your February 2024 issue I found the "Bible Study Gallery" most interesting, reviewing some Adventist leaders' well-marked Bibles. My personal favorites were Dwight Nelson's Matthew 26, 27 spread followed by Mark Finley's Acts 15, 16 spread. It's not depicted in the gallery, but I would like to submit my Bible pages, including concordance, as third on my list of favorites. I am so in love with my study Bible that I have asked the Lord that when I get to heaven, He will return my well-marked Bible to me for the eternity (hopefully with improved handwriting)!

Richard Lane

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.

www.heritage.net.org
23100 Clarkrange Hwy
Monterey, TN 38574
931.839.6675



Ready to begin an enriching academic journey?
Your future starts here where Jesus is shared,
friendships flourish, college readiness is
paramount, and service is a way of life. Enroll
now and set the foundation for a fulfilling
educational experience.

...ENCOURAGING
YOUNG PEOPLE
TO LEARN,
EXPERIENCE,
LIVE AND
SHARE CHRIST



“Remember that our boss is God. And if God is with us, we are much more powerful.”
Mario Brito, p. 13

NEWS



C. Josef Ghosn (right) receives the mace from AdventHealth Florida CEO Randy Haffner during the presidential inauguration ceremony. PHOTO: ADVENTHEALTH NEWS

ADVENTHEALTH UNIVERSITY INAUGURATES THIRD LEADER IN ITS HISTORY

C. JOSEF GHOSN HAS EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN HEALTH-CARE ADMINISTRATION.

ADVENTHEALTH NEWS

C. Josef Ghosn was inaugurated as the third president and CEO of AdventHealth University (AHU) on February 15.

“Today is a special day for me and for my family, but most important, this is an important moment for our students, who are at the heart of all we do,” Ghosn shared with more than 500 guests at Forest Lake Seventh-day Adventist

Church in Apopka, Florida. “AHU is a very special place, where we have a unique opportunity to develop highly skilled health professionals who will practice health care as a ministry and make a tremendous impact on the lives of patients and their families.”

Ghosn, who joined AHU in May 2023, has extensive leadership experience in health-care adminis-

tration. Most recently he served as vice president of strategic planning for AdventHealth’s Multistate Division and, before that, as senior vice president for strategic planning for AdventHealth in Florida. Ghosn was a tenured professor and associate dean of academic affairs at Atlantic Union College. He also served as a professor of business and education at Southern Adven-

tist University and as an adjunct professor of health-care administration at AdventHealth University. He holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and a Master of Business Administration degree with a health-care administration emphasis from Andrews University.

“This is a special milestone in the history of AdventHealth University,” said Randy Haffner, president and CEO of AdventHealth Florida and chair of AHU’s board of trustees. “As we inaugurate Dr. C. Josef Ghosn, we begin a pivotal time in the life of this institution. New degrees and workforce certificates continue to be added, student enrollment is increasing, plans for expanding the current campuses are under way, and new campuses are being explored—ambitious growth plans to help our nation solve nurse and provider shortages. This means that more caregivers can fulfill their calling to provide hope and healing and join a growing workforce specially trained in whole-person care.”

AdventHealth University, with campuses in Orlando, Florida, and Denver, Colorado, was founded in 1992 and has graduated more than 10,000 students. Today the university is poised for a significant increase in student enrollment. It also maintains ambitious plans to begin expanding its Orlando campus footprint and open an additional Florida campus in the next 12 months. ▀



Ray Frometa, Youth Ministries director of the Cuban Union Conference, leads a seminar during a leadership training event in Peñas Blancas, Mayabeque, Cuba. PHOTO: CUBAN UNION CONFERENCE

ADVENTIST CHURCH IN CUBA RESPONDS AFTER ONE IN THREE PASTORS LEAVES SINCE 2021

LEADERS SPEED UP TRAINING TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE REPLACE THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT.

IREYDIS PITA AND LIBNA STEVENS, *INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS*

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cuba is doubling its efforts to equip young people in response to the emigration of a large number of pastors and local leaders in recent years. Before the COVID-19 pandemic the emigration of pastors and church leaders was a regular occurrence, but the number has grown to an unprecedented level since then, local church leaders said.

“Between 2021 and 2023 the multidimensional crisis on the island accelerated migration, something that has affected the Adventist Church here,” Aldo Pérez, Cuban Union Conference president, said. “We have lost valuable pastors and local leaders.” In 2023 alone, 29 pastoral families left the island. Since 2021 a total of 44 pastoral families have left their post. That represents a third of the pastors who lead at the union, conference, mission, and local church level, he said.

Pérez said this is nothing new. In 1980 the church lost more than

100 church workers. He calls the present situation the “post-COVID crisis, when the economic situation has become more difficult and critical here.” He added, “Many of our brothers and sisters, and many workers as well, are looking for better ways to support their family members and children, and that hits us as a church, but we praise God that in the midst of this situation, in the midst of this crisis, many new believers are joining the church, looking for refuge and hope in God.”

AN EMERGENCY TRAINING PROGRAM

The pressing situation forced leaders to implement what they call an emergency program to train new leaders. “We have a young leadership in the church, and we must equip them well so that the church can move forward with its missionary work,” Pérez said.

To face the challenge of losing so many pastors and local leaders, administrators have strategized to train 7,000 youth, including 3,500 new Master

Guides and 3,500 Adventist Youth (AY) leaders, across the island.

“The goal is to accelerate the processes and produce trained and motivated leaders to serve at greater speed and quantity than the migration pulls,” Ray Frometa, Youth Ministries director of the Cuba Union, said.

RECRUITING AND TRAINING STRATEGY

The fast recruiting and training of new leaders is the new strategy, but the vision of the church in Cuba has always been to focus on equipping leaders continually, he said. Initiatives planned for the current quinquennium have included training some 300 young people in 2023 to become instructors in each conference, appoint a Master Guide and AY leader in each district, provide a youth ministries institute online, and train local church leaders in each church to become youth mentors.

During a recent training of more than 500 youth leaders and public campus ministries (PCM) students and young professionals in January, Frometa encouraged them to strive to make a difference for the Lord and never think or say that the best of the leaders left the country. “Those of us who are left are the ones whom God will use to finish the work,” he said. “God is calling and training you because this work is not about human talent, but about the will and purpose of God.”

The Adventist Church in Cuba oversees more than 12,000 young people. About half are ages 6-15 and the other half 16-30.

STRENGTHENING YOUTH LEADERS

As part of the strategy to restore leadership, a pastor has been assigned in each of the 20 AY federations throughout the country. Each of them can directly supervise and lead in the process of recruitment and training of the new AY leaders and Master Guides, Frometa said. “They will have the mission of emphasizing the organization of the clubs and youth leaders as well as the mentoring program that would end up integrating them in the local leadership of the church.” It’s about recruiting the active nucleus of the church to work in favor of the youth and place them as a priority so the church can be rejuvenated as well, he said.

The youth leadership program always ran at a modest rhythm in the church, Frometa explained, but as designated associate youth ministries directors, the new leaders can take a more active role and help each local pastor develop an intensive leadership program in each church district.

The youth ministries training that took place in Holguin in January taught the 30 new leaders to understand their role better. They also reviewed strategies, initiatives, and activities, and resolved to move forward together to serve the church as future youth ministries leaders, Frometa reported.

“Being part of a nationally coordinated leadership team, any one of them can continue working with the strategies set in place and be ready to face an eventual migratory vacancy in any of the con-

ferences or missions in the country,” he explained.

EQUIPPING DEDICATED AND PASSIONATE LEADERS

Honing young people at different levels and ministries of the church remains a priority and part of the ongoing strategy, Pérez emphasized. On January 12 and 13 nearly 400 university students, young professionals, and high school students gathered in Las Tunas for a PCM event, at which they were reminded to cling to God and minister to others even amid the challenges they face each day. The PCM event included Hiram Ruiz, PCM director of the Inter-American Division, who encouraged the youth to let God lead in their lives and witness the positive changes they can make in the world around them.

Everything involving strengthening and training young people is important, Pérez said. The intent to train leaders must be more aggressive now, he added. “We need to continue strengthening the church in this area and to try to reverse the effects of this crisis that brought to light the fragility of the church,” he emphasized.

There is no shortage of miracles in Cuba, Pérez said. “God will continue to work more miracles here in Cuba, especially so that our trained youth leaders can continue to win other young people for the eternal kingdom.”

More than 40,000 Seventh-day Adventists meet in 546 churches and congregations in Cuba. The union conference oversees four conferences and two missions across the island. ■

More than 80 delegates met for the first Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Ministries Global Congress in Siem Reap, Cambodia. PHOTO: SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION



ADVENTIST CHURCH CALLS FOR SAFEGUARDING ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

DELEGATES TO CAMBODIA EVENT COMMIT TO ASSIST THOSE WHO MOST NEED IT.

EDWARD RODRIGUEZ, SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

Driven with the purpose of compassion and commitment, delegates convened for the first Orphans and Vulnerable Children's (OVC) Ministries Global Congress, held February 21-26 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and themed "Learn, Seek, Defend, and Disciple." More than 80 delegates representing Seventh-day Adventist organizations and institutions involved in OVC ministries joined the gathering.

Amid fervent discussions on pressing social, political, and moral issues around the world, attendees echoed a singular imperative: safeguarding society's most vulnerable—orphans and vulnerable children. In a demonstration of unwavering commitment, the international assembly united in a plea resonating with empathy and advocacy, embodying the core values of the Adventist community.

Linda Koh, retired General Conference Children's Ministries director, opened the congress with a poignant address. Her stirring words served as a profound reminder, urging attendees to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit to illuminate a broader perspective of the mission ahead. Emphasizing the imperative of inclusivity, Koh's message resonated deeply, urging collective action to uplift the vulnerable and neglected among us.

"The mission transcends borders. As stated in Acts 26:18, God beckons us to open our eyes 'so that they may turn from darkness to light' [ESV]," Koh emphasized. Unfortunately, across the globe, millions of children find themselves orphaned for a myriad of reasons, including the ravages of war, famine, displacement, disease, and poverty. It is depressing to learn from statistics that out of the more than 132 million children who are considered orphans, a staggering 13 million have experienced the loss of both parents.

The profound impact of these staggering statistics prompted the organization of a historic congress, drawing together church leaders, ministry pioneers, and humanitarian advocates for a pivotal gathering aimed at deliberating, discussing, and raising awareness about the crucial role of every Adventist church member worldwide. At the core of each Possibility Ministry lies a fundamental objective: the restoration of dignity and personal worth in those they serve, leaders said. Central to this mission is the recognition and cultivation of hidden talents, directing them toward selfless service for the betterment of others.

"We're not only tasked with identifying the vulnerable; we're also called to send them," Larry

Evans, retired assistant to the president for Adventist Possibility Ministries (APM), emphasized. "Our objective is to empower them so that they, in turn, can uplift others," he said.

As an initiative of the Adventist world church, APM actively seeks to engage pastors, laypeople, and individuals of all ages and backgrounds, recognizing that through collective effort a broader community can be reached and ministered to effectively, leaders said.

The Cambodia event delved into crucial topics concerning the protection and support of orphans and vulnerable children. With contributions from OVC Ministries across hardship-stricken regions, the meeting was more than presentations, group discussions, prayer sessions, and heartfelt testimonies.

"This congress offers a diverse array of activities, encouraging delegates to actively engage in discussions and recognize the profound significance of OVCS work," Doug Venn, current assistant to the president for APM, said. "Our ultimate aim is that each participant departs with a transformed perspective on this ministry, embodying God's compassion and instilling a genuine sense of spirituality in every child we encounter." 🍀

Group photo of participants and presenters at the Women in Ministry Conference in Florence, Italy. PHOTO: MAIKE HAASE



WOMEN IN MINISTRY ARE “CALLED, CHOSEN, AND FAITHFUL”

CONFERENCE BRINGS MORE THAN 60 ADVENTIST WOMEN TO ITALY FOR REFLECTION.

TSVETELINA TSVETANOVA, FOR INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

Many of the participants had questions during the first couple of days at the Inter-European Division (EUD) Women in Ministry Conference, held in the city of Florence, Italy.

I know I was called to ministry, but was I really chosen, or did I make the choice myself? Am I being faithful, and will I be faithful enough to the end?

From February 4 to 8 more than 60 Seventh-day Adventist women from all over Europe gathered at Italian Adventist University Villa Aurora to reaffirm their ministry, encourage one another, and find more ways and opportunities to serve in their communities, guided by the work of the Holy Spirit. The women who participated in the event were pastors, chaplains, departmental directors, and institutional leaders and administrators.

Speakers for the event included General Conference vice president Audrey Andersson, who shared her knowledge, her testimony, and her mission as a woman in ministry, with all its advantages and vulnerabilities. She laid bare the processes, significance, and results of the calling, the choice, and the faithfulness in attendees' personal and professional lives.

Another speaker was Kessia Bennett, a lead pastor from the Ore-

gon Conference of the North American Division. Bennett emphasized the role of the minister (not her title), profoundly noting that “how we think of our role in ministry will determine how we fulfill the task before us.”

Finally, Edyta Jankiewicz, representing the women in ministry from the South Pacific Division and serving as an associate ministerial secretary, shared useful tips on being a disciple of Jesus.

All three lecturers openly shared their knowledge and their very personal experiences. A sincere message of hope, humbleness, and affirmation accompanied each presentation, always followed by a special time for prayer.

Special guests led the morning and evening devotions, including Dagmar Dorn, EUD Women's Ministries director; EUD president Mario Brito; Italian Union of Churches Conference president Andrei Cretu; and EUD Ministerial Association director Ventsislav Panayotov. “If you want to go strong, you must go through challenges. Challenges bring success. Take it with patience. Remember that our boss is God. And if God is with us, we are much more powerful,” Brito told them.

Participants said they loved the time spent together.

“I really needed this special time,” Petya Gotzeva, Youth Ministries leader at the Bulgarian Union, said. “What I took from this conference was the impression that to be more efficient in my ministry, I should try to be more focused on building a healthier relationship with God and with others. I need that time for personal spiritual growth.”

Maike Haase, Bavarian Conference Communication Department director, agreed. “I am happy that I was able to connect with other young women in ministry. I think it was a great experience for all,” she said.

The last day concluded with a panel discussion in which some participants shared the testimony of our calling and the path we follow as ministers.

Varta Panayotova, EUD Ministerial Spouses Association director and one of the conference organizers, said the event should be repeated soon. “We should have meetings like this more often. It is so encouraging and inspiring to see so many women in different ministries, and yet, sharing their hopes, dreams, and challenges in a very open and heartfelt way,” she said. 🍀

The Rose James Endowment is a donation by Stanley James (pictured), a Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary alumnus. PHOTO: JEFF BOYD



ENDOWMENT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO BLACK ADVENTIST RESEARCH

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES THE LAUNCH OF AN ALUMNUS-DRIVEN INITIATIVE.

ANDREWS FRANCIS, *THE STUDENT MOVEMENT*, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

The Center for Adventist Research (CAR) of Andrews University hosted its annual Friends Event on February 8, celebrating its latest sizable contribution: the Rose James Endowment. The endowment is a donation by Stanley James, a Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary alumnus.

James named the endowment after his mother, who provided “unwavering support” for him through his journey through Adventist higher education. James and his family have started the endowment with a \$20,000 donation, which they will renew annually. Additional donations are being solicited from church officials, medical doctors, and other supporters to help grow the endowment and its impact.

The money will be used to digitize scholarly lecture series by Seventh-day Adventist civil rights advocate and evangelist E. E. Cleveland and evangelist C. D. Brooks. These lecture series are entitled “The E. E. Cleveland Lecture” and “C. D. Brooks Research Fellowship,” and their digitization will make their content more accessible. The Rose James Endowment’s funds are also meant to enhance the efforts of the Adventist Church’s work on acknowledging Black Adventist history, racial issues, and social justice work globally.

CAR director and associate professor Kevin Burton shared that the endowment is designed to “strengthen [CAR’s] relationship with Oakwood University and chart paths forward to racial justice and reconciliation.” A purpose statement for the endowment that Burton provided states confidently that “this initiative upholds the principles of Scripture and the prophetic writings of Ellen G. White.” In accordance with Adventist values and beliefs, “the Rose James Endowment endeavors to be a catalyst for impactful change, championing Adventist values in action.”

THE PROFOUND INFLUENCE OF A MOTHER

Living in Bermuda, Rose James faced the responsibility of being a single mother to five children. According to Rose, Stanley, her third child, desired to be a doctor from the age of 3. Rose affirmed to her son that he was more than capable of accomplishing these goals and more, despite his own self-doubt. James credits much of his success to his mother.

“My mom always said, ‘You are intelligent.’ Our context of five kids, single parent—I don’t know how she did it. But she maintained her dignity, her self-respect, her poise, and her principles. . . . She is the

most important thing in my life, next to God.”

James also credits a lot of his success to being introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist faith. Starting at the Bermuda Institute of Seventh-day Adventists, a pre-K through twelfth grade institution in his home country, James has experienced a complete Adventist education journey. He earned his undergraduate degree at Oakwood University and later graduated from the Loma Linda University School of Medicine. In 2016 he graduated with his Master of Divinity degree from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

As the CEO of the Premier Health and Wellness Center in Bermuda, James still practices medicine. He is also an assistant pastor and is working to get his Ph.D. He shared that once he finishes that degree, he may move to the United States, enter teaching, and raise a family. In the endowment’s purpose statement, James has been credited for his “leadership and his doctoral research on health-care disparities [embodying] the principles of faith.”

Yangon Adventist Seminary's newest building, inaugurated in 2018. PHOTO: SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION



ADVENTIST SCHOOL IN MYANMAR OFFERS EDUCATION TO DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

YANGON INSTITUTION IS EXPANDING ITS REACH IN A MOSTLY NON-CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT.

EDWARD RODRIGUEZ, SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

Amid a mostly non-Christian environment, a Seventh-day Adventist school in Myanmar is on a path to share hope and love with the community, regional church leaders said.

From its small beginnings, Yangon Adventist Seminary (YAS) has grown into a powerful force in society, sharing the gospel of truth and faith, leaders reported. "Its dedication to Christian education and principles has provided opportunities for families to accept Jesus and see the difference He can make in their children's lives," they said.

The Myanmar Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (MYUM) has owned and run YAS since 2013. However, its roots trace back to the 1950s, when it was known as Miss Gifford School, named after Miss Lockie Gifford, a dedicated missionary teacher from the United States.

At present the school serves a student body of 1,199, with only 17 percent Adventist students and 83 percent coming from other faiths. Parents who have chosen to enroll their children in the institution often liken it to a second home for their offspring. "They view YAS as a nurturing environment conducive to wholistic learning," leaders explained. These parents value not only the academic

development fostered here but also the emphasis placed on character building and cultivating meaningful relationships with others, they said.

"I wanted my children to learn more about God. . . . That's why I chose YAS as the best school for my children," Ciin Suan Piang, a YAS student father, commented. "As a church worker, I had looked for a school that offered Bible subjects, was good at teaching, and had affordable fees. It was surely a path shown by God to enroll my children in YAS, and I never regretted it."

Current YAS principal Sonia Shine emphasized that the school's mission extends beyond mere teaching. She envisions a dynamic environment in which students, parents, and faculty are interconnected, cultivating not only academic growth but also character development. Through encouraging strong connections, the school aims to cultivate a supportive community conducive to wholistic learning experiences, she explained.

"Our students don't just absorb knowledge within classroom walls; they actively engage with the community, gaining invaluable experiences in helping others and creating positive change," Shine emphasized.

Through the years YAS has experienced steady growth. In 2000

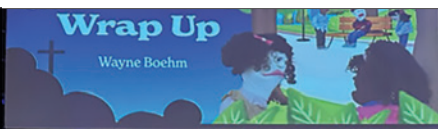
a two-story brick building capable of accommodating 150 students was erected. This marked a turning point as non-Adventist parents began recognizing the value of Adventist education, leading to a surge in enrollment. By the 2017-2018 academic year YAS welcomed a student population exceeding 630. In June 2018 the school inaugurated a new multi-story building.

YAS students represent a diverse array of religious affiliations, including Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, Buddhist, and Islamic faiths. Remarkably, 54 students have been baptized into the Adventist Church in the past five years.

The school, which has been accredited by the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AAA), dedicated a new staff housing building in October 2022. It is a testament to YAS's continued growth and commitment to nurturing both its students and staff, regional church leaders shared. "As Yangon Adventist Seminary continues to evolve and expand its reach, it remains steadfast in its mission to impart knowledge and share the love of God with young minds, embodying the principles of faith, education, and service," they said. ▀

More than 100 people have been involved in the production of *The Rescue*, a series that helps children get acquainted with the great controversy.

PHOTO: ADVENTIST RECORD



THE RESCUE SERIES INTRODUCES CHILDREN TO THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

THE VIDEOS USE ANIMATION AND PUPPETRY TO PORTRAY CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS.

JULIANA MUNIZ, ADVENTIST RECORD

A new series depicting the great controversy for children was launched with a special program held at the Avondale University church in Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia, on February 3. Created by Abide Family Ministry for Hope Channel, *The Rescue* uses animation and puppetry to portray Christian teachings and the story of redemption for children with little or no biblical literacy.

"Children today are living in a media-saturated world," Wayne Boehm, director of Hope Channel South Pacific, said. "A lot of what they see and hear doesn't necessarily help them grow in positive ways, especially from a biblical perspective. There's plenty of Bible stories being told on Christian television, but we're aiming to dig deeper, to help kids really grasp the biblical story in a way that sticks with them."

Building on the success of the King's Kids TV series, which supported children's spiritual growth during COVID-19 lockdowns by following the children's Sabbath School curriculum, the team behind *The Rescue* identified media gaps in the church for children postpandemic.

"After the lockdowns we asked ourselves what we could do next to continue supporting our young audience. *The Rescue* is our answer to that question," Boehm explained.

The series is specially designed to bridge a crucial gap highlighted by R. Mark Baxter in his book *The Coming Revolution: Because Status Quo Missions Won't Finish the Job*, where he noted that "91 percent of all Christian outreach/evangelism does not target non-Christians but targets other Christians." Based on this statistic, *The Rescue* was intentionally crafted to engage children from nonchurched or nominal Christian families, as well as those from Adventist homes.

"The focus of *The Rescue* is to introduce children to a God who loves them and has a plan for their lives, using language and concepts that are accessible to all, regardless of their prior exposure to the Bible," Boehm said.

The launch event was met with enthusiasm at the Avondale University church, drawing a crowd of 150 attendees, including families and children, eager to see the new series. Special guests at the event included Greater Sydney Confer-

ence Children's Ministries director Daron Pratt and Australian Union Conference representatives, including associate Ministerial Association secretary Brendan Pratt, Family and Children's Ministries director Sylvia Mendez, and resource development coordinator Amanda Bews.

Norman Hurlow, Avondale University church senior pastor, highlighted the importance of children's content for the local church to help teach the next generation about the great controversy.

"We at Avondale University church are passionate about creatively communicating the story of God's love to our children," Hurlow said. "What better way to do that than connecting it all to the grand meta-narrative found in the Bible and portrayed through *The Rescue*? Stories inspire and teach. This series teaches our kids about the great controversy between good and evil and inspires them to choose the way of love."

With more than 100 people involved in the production of the series, *The Rescue* will be covered in three seasons, totaling 44 episodes, which will be available globally through the series website, social media, and Hope Channel. ■



ADVENTIST ENTREPRENEUR MINISTRY HELPS TO BUILD CHURCHES IN CHILE. “Manos a la Obra” (“Let’s Do the Work”) is a ministry that supports the building of churches in places with no Adventist presence and also promotes special mission projects. The goal is helping more people get to know about Jesus. The ministry was born out of Adventist Entrepreneurs Foundation Chile. Foundation members assign their own resources and donations from third parties to support mission projects that seek to strengthen the work of the organized church.



LEADERS INTRODUCE VIRTUAL ASSISTANT ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS. Leaders of the Trans Pacific Union Mission in the Southern Pacific Division recently introduced Hope VA, a virtual assistant that offers Bible studies and health information. The assistant delivers resources in a conversational format to those who send a message to WhatsApp. The lessons have been carefully scripted by Adventist pastors to deliver simple grace-filled studies that are friendly in tone.



HEALTHY HEART TEAM PROVIDES VITAL HEALTH TRAINING IN NEPAL. The Ultimate Mission Healthy Heart team, a dedicated team of Adventist health-care professionals, returned to Nepal February 5-10 to conduct an intensive five-day health training program. The initiative sought to empower the wives of gospel outreach workers at Biratnagar. The initiative, which took place for the second consecutive year, focused on not only improving health awareness but also enhancing the community’s capacity to address health challenges effectively while fostering evangelism.



MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE CAMP OFFERS A WEALTH OF INSIGHTFUL ACTIVITIES. The camp in southern Philippines opened at Mountain View College in Valencia, Bukidnon, on February 11. More than 4,800 student attendees, mostly from fifth- and sixth-grade classes across 90 Adventist elementary schools in the South Philippine Union Conference, participated in the camp. The event was a weeklong experience for students, faculty, and staff, and delivered a distinctive blend of educational enrichment and spiritual nourishment to its attendees through activities that zeroed in on wholistic development.



ANDREWS UNIVERSITY’S *ENVISION* MAGAZINE WINS NATIONAL AWARD. The Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) has awarded a 2023 Pacemaker Award to *Envision*, the university’s student-produced magazine. The magazine was honored in the category of feature/general audience magazines. The award, designated by the judges of the ACP, recognizes national excellence in collegiate journalism. With content sourced fully from students, the magazine’s production was multifaceted. The Department of Visual Art, Communication, and Design and the Department of English collaborated on the issue.



IN UKRAINE AND BEYOND, ADRA STAYS COMMITTED TO HEALING COMMUNITIES. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) continues humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, two years after the armed conflict erupted. ADRA has been at the forefront in Ukraine and neighboring countries, providing critical assistance, including food, shelter, psychological support, and medical care. ADRA has contributed an estimated US\$40 million in humanitarian aid and assisted more than 2.6 million people in Ukraine and hundreds of thousands of refugees who are now residing in various European countries and around the world.



ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

To receive our weekly newsletter highlighting current news, inspiring stories, thought-provoking commentaries, engaging features, and other media, sign up today.

www.adventistreview.org/newsletter-signup

A MOSAIC OF GIFTS

Building on the extraordinary talents of differently abled members

BETH THOMAS



In the tapestry of a thriving church community, the diverse abilities and unique gifts each member has contributes to a vibrant worship experience. Every individual, regardless of their abilities, has a distinct talent God can use to bring richness to the faith community (see 1 Cor. 12).

Some members' extraordinary skills equip them for specific roles and responsibilities. Gordon Haines is just one example.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

Gordon is an unassuming figure, but if you sit and chat with him, you will find a wealth of knowledge. Gordon is the audiovisual/information technology (AV/IT) technician for his church in Clarksville, Maryland. He handles everything from networking and Wi-Fi to the audio and streaming system. On Sabbaths he operates the service livestream and switches camera views to provide a more engaging experience for the online audience. He also works with the AV/IT team to design and install upgrades to the equipment and systems as needed and sets up equipment for special events.

When Gordon was baptized in 2014, his dad asked him what he'd like to do to get involved in church life. Gordon had been interested in AV, and he requested to be part of the team. At the time this consisted of running the sound board. In 2017 there was a push to have a simple streaming system so people who could not attend church could still hear the sermon. Networking was added to handle the amount of people using Wi-Fi and the increased number of equipment needing network access. That's where Gordon stepped in.

Gordon is perfect for this position. In elementary school he was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, a previous diagnosis on the autism spectrum, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Individuals with

Asperger's generally have "remarkable focus and persistence; aptitude for recognizing patterns; and attention to detail. Some challenges can include hypersensitivities to lights, sounds, tastes, etc.; difficulty with give and take of conversation and nonverbal conversation skills; and uncoordinated movements. Many learn to overcome their challenges by building on strengths."¹

Gordon has built on his strengths to enhance the AV system. He says, "While I struggle with being able to read people, especially subtle changes in tone or expression, I have always excelled at understanding mechanical systems and how things work. Ever since I was a kid I have been able to understand computers and electronic systems well. This helps with troubleshooting glitches, along with my sensitive hearing, which helps with tuning microphones"

He loves helping behind the scenes to make everything run smoothly. "It really helps people in our local congregation and the people who join us on our stream every week," he says. And while Gordon may not have identified his specific spiritual gift yet, he knows that his work with the AV/IT team enables his church to reach people with God's Word.

DIFFERENT ABILITIES, VALUABLE INSIGHT

Individuals with different abilities can offer unique perspectives worth considering for those in leadership positions.

First, differently abled people have a depth of understanding as it relates to human suffering that many of us do not have. "Because they constantly deal with limitations, discomfort, and pain, they do so better than the rest of us. They learn to live with suffering."²

David Deuel, pastor and Old Testament professor, relates that "many Christians with disabilities walk closely with God because they need to rely on the Lord to endure their challenges in life far more than others of us. In their moments of physical pain, frustration, and isolation, they learn how to look to God and find Him ready to receive them in their disability."³

Second, differently abled people may have a more sensitive gauge for interpreting hurt feelings or perceived mistreatment among members and can bring awareness to the need for compassion and understanding when dealing with delicate issues.

Deuel continues: "People with disabilities are uniquely gifted and can minister to others in amazing ways. Their physical or mental disability, in God's hands, becomes a ministry blessing. This brings new insight to Paul's challenge that all believers in the body of Christ have gifts that the church needs (1 Peter 4:10). From an outreach perspective, people with disabilities have incomparable ability to reach disability communities with

the gospel and disciple them. The rest of us may not know how to enter a specific disability culture,"⁴ but can draw on the wisdom of others to meet the needs of that community. Differently abled members need to know that they are valued and appreciated and that their gifts contribute to the mission of the church.

It is important to recognize that each of us were born with a disability. When Adam and Eve sinned, their choice left us with a debilitating drawback that we deal with daily. But, as Deuel points out,

"God . . . holds disability like a tool in His mighty hands to shape men and women into the image of Christ. . . . He uses it in our lives in many ways. Through it, we grow as individuals and churches."⁵

Embracing and celebrating the varied abilities within a church community fosters an environment in which everyone feels valued and that creates a space for mutual support and spiritual growth. In this inclusive setting the church becomes a testament to the power of unity in diversity and the gifts of the Spirit. ▀

¹ <https://www.autismspeaks.org/types-autism-what-asperger-syndrome>

² <https://trainingleadersinternational.org/jgc/31/shepherding-people-with-disabilities>

³ Adapted from Dave Deuel, "God's Story of Disability: The Unfolding Plan From Genesis to Revelation," *Journal of the Christian Institute on Disability* 2, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2013).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Beth Thomas is assistant editor for *Adventist Review*.

THINK DIFFERENTLY. THINK POSSIBILITY.

LARRY R. EVANS

Great promises in the Bible are often found in names. When God changed a person's name, it was usually to establish a new identity. With the new identity came a new or expanded purpose. This was true for Jacob (Gen. 32:28), Abraham (Gen. 17:5), Sarah (Gen. 17:15), and Paul (Acts 13:9). Today baptism gives each person a new identity and purpose when they are baptized in "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

In more recent times name changes have also occurred to indicate an expanded or more defined purpose. In 2015 the General Conference Disability Ministries was changed to Special Needs Ministries (SNM) because some were sensitive to being called disabled. Then in 2019, in recognition of an expanded and refocused ministry, SNM became Adventist Possibility Ministries (APM).

WHAT IS IN THE NAME?

The new name purposely focuses on the person's potential rather than what they cannot do or do not have. A statement by Ellen White offers another way of thinking about this ministry. "I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church." She does not stop there, however. She then continues to explain that the purpose of this was "to prove His people and develop



their true character.”¹ These individuals not only need to be accommodated and included in the activities of the church; they are needed. Jesus saw more than a disability. He could see what they could become and why the Christian movement would benefit from them. In many ways our ministry “with” individuals who have special needs provides greater opportunities to deepen our understanding of the nature of God’s kingdom.

The new name, Adventist Possibility Ministries, while not denying the reality of disabilities, opens the door to exploring the possibilities and strengths that these individuals bring to God’s mission. It has been observed that “when we focus on our differences, we tend to impart value—usually negative—to those differences. Instead of connecting with people affected by disability . . . we emphasize the differences to legitimize our desire to simply pursue our agendas—those specific to our “community”—whatever they might be.”² Adventist Possibility Ministries seeks to change that tendency. A fundamental principle is the belief that “all are gifted, needed, and treasured!”

LEAD WITH POSSIBILITY THINKING

Any kind of leadership has challenges. The seven ministries of APM³ underscore the need to lead with special sensitivity. Marginalized individuals often struggle with trusting those who offer to help. The following are some areas in which thinking differently opens doors for greater possibilities when working with those who have special needs.

Invest in people. People stay where they feel valued. For Jesus, the person mattered first regardless of scheduling issues, prevailing societal stigmas, or inconvenient requests. He invested His time, His efforts, and ultimately His whole life in people. They were His mission.

Visualize a new future. All too often we are ready to write the “conclusion” to someone’s life when God is ready to add new chapters. Seeing beyond where the person is at the moment is a cherished leadership gift of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, shaming someone into “success” seldom leads to long-term change.

Respect. Words and actions of affirmation are long-lasting. Ellen White said it well: “If we wish to do good to souls, our success with these souls will be in proportion to their belief in our belief in, and appreciation of, them. Respect shown to the struggling human soul is the sure means through Christ Jesus

All too often we are ready to write the “conclusion” to someone’s life when God is ready to add new chapters.

of the restoration of the self-respect the man has lost.”⁴

Socialize. While general socializing can be helpful, Jesus mingled “as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’”⁵ People with disabilities often feel isolated. Invitations to dinner or a drive to a special place can make a huge difference. Unless there is a sense of belonging, membership seldom holds those with disabilities in church fellowship.

Provide opportunities. Possibility leaders provide challenging opportunities. Jesus did this when He said simply, “Rise, take up your bed and walk” (John 5:8), and later said to take up your “cross, and follow Me” (Matt. 16:24). Giving challenging opportunities encourages them to stretch and develop the potential God has given them.

Be an example. Nothing speaks as much to others as the leader being seen showing genuine care. As has been noted by many, as the world becomes more engrossed with “high tech,” there is a greater need for “high touch.”

A LIFE THAT MATTERS

Everyone wants their life to matter. No one is insignificant, though many feel they are. Possibility thinking seeks to bring a unique meaning and purpose to individuals who have felt hopeless for far too long. It is an extension of the ministry of Jesus.⁶

¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 3, p. 511; see also p. 517.

² Stephanie O. Hubach, *Same Lake, Different Boat* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Publishing, 2020), p. 37.

³ The ministries are as follows: 1. The Deaf and hard of hearing. 2. The blind and those with low vision. 3. Those challenged with mobility. 4. Those facing mental health disorders, such as autism, Down syndrome, and learning disabilities. 5. Orphans and vulnerable children. 6. Those grieving spousal loss. 7. Support of caregivers of those above.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1923), p. 281.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 143.

⁶ The online training course for Adventist Possibility Ministries may be found at <https://www.adventistlearningcommunity.com/>.

Larry R. Evans is now retired. He served as assistant to the president for Adventist Possibility Ministries at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



“I WILL BE HANDSOME”

The miraculous story of a future pastor

SIKHULULEKILE DACO

“What an ugly baby!” she exclaimed at the sight of her newborn. She was not being mean or unkind when she said this. These were simply the first thoughts Matthew Djim’s mother had when she was handed her baby at his birth. She could tell something was not quite right. Three days after his birth the doctors told her that Matthew had Down syndrome.

Down syndrome in Matthew’s native Indonesia has a prevalence of 0.12 percent.¹ Globally, 3,000 to 5,000 children are born with the condition every year.² The most common and best known chromosomal disorder in humans, Down syndrome is caused by an extra partial or whole copy of chromosome 21. It is “the most common cause of intellectual disability. . . and gives rise to multiple complications as part of the syndrome.”³

AN INCREDIBLE REQUEST

When Matthew was born, it seemed he could neither hear nor speak. Then the doctors discovered that he had a congenital heart disease in which there was a hole in his heart about 0.5 millimeters in diameter. Matthew’s mother fell into depression. The diagnosis had been unexpected, so she had not had time to

prepare herself, or her family, for its implications. She had two other children to care for. And there were no therapy options for individuals with Down syndrome in the city where she lived. All these factors coalesced to lead her to make an incredible request of her sister-in-law, Arlaine.

Arlaine lived in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, where many resources could be found for those living with Down syndrome. Matthew’s mother ventured to ask her to take over care of the now-4-month-old baby. Without skipping a beat, Arlaine agreed. She loved all her nephews and jumped at the opportunity to help! It was only after the arrangement had been settled that she paused to reflect on the fact that she, single and in her early 20s, who had never been a mother, was now to care for a baby. Moreover, this baby had a condition she knew nothing about!

She read everything about Down syndrome that she could get her hands on, but all she found was discouragement. So she turned to the Spirit of Prophecy. Perhaps Ellen White had counsel she could rely on. She came upon the statement “There is nothing more calculated to energize the mind and strengthen the intellect than the study of the Word of God. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible.”⁴ *In a normal child, she thought, this would apply. But what of a child with Down syndrome?* She felt that she had nothing to lose in trusting what the Spirit of Prophecy said.

Opposite page: Matthew in front of Indonesia Adventist University where he hopes to attend seminary someday. Top: Matthew loves to pray for the sick, elderly, and children. Middle: Besides the Bible, Matthew loves to read the Spirit of Prophecy. Bottom: Because he reads it so much, Matthew's Bible is worn out.



MIRACLES STILL HAPPEN

In addition to the therapies Matthew was receiving, Arlaine applied all the health principles she learned from the writings of Ellen White, and implemented a regimented exposure to the Word of God. Every morning, beginning when he was just 4 months old, she began reading Scripture to him. For three months she would read the same chapter every day and sing the same hymn, then she would move on to the next chapter and hymn. In spite of his initial poor prognosis, when he was 1 year old Matthew began to vocalize. The sounds imitated the cadence of the Bible chapter reading. Moreover, in answer to the many prayers in his behalf, the 0.5-millimeter hole in his heart had simply vanished by the time of his 18-month checkup.

Arlaine remembers one the first conversations she had with Matthew. She had been singing the hymn “It May Be at Morn” when he chimed in, “When I get to heaven, I will not have Down syndrome. I will be handsome.” It was at once heart-warming and heart-wrenching. Then he continued: “And I want you to be there!” From a 4-month-old unresponsive to stimuli to a spiritually aware 2-year-old making an appeal to his beloved aunt—it was a testament to the power of God’s Word. To this day, Matthew’s favorite Bible topic is the second coming of Jesus. He likes to stand at the entrance to his aunt’s house, looking out into the horizon, waiting for Jesus to come.

At his local church Matthew is the loudest singer, praising God unashamedly with his discordant voice. His favorite song is “We Have This Hope.” From the age of 4 he has wanted to be a pastor, so each Sabbath, to practice for his goal, he stands next to the church pastor to greet guests and church members alike. His greeting service has become invaluable, as he has an impeccable memory for names and faces, so guests always feel at home. He will also be the first to pray with anyone expressing a need for God’s intervention.

He likes to stand at the entrance to his aunt’s house, looking out into the horizon, waiting for Jesus to come.

Matthew is 18 now, with one year of high school remaining, and he is excited about attending college to prepare for pastoral ministry. For all his virtues, he’s not the picture of perfection. Left alone with his math homework, he will very quickly revert to reading his Bible instead of doing his math. It’s a good problem to have, but one of his present challenges nonetheless.

For Arlaine’s part, she feels privileged to learn from Matthew. Heaven, for him, is not just a doctrine, but a reality—as it should be for us all. Quoting 1 Corinthians 1:27-29, Arlaine says her prayer is for Matthew to be a witness for the Lord and testify of God’s love and power. “If a child with Down syndrome like Matthew can witness, not in his own strength but because of God who works through him, everybody can do it.”¹

¹ Yulia Ariani, Purnomo Soeharso, Damayanti R. Sjarif, “Genetics and Genomic Medicine in Indonesia,” *Molecular Genetics & Genomic Medicine*, Mar. 29, 2017, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/mgg3.284#?text=Down%20syndrome%20is%20a%20common,Down%20syndrome%20in%20the%20country>, accessed Feb. 22, 2024.

² <https://www.un.org/en/observances/down-syndrome-day#:~:text=Background,born%20with%20this%20chromosome%20disorder>, accessed Feb. 22, 2024.

³ Sanaa Benhaourech, Abdenasser Drighil, and Ayoub El Hammiri, “Congenital Heart Disease and Down Syndrome: Various Aspects of a Confirmed Association,” *Cardiovascular Journal of Africa*, September-October 2016, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5370349>, accessed Feb. 22, 2024.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), p. 460.

Sikhululekile Daco is an associate editor of *Adventist Review*.



NOT ALONE

Ministering to those experiencing spousal loss

BECKY ST. CLAIR

Within the space of one year Frank Hasel's life went from one of a content husband and father to one of a grieving widower with three boys to raise on his own. His wife's onset of cancer was swift and unbeatable, and the whirlwind of months of hospitals, treatments, lifestyle changes, and prayer ended in the most painful experience of Hasel's life.

"When you experience something like that, it raises a lot of questions about justice and God's fairness," Hasel says. "You have to learn to deal with that and find your way in a new reality you did not envision."

SAILORS' SONG AT STORMY SEA

It was this that led Hasel to publish *Love Is!*, a book about losing his wife, and how he walked the path to healing. It's a guidebook not only for those going through grief themselves, but for those wishing to help others they know experiencing loss. He also addresses the necessity of expressing one's grief.

"Something we have lost in the West is the whole concept of 'lament,'" Hasel comments. "It's prominent in the Bible, but many Christians have a hard time dealing with tough questions and negative feelings, because they think that's not how God wants them to feel. If you don't learn to articulate lament, you miss out on something important to the grieving process."

In Psalms, Hasel points out, the writers spend a significant amount of time lamenting that "in a world like this with a good, all-powerful, all-loving God," X, Y, or Z shouldn't happen.

"It isn't fair," Hasel says. "And we have to express this and not be scared of God not understanding us. He has gone through grief Himself, and He can take our questions. And in those moments we need community more than ever."

In the preface to his book, Hasel quotes author Anne Lamott, who writes that sharing one's thoughts and experiences with others in similar situations is like "singing on a boat during a terrible storm at sea. You can't stop the raging storm, but singing can change the hearts and spirits of the people who are together on that ship."¹

Hasel says, "I wrote this book because . . . being aware that we are not alone decreases our sense of isolation. Instead of being crushed by the sadness of our grief, listening to another's story of hope can be like that song on a ship in a storm."

MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE

Talking about grief, loss, and sadness has not always been socially acceptable, even in the church. Some, like Hasel, are changing the norm, creating community and offering comfort for those walking one of the darkest paths of life.

"It's important that we are safe to be real within our church," says Heidi Jones, hospice chaplain in Spokane, Washington. "Grief and loss are part of the human experience, and to notice and nurture only the happy parts of life is superficial. Jesus cared for the whole person; if our focus and reason for existing is Jesus, how can we ignore this part of reality?"

Jones serves as program coordinator for Renew Spokane, a collaboration of Adventist churches in the Spokane area. Renew Spokane operates through a pilot project grant provided by the General Conference Global Mission Urban Center. Through her work with hospice, Jones was sending a weekly email to support families processing loss, and as she continued to encounter grieving people both professionally and personally, she had an idea on how to connect those hurting people with Renew Spokane.

"I started thinking it would be good to have something specifically from the church to nurture those journeying through loss," Jones says. So she created *Peace, Be Still*, a weekly e-devotional with content from people in different areas of expertise. Each issue includes a meditation thought provided by chaplains, pastors, grief counselors, or those who have experienced loss; a grief-related scripture promise; links to one or two encouraging songs; and a prayer.

"It started out in just our local churches," Jones says. As word of mouth has spread, they have received requests from people in several states and even Canada. Currently more than 300 people receive *Peace, Be Still*.

"It's helpful for those grieving to have support coming directly to them, especially if they just don't feel ready to go somewhere for a support group or to meet with a grief counselor," Jones points out.

ACKNOWLEDGING SORROW

A particularly difficult time after loss is Christmas. While most of the world seems jolly and merry, those whose lives have been turned upside-down by loss feel they don't fit in anywhere.

"You're struck by the contrast between what the season is supposed to be—happy and joyful and full of memory-making—and what you're feeling," Jones explains. "Facing the holidays without the ones you want to be with makes it one of the most painful times of year."

To address this particular need, several Adventist churches in the Greater Spokane area joined together to host a Blue Christmas service, something Jones had experienced while living in Loma Linda, California. This interdenominational event brings people together who are navigating grief during the holidays and provides time and space to process how they're feeling and to remember their loved ones.

"For the grieving, the expectation to be merry amidst this 'most wonderful time of the year' is unrealistic and out of touch," Jones says. "Blue Christmas acknowledges the pain, and gives the grieving a place to go where they don't have to be alone with their feelings. It's a time to honor the memory of the one who is missed and seek the comfort of the Holy Spirit as they enter a sacred moment with other grieving hearts."

With candlelight and contemplative music, Blue Christmas incorporates Scripture, dramatic readings, and congregational singing into a program that speaks to grieving hearts and offers the sense of belonging and validation they need.

In its first year more than 75 people attended the Blue Christmas service.

One non-Adventist pastor who attended Blue Christmas later sent the church a card, thanking them for providing such a meaningful service.

"He had recently lost an immediate family member, and, as a busy pastor responsible for a busy congregation, was having a difficult time finding the space to honor and acknowledge his sorrow," Jones says. "This event nurtured his heart and provided him with a space to be honest with his grief, and experience the comfort of God's presence."

Talking about grief, loss, and sadness has not always been socially acceptable, even in the church.



Sheila Hendricks, a member of Sligo church in Takoma Park, Maryland, comments, “It’s important for people to not feel like they’re the only ones going through this experience, when so many others have shared it.” Hendricks is cofounder of Heartlifters Ministries, which ministers specifically to those navigating the loss of a spouse—whether through death or divorce.

SHARED EXPERIENCES

Hendricks lost her husband to cancer at age 59, and the sense of loneliness was profound, particularly when it came to church.

“During the week you can keep busy, but the loneliness of going to church alone is very, very hard,” Hendricks adds. Additionally, she felt friendships she’d enjoyed prior to the death of her husband slipping away. “A lot of friends disappeared because their husbands no longer had anyone to hang around with when we were together,” she explains. “Many people I’ve talked to have experienced this. Your friends change.”

When Hendricks started talking with a few friends whose husbands had also passed away, she realized she wasn’t the only one who felt alone.

“You lose half your identity when you lose your spouse,” she says. “And that loneliness is shared. When I heard the stories other women were telling, I felt a passion growing in me to do something.”

One of those women was Charlotte Conway, fellow Sligo church member and longtime treasurer for the church. She and Hendricks started talking and realized they had a lot in common—including late husbands named Bob, and their desire to minister to those experiencing the loss of a spouse.

Conway lost her husband to Alzheimer’s after 54 years of marriage, and although their experiences are different, Conway says, they all have a shared understanding of grief. “It’s traumatic,” she says.

Hendricks adds, “You can’t heal by being stoic. It helps so much to have someone holding your hand as you traverse the grief—someone who understands you’re hurting in a way many others can’t comprehend.”

Together Hendricks and Conway started Heartlifters as a way to reach out to and support others who had been through what they had. The ministry has grown over its seven years, and now has a committee of eight overseeing its operation. As an official ministry of Sligo church, Heartlifters has its own budget and is enthusiastically supported by the pastoral staff.

“It’s a difficult ministry, and one we wish we didn’t need,” Conway says. Though originally they didn’t want to focus on grief seminars, the need was clear, and now Heartlifters provides regular grief recovery seminars in addition to their community-building events in an effort to find joy after loss.

When Hendricks’ husband died, her best friend sent her a care package. This package was the inspiration behind what Heartlifters calls “Sunshine Boxes,” which anyone can request for a grieving person, even if they’re out of state.

These special boxes include items and notes specifically focused on self-care and hope, such as a candle and a book. On the anniversary of the spouse's death, Heartlifters sends a "thinking of you" card with a packet of forget-me-not seeds to plant in memory of their spouse. They also send cards on Valentine's Day and Christmas, two of the most difficult holidays to endure after the loss of a spouse.

"A complete stranger called me one day, devastated because she had lost her husband suddenly and was trying to pick up the pieces," Conway shares. "We talked for two hours about our shared experience. Heartlifters has meant so much to her."

Conway also recalls meeting two women from Canada who joined them for two grief seminars. "They had a hard time finding an Adventist church providing grief recovery, and were thrilled to find Heartlifters," Conway says.

A unique aspect of Heartlifters is that they don't just focus on people who have lost spouses to death; they also reach out to those who have lost them to divorce.

"I think we've forgotten about this particular group," Conway says. "We don't want to talk about it because the church doesn't talk about it. But it's just as profound a sense of grief and loneliness as losing them to death, and it's just as important to process that grief and heal with others who understand."

The Heartlifters team includes a couple of divorced individuals, and their perspective, Hendricks says, is invaluable.

"There's a need, and we have to reach out," she adds. "God has placed this ministry on our hearts, and we hope we can honor Him by helping those who are hurting."

MINISTRY THAT MOVES

Help can take many forms, and sometimes it doesn't take the form of what we expect. In his book Hasel has an entire chapter on things that can be helpful and things that really aren't, including what we should and shouldn't say in an attempt to comfort someone who's grieving.

"Many people know others who have gone through this experience," Hasel says. "The challenge is often that they don't know how to relate to them. Usually they mean well, but since they've never experienced that particular pain, they often say things that actually hurt and are not comforting at all."

Some of the examples of what not to say include:

"It could be worse."

"Everything happens for a reason."

"At least . . ."

"I know how you feel."

In his book Hasel points out that what grieving people need most are not bits of advice or words of wisdom, but "practical help and calm presence."² In fact, he says, there need not be words at all.

"Just being there with them, silently sharing the pain of their loss, attentively listening to the unexplainable and deeply perplexing things of life without trying to give a reason for this tragedy . . . is the best we can offer."³

Hasel also includes a list of suggestions for "helpful help," including ways to spend meaningful time with the person.

"Sometimes people act as if grief is a contagious disease," Hasel writes. "It might make you uncomfortable and sad, but . . . showing up for a . . . person you care about means that you love them enough to be with them through their hardest moments."⁴

Jones agrees. "People who know you coming alongside to journey with you in your current painful reality is really powerful," she says. "This kind of ministry is what moves the church from beyond the Sabbath morning formalities to the needs of individuals."

Navigating the loss of a spouse can be made less overwhelming with the support and comfort of others, and this is where the church can shine. Churches can and should be sanctuaries of support, providing solace and a sense of belonging—particularly during life's most difficult journeys.

"As people realize the church cares, they connect that to God, and they begin to feel God still cares," Jones says. "We are God's hands and heart on earth, and we should use these to remind people they are not alone, their pain is noticed, and we are there to walk alongside." 🌿

¹ Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), p. 237.

² Frank M. Hasel, *Love Is: A Journey of Grief, Grace, and Gratitude* (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2024), p. 85.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Becky St. Clair is a freelance writer living in California with her husband and three children. She has a decade of experience in public relations for the church, and currently writes and copyedits for various church entities around the world.

Ministering to the Unfortunate

We are called to be attentive to the needs of the unfortunate among us.

ELLEN G. WHITE



I have been shown some things in reference to our duty to the unfortunate which I feel it my duty to write at this time.

I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character. If we have the true religion of the Bible we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His brethren; and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren and who are less fortunate than ourselves.

WHO ARE THE UNFORTUNATE?

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments and the last six hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer who his neighbor was in the illustration of the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and who fell among thieves and was robbed and beaten and left half dead. The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help he did not question whether he was a relative or was of his country or creed; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast, and carried him to an inn and made provision for his wants at his own expense. This Samaritan, said

Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class in the church who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy and help. This class, notwithstanding their position in the church, are commandment breakers. The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ and who are imitating His example in doing good.

Those who have pity for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life. There is in — a great lack of personal religion and of a sense of individual obligation to feel for others' woes and to work with disinterested benevolence for the prosperity of the unfortunate and afflicted. Some have no experience in these duties. They have all their lives been like the Levite and the priest, who passed by on the other side. There is a work for the church to do, which, if left undone, will bring darkness upon them. The church as a whole and individually should bring their motives under faithful examination and compare their lives with the life and teachings of the only correct Pattern. Christ regards all acts of mercy, benevolence, and thoughtful consideration for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the sick, the widow, and the orphan as done to Himself; and these works are preserved in the heavenly records and will be rewarded. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and the Levite to the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice and every manifestation of careless indifference to and neglect of the afflicted among us. Everyone will finally be rewarded as his works have been. . . .

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

While God is a friend to the blind and the unfortunate, He does not excuse their sins. He requires them to overcome and to perfect Christian character in the name of Jesus, who overcame in their behalf. But Jesus pities our weakness, and He is ready to give strength to bear up in trial and to resist the temptations of Satan, if we will cast our burden upon Him. . . .

I was shown that God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate

The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ and who are imitating His example in doing good.

than they are. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Here genuine religion is defined. God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world. . . .

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction and places them in positions similar to those occupied by the persons who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

God will hold the church at — responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and unsympathizing spirit is allowed to exist in any of its members toward the unfortunate, the widow, the orphan, the blind, the lame, or those who are sick in body or mind, He will hide His face from His people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any professing the name of Christ so far misrepresent their Saviour as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church accountable for the sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them. ♣

Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry. This selection was taken from *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 3, pp. 511-518.



1888 Message National Conference 2024

JESUS PAID IT ALL

All to Him I Owe

Southern Adventist University
July 10 -13, 2024

Speakers

Dan Binus, Dee Casper, Carlos Munoz, Westney White, Jeff Zaremsky, Ron Duffield, Jerry Finneman, Todd and Patti Guthrie, Bob and Andi Hunsaker, Kelly Kinsley, Charles Rietman, Brian and Lyndi Schwartz

For more info: 269-473-1888 | info@1888msc.org | 1888msc.org

A LITTLE EXISTENTIALIST DREAD FOR THE SOUL

Describing the change that overwhelmed Adam and Eve immediately after the Fall, Ellen White wrote that their peace and harmony was replaced by “a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul.”¹ *A sense of sin? A dread of the future? A nakedness of soul?* These sentiments, from Adam and Eve in Eden, sound like Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, atheists in the twentieth century.

Though he wouldn’t use the word “sin” in our sense, Sartre did struggle with moral questions, and the guilt that follows one’s actions, such as expressed in his play *Dirty Hands*. This moral dilemma was made worse by his hard-nosed atheism and existentialism. “The existentialist . . .,” he admitted, “thinks it very distressing that God does not exist, because all possibility of finding values in a heaven of ideas disappears along with Him; there can no longer be an *a priori* Good since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it.”²

In his novel *Nausea*, which expressed what people felt trying to live within a world that, he argued, gave us no reason to live—his main character, Roquentin, griped: “I was just thinking . . . that here we sit, all of us, eating and drinking to preserve our precious existence and really there is nothing, nothing, absolutely no reason for existing.”³

Why endure an existence without purpose in a world whose only certainty, only absolute, is the contingency and randomness of events, even life-changing events, that have as much purpose as the shape of clouds? What hope can one have, Roquentin complains, when “any-

thing can happen, anything.”⁴ Talk about dread of the future.

In the novel *The Stranger* Albert Camus’ Meursault, about as naked a soul as one could concoct, awaits his execution for murder. “The presiding judge told me in bizarre language that I was to have my head chopped off in a public square in the name of the French people.”⁵ Roused in his jail cell by early-morning sirens, Meursault said that “they were announcing departures for a world that now and forever meant nothing to me.”⁶

Bunk. If this world meant so little to Camus, why did he expend so much ink trying to make sense of it? However logical Camus wanted to be—after all, why should this absurd and godless world mean anything to us?—everyone knows very well that it does mean something to us, even if Camus and Sartre, in their atheism, didn’t know what. (There is, though, convincing evidence that, just before his accidental death, Camus had wanted to be baptized.)

The serpent seduced Eve with the words “You will be like God” (Gen. 3:5). Sartre, 6,000 years later, wrote that “man is a being whose project is to be God.”⁷ I’m not sure what he meant, except that, perhaps, not only did his atheism not work—he knew it, too. ♣

¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), p. 57.

² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Human Emotions* (New York: The Wisdom Library, 1957), p. 22.

³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New Directions Publishing), Kindle Edition, p. 120.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁵ Albert Camus, *The Stranger* (New York: Vintage International, 1988), p. 107.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁷ Sartre, *Existentialism*, p. 63.

Clifford Goldstein is the editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide*. His new book is *Risen: Finding Hope in the Empty Tomb*.

CLIFF'S
EDGE
CLIFFORD
GOLDSTEIN



WHY ENDURE AN
EXISTENCE WITHOUT
PURPOSE IN A
WORLD WHOSE ONLY
CERTAINTY IS
THE CONTINGENCY
AND RANDOMNESS
OF EVENTS?

LIAR, LIAR

*The devil's strategy
of deception and slander*

JOHN PECKHAM

The governor faced serious accusations of corruption. He was innocent, but many of his constituents did not know what to believe. The accusations included rumors of infidelity toward his wife. This upset him more because of how it affected his wife than how it affected his position as governor. If his wife believed such allegations, their relationship would be profoundly damaged.

How could he clear his name and restore the relationships? Imagine he chose to imprison his accusers until they withdrew the charges against him. Would that help? No. It would be *entirely* counterproductive, only making things worse—far worse!

Might the governor exercise his power in some other way to clear his name? No. Innocent though he may be, the more of his executive power he would use against his accusers, the more likely his constituents would think he was corrupt. Slanderous allegations against one's name cannot be defeated by force or power. The only way to defeat such allegations? Show them to be false by demonstration.

In our world God's name has been dragged through the mud. This is no accident. This is the enemy's strategy in the cosmic conflict, and has been throughout the ages.







The serpent started with what might seem like an innocent question. But the question stated nearly the exact opposite of what God had commanded.

SLANDER IN THE GARDEN

Genesis 1 and 2 tell of God's creation of the world, *all* of which was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). But in Genesis 3 everything changes.

The story there begins, "Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" (Gen. 3:1). The Hebrew word for "cunning" or "crafty" is ambivalent—used of both good and evil agents throughout the Bible. If you were hearing this story for the first time, you might not yet know whether the serpent was good or evil.

This "crafty" serpent "said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" (verse 1). The serpent started with what might seem like an innocent question. But the question stated nearly the exact opposite of what God had commanded. God told Adam and Eve they could eat from *every* tree except for one (Gen. 2:16, 17). It wasn't really a hard commandment, by the way. It was not as if God had said they could eat from only one tree. Only one tree was off-limits.

Accordingly, Eve responded, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die'" (Gen. 3:2, 3).

"You will not surely die," the serpent replied (Gen. 3:4). Here this "crafty" serpent effectively claimed that God was a liar.

At this juncture *someone* must have lied to Eve. She had a choice to make. Either God had lied or the serpent was now lying to her, but someone was a liar. Whom would Eve believe?

The serpent didn't merely allege that God was a liar, however. He also planted a motive: "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). The serpent effectively claimed, "God is lying to you because He wants to oppress you. He doesn't want what is best for you. He wants to keep you in the dark."

The serpent's allegations are deeply slanderous, painting a portrait of God that is the exact opposite of God's character of unselfish love.

THE FATHER OF LIES

Revelation identifies this serpent as the devil, calling him "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). Jesus Himself teaches about this archdeceiver: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44).

Notably, the Greek word translated "devil" (*diabolos*) means "slanderer," one who brings "charges with hostile intent"¹ Accordingly, when Ezekiel 28 introduces the fall of the angel who became the devil, it refers to his activity with a term that literally refers to slander (verse 5).² Satan is the slanderer from the beginning—the father of slander and archslanderer. From the very beginning until now and beyond, the serpent continues to slander God's name in the cosmic conflict.

In direct contrast to Satan's disinformation campaign, Jesus proclaimed of His own mission: "For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37). Notice the reason He came: to witness or testify to the truth. And He called His disciples to be witnesses to the truth (a major theme of Scripture).

Truth matters far more than most people think.

But some do not believe Christ precisely because He testifies of the truth. Indeed, just after identifying the devil as the father of lies in John 8, Jesus added, "But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe Me. . . . And if I tell you the truth, why do you not believe Me?" (verses 45, 46). We must be very careful not to believe simply what we want to believe. We might find ourselves rejecting God's truth.

CHERISHING TRUTH IN A POST-TRUTH AGE

We live in an age that has often been called the information age. But with the lies and deception that fly around in social media and beyond, ours might as well be called the disinformation age. We live in a new Babylon—in the sense of confusion.

In my office I have the following text hanging, which I continually try to follow: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). It is not that I or you can be saved by knowledge. We cannot. But the truth nevertheless matters a great deal. We are to be ready to give reasons for our faith (1 Peter 3:15) and to thwart the fiery arrows of the devil (Eph. 6:16), knowing that many arrows in the devil's arsenal aim at undermining the truth about God—especially God's character of perfect justice and love.

Again, that God's name has been dragged through the mud is no accident. It is the enemy's strategy. He is the archdeceiver and the archslander that seeks to displace God by causing creatures to think God is a tyrant. His war against God is a war of disinformation. But even as a governor could not clear his name by force or a display of power, allegations against God's character cannot be defeated by the exercise of power, but only by a demonstration of God's character of perfect, unselfish love.

Even if Satan were removed from the picture, without a demonstration of God's character the doubts and distrust sown by Satan's allegations would persistently unravel the harmony of the universe. This is because love depends on trust, and if creatures do not trust God fully, love is undermined, and with it the very foundation of the harmony of the universe. God, then, demonstrates His character not for His own sake, but for ours, for without such demonstration the greatest good for all humans, love relationship with God, would be undermined.

The only way for God to root out evil once and for all is by a demonstration of His character of love that is sufficient to answer all questions for all time—showing the devil's allegations to be utterly false. This He does at the greatest cost to Himself, through (among other things) Christ's giving His own life for us on the cross—the ultimate display of love.

In what some have referred to as a post-truth age, truth matters perhaps more than ever before. Christ came not only to (among other things) "bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37) but also to commission His followers to be witnesses. How much, then, should we devote to searching for truth, particularly to know God as deeply as possible, discerning truth from falsehood, and spreading the truth about God's love far and wide—not only in words but also in deeds?

Would you follow Christ? May we take up the high calling of seeking and knowing the truth and lovingly standing as one of Christ's witnesses in an age of disinformation.

"This is eternal life," Jesus said to the Father, "that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). How might you help someone else know Him today? ♣

¹ H. Bietenhard, "Satan, Beelzebul, Devil, Exorcism," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), vol. 3, p. 468.

² The term, *rekullah*, is typically translated "trading" in this verse, but the verb more specifically "signifies going from person to person dealing in goods or in gossip." Richard M. Davidson, "And There Was Gossip in Heaven," *Adventist Review*, Jan. 24, 2013, p. 23, www.adventistreview.org/2013-1503-22.

John Peckham is associate editor of *Adventist Review* and research professor of theology and Christian philosophy at Andrews University.

At Jesus' trial Pilate asked a key question: "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

If we were to pose that question or its counterpart, "How do we know what is true?" to a cross section of contemporary society, we would encounter a range of responses:

"It has been that way for a long time."

"Well, everyone agrees."

"I feel strongly about it!"

"It all fits together so beautifully."

"Look, it just works."

"She's the expert, and she surely must know."

LIMITATIONS IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

We recognize, however, that each of these criteria for determining truth presents inherent limitations.

Every tradition, for example, must have a beginning. How did the first

person know what was true? Is the majority always right? After all, at one time all but eight people believed that it could never rain (1 Peter 3:20).

What happens when two people feel strongly about the same thing, but in opposite ways? What if we were to start with a false premise? Would our beautiful harmony make us dead wrong? Something may work, but is it necessarily correct because it works? Think deceptive advertising.

Who is going to be the authority? How do they know what is true?

Perhaps we can empathize with Thomas' predicament: "We don't know anything for certain!" (cf. John 14:5). Before we hastily discard any of these criteria, however, we should note that each is of value and can contribute toward a better understanding of truth. The point, however, is that not one of these approaches can guarantee truth.

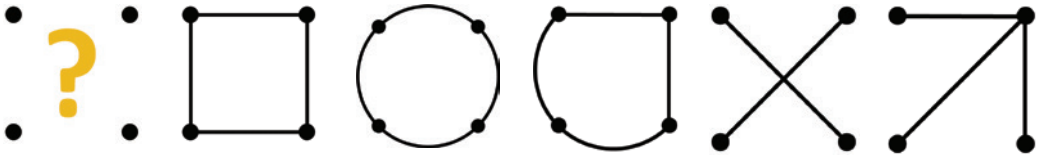
TRUTH

**JOHN
WESLEY
TAYLOR V**

MATTERS



FIGURE 1. DATA MUST BE INTERPRETED.



WHAT ABOUT RESEARCH?

One of the more pervasive truth criteria is that of empirical evidence. This approach is frequently expressed in such statements as “It’s supported by research” and “It’s scientifically sound.” Certainly research, with its systematic methodology and its checks and balances, such as peer review and replication of findings, is one of the more promising avenues through which we can approximate truth.

We would be naive, however, if we did not recognize the limitations of research, several of which are highlighted in Scripture. Do we truly perceive what is out there, or could it be that we “see through a glass, darkly”? (1 Cor. 13:12, KJV). Could appearances, at times, be deceiving? (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7).

Furthermore, data must be interpreted to become meaningful. If I place four dots on a page (Figure 1), what do they represent? A square? A circle? A combination of these? A sign to stop? Or a sign to proceed? Clearly data do not speak for themselves. They must be interpreted.

But that interpretation is influenced by our worldview. The story of the 12 evaluators in Numbers 13 reminds us that it is possible to look at the same data and yet arrive at quite different interpretations because of differences in worldview.

One further limitation of research: Is all the evidence ever in? Might we “know only in part” (1 Cor. 13:9, NRSV) and that partial knowledge lead us to faulty conclusions?

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSE

What, then, is the answer? How can we know what is truth?

Regrettably, the clamor of the crowd distracted Pilate, and he turned away before Jesus could answer his question. As is often the case with God, however, Christ had answered the question before it was asked when He stated, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). For the Christian, then, truth is a Person.

That is not all. A few hours before His encounter with Pilate, Christ had prayed, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (John 17:17). In the biblical worldview, then, the Word, whether written or incarnate, is truth.

This implies that knowledge of truth is both intellectual (learning about God, His words, and His works) and relational (knowing Christ personally and experientially).





**Human beings, therefore,
cannot destroy truth.
They can choose only to
accept or reject God's truth.**

IMPLICATIONS OF THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

What are the implications of this perspective? There are several key concepts.

Truth begins with God, not with human beings. James wrote, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17), and John added, "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

This means that although we can develop interpretations or applications of truth, we do not ultimately create truth. This does not imply, however, that we are mere passive recipients. God desires us to actively discover and, at times, recover truth (John 5:39; Job 12:7; Prov. 2:4, 5).

Because truth resides in God and God does not change, truth is stable. The Bible speaks of "the God of truth" (Isa. 65:16) and asserts that "truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). It also states that God is eternal and unchanging: "From everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (Ps. 90:2) and "I am the Lord, I do not change" (Mal. 3:6). As a result, God's truth is constant. As David confirmed: "The truth of the Lord endures forever" (Ps. 117:2).

Human beings, therefore, cannot destroy truth. They can choose only to accept or reject God's truth. Ellen G. White reminds us: "Those who have the sanctifying power of the truth upon their hearts will exert a persuasive influence. Knowing that the advocates of error cannot create or destroy truth, they can afford to be calm and considerate."¹

All truth possesses unity because it comes from the same Source. While not all that is consistent is true (given that we might start with a false premise), that which is true is internally consistent. Truth will always be in harmony with itself wherever and whenever it is found. Any contradiction either denotes error or highlights a problem with finite understanding, serving as a call for further study and reflection.

Truth is infinite because God is infinite. The frontiers of our understanding are also the horizons of our ignorance. We can visualize our knowledge as a circle, surrounded by the vast universe of what we don't know or, much less, understand. Our only contact with that universe, however, is at the circumference of our circle. Beyond that circumference, we don't even know that we don't know.

When the circle of knowledge is small, the circumference is also small, and we might be led to believe that there are only a few things that we do not yet know. As the area of the circle begins to expand, perhaps through learning or research, so does the circumference and our points of contact with the unknown. Conse-

quently, the more we learn, the more we realize how much there is yet to learn, and the more humble we should be.

We must continually grow in knowledge and understanding of truth. It is not sufficient to stand, anchored in the truth. According to Scripture, we must walk in the truth (2 John 4; 3 John 3, 4). To walk denotes movement and progress. Ellen White counsels, “Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed.”²

How presumptuous it would be, then, for anyone to declare or act as if he or she possesses all truth! A Christian will never possess all truth. After all, God’s truth is infinite, and we are finite. Nevertheless, through study and experience, and through collaboration with other truth seekers and by divine guidance, the proportion of error should begin to drop away, with the goal that ultimately all that the Christian possesses is truth.

Because God is the source of all truth, all truth is ultimately God’s truth. If something is true—even if it is the truth about the untruth, it is an extension of God’s truth, and we must recognize and highlight that connection.

At the same time, we must also acknowledge that Christians do not have a monopoly on truth. Nonbelievers also discover truths. “[God] makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45) because He wants all “to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). What then is the difference between the believer and the nonbeliever? The believer in God acknowledges and values the Source of that truth.

HOW DO WE OBTAIN TRUTH?

Fundamentally we are enabled to acquire truth because God takes the initiative, sharing true facts and principles with us. Divine revelation is the channel through which God reveals truth to human beings. Reason, research, and reflection are gifts from God to understand truth, while faith is a whole-hearted commitment to accept God’s truth.

There is a problem, however. Paul speaks of those “who changed the truth

of God into a lie” (Rom. 1:25, KJV). While God’s truth cannot be destroyed, it can, in fact, be distorted. When an object is viewed through a warped lens, our perception of that object is deformed, although the object itself has not changed.

How does this misrepresentation of truth occur? There are at least two possibilities. First, this distortion can result from Satan’s direct manipulation of God’s truth. Paul’s encounter with the fortune-telling slave girl (Acts 16:16-18) illustrates how a statement of truth can be subverted to cause people to arrive at false conclusions.

Second, God’s truth can be distorted when we adopt a secular worldview, a perspective that removes God from the equation (2 Cor. 4:4). The result in either case is false conclusions regarding God’s revelation of truth, and this is tragic!

The good news is that God is again proactive. He provides the “Spirit of Truth” that will guide us “into all truth” (John 16:13). It is the role of the Holy Spirit to deflect Satan’s attempted distortions of truth and to rescue us from the false assumptions of a secular worldview. As a result, we are enabled to arrive at correct conclusions regarding God and His truth. The prophet Isaiah writes, “When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him” (Isa. 59:19).

There is an additional safeguard—the community of faith. While popularity polls do not determine truth, “every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses” (2 Cor. 13:1, NIV). Acts 15 records that when the early Christian believers needed to decide which matters were essential, they came together, discussed, and prayed, and under guidance of the Spirit reached a conclusion.

A FINAL MATTER

Paul writes that “wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth” (2 Thess. 2:10, NIV). It is not enough, then, to *know* the truth. We must *love* the truth.

What does it mean to love the truth? It means that we must *live* the truth, incorporating it into the fabric of our lives.

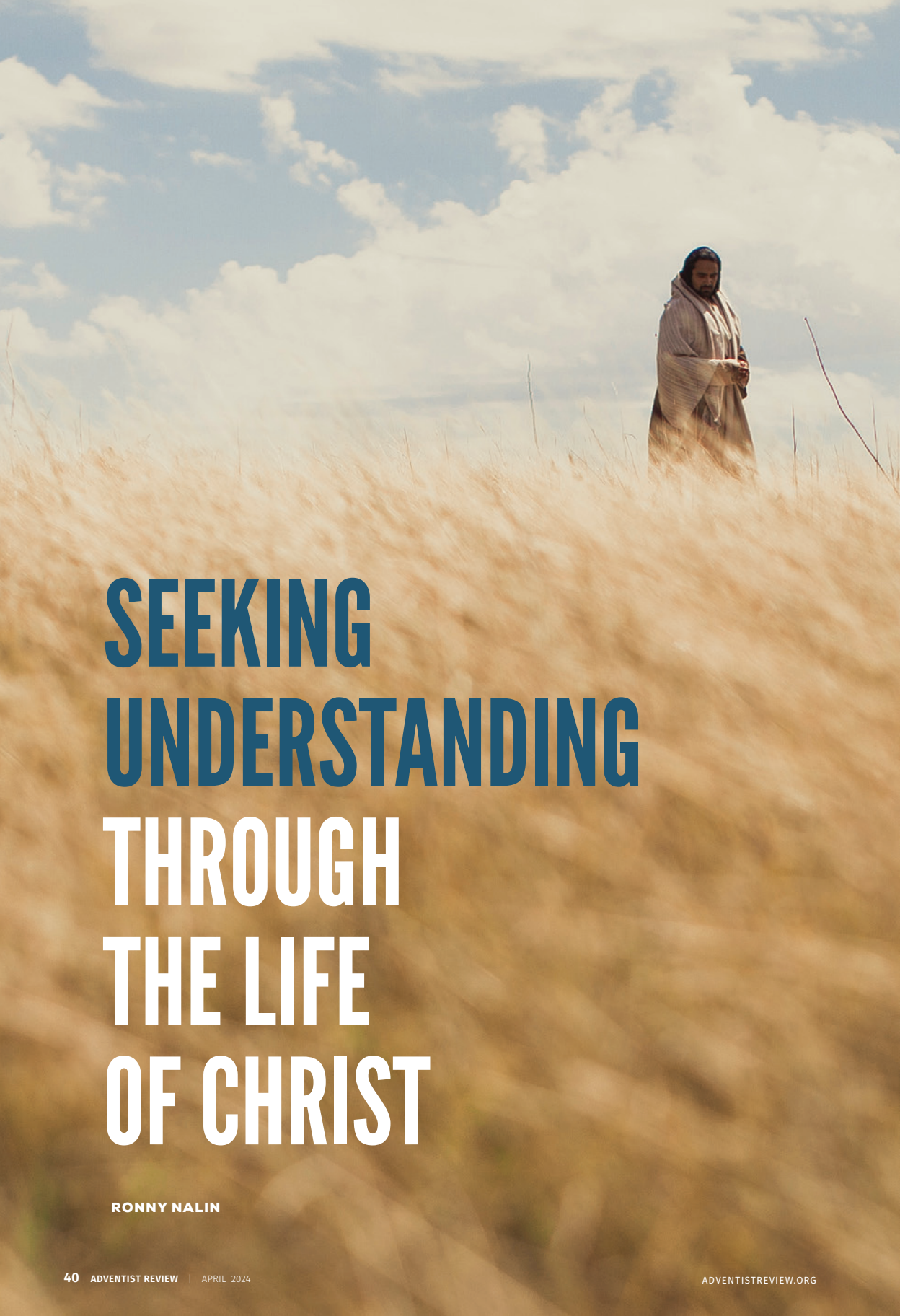
The result? “The truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Free from false assumptions, from misplaced interpretations. Truth as it is in Jesus offers the only freedom. “If the Son sets you free, you really will be free” (John 8:36, NASB).

At the end of earth’s history, God proclaims: “Open the gates that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in” (Isa. 26:2). In the final analysis, truth matters! 🗡️

¹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 281.


² Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 35.

John Wesley Taylor V is a truth seeker committed to the biblical worldview. He presently serves as president of Andrews University.



SEEKING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THE LIFE OF CHRIST

RONNY NALIN



The prologue of the Gospel of John (John 1:1-18) provides a concise summary of what we need to know to understand reality and our origins.

In the beginning was the Word.

The Word was with God and was God.

Everything (including us) was made through the Word.

The Word was made flesh and dwelled for a time among us.

No one has ever seen God in the fullness of His glory. But the Word made flesh has made Him known.

This sequence establishes that Christ is God, Christ is the Creator, and Christ is the only one through whom we can understand God's qualities and nature. No one has ever seen God, but Christ dwelled among us, and He revealed God in our human dimension.

John explains that Christ is the method and pathway to the acquisition of true knowledge. In contemplating Christ, we understand. But what can we specifically learn about God, and His relation to the natural world, from the life of Christ? In what follows I will outline three important truths that Christ made clear, while ministering to us on earth, about Creation and God's relationship to it.

GOD'S AUTHORITY OVER CREATION

Our existence is regulated by inflexible natural laws to which we are bound. We can use them to our advantage, but there is no escaping them. Think of gravity as a simple test of this statement. The current high jump world record is 8 feet $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (2.45 meters). No matter how hard we try, most of us cannot even jump up more than a few tens of centimeters without the help of some contraptions.

We cannot defy gravity. Yet at the end of His earthly ministry, as we read in Acts 1, Christ is elevated and ascends into heaven. What should we make of that?

For us, there is no way of beating gravity's downward pull. We could challenge countless volunteers to go to a lake, board a boat, and step out to walk on water, with the same inexorable result of seeing them sink under the water's surface. No wonder that in Matthew 14 we are told that the disciples were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on water, and thought He was a ghost. What would you think?

Christ demonstrated that God can interact with the natural world in a way that transcends our constrained experience. He reinforced this message by choosing to perform specific actions that echoed Creation week. For example, in calming the storm at the Lake of Galilee, Jesus rebuked the winds and waves, paralleling the organization of the waters in the second day of Creation. And He used His Word, nothing else, to do so. The response of the disciples captures the amazement of encountering something so extraordinary: "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" (Matt. 8:27, NIV). We obey the laws of nature, not them us. And yet nature obeys Christ!

Most important, Christ chose to demonstrate creative power in the resurrection of Lazarus by *speaking* him into life. There was no physical manipulation, environmental modifications, or substance injection involved in this mighty act. The same Word by which the heavens were made called Lazarus back to life.

Satan, the foremost rejector of God's authority, challenged Christ's divinity by questioning Him on these two very attributes: His creative power, by asking Him to turn stones into bread, and His authority over the laws of nature, by asking Him to jump off a building (Matt. 4:3, 5). Jesus' refusal to yield to the promptings of the rebellious accuser demonstrates that God's power and authority are not arbitrary, nor whimsical. They cannot be manipulated or appropriated, and they operate according to established principles.

Christ corrects our limited focus and provides us with clear principles to attain deeper understanding.



PHOTO: PEARL / LIGHTSTOCK

The life of Christ points to an understanding that surpasses naturalism and materialism, revealing that God existed before the foundation of the world, manifested His power at Creation, and holds authority over the laws of nature, using them according to His purposes.

GOD'S INTIMACY WITH HIS CREATION

Through listening to Christ's teachings, we discover another important aspect of God's relationship to His creation. Jesus showed great acquaintance with the details of natural systems. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), for example, Jesus drew attention to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. He used such words as "look at" or "consider." He understood animal behavior and appreciated beauty in nature. Christ revealed God's care and concern for even the smallest creatures. In Matthew 10:29 Jesus explicitly told us that even the life of two sparrows is under the caring watch of the Father. Christ had a clear awareness of the surrounding landscape, caring for small details, such as selecting a grassy area for a multitude to sit in a more comfortable setting (Mark 6:39). One of the most memorable images that Christ used to illustrate the relationship of trust that exists between Him and us, found in John 10, is based on a bridge of intimate connection between humans (the shepherd) and animals (the sheep). Jesus says that His sheep know and listen to His voice. There is mutual familiarity.

Therefore, Christ's example invites us to confidently explore the creation, promising us a rewarding encounter with the God who oversees it. Knowledge gained through this intimacy opens the doors to discovery, childlike amazement, and trust.

GOD EXPANDS OUR PERCEPTION OF CREATION

A third constitutive aspect of finding true knowledge in Christ can be illustrated from Acts 1:10, 11: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?'" Our eyes can remain fixed, looking up, gazing at physical realities, but Jesus takes us to a point where we go beyond what is visible. The knowledge we gain through Christ transcends our reality.

With His incarnation and life, Jesus embraced physical reality. He did not deny it or disregard it, as in classical Greek dualism. But He used it as a platform to expand and illuminate our understanding of greater realities. In demonstrations such as the Transfiguration, we could say that Christ aimed to reveal to us the heavenly or spiritual realm. This is not an ethereal or imaginary realm. In His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus acknowledges that it is difficult for us to be directed from earthly things to the heavenly realm, because He is the only one who has had access to it, and He is trying to open it up for us (John 3:10-13). Therefore, Christ's ultimate goal is to expand our understanding of reality, revealing that there is much more to creation than just what we see.

CHRIST SHARPENS OUR FOCUS

In a time when we are surrounded by naturalistic worldviews, Christ corrects our limited focus and provides us with clear principles to attain deeper understanding: God has authority over His creation, God invites us to have intimacy with creation, and God will expand our perception of creation. We could read these three aspects in Jesus' affirmation: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The way, because we learn through Him that there is more than the eye can see; the truth, because we are grossly mistaken when we do not acknowledge the power and authority of God; and the life, because with Him we learn to walk a path of intimate understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live. 📌

Ronny Nalin, Ph.D., is director of the Geoscience Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

SEVEN KEYS TO THE POWER OF PROMISE

Practically speaking, in understanding the interplay between divine assurance and personal responsibility, Christians discover spiritual power in embracing the principles encapsulated in the acrostic PROMISE.

Providence

At the core of Christian living is the unalterable belief in God's providence or guidance. Proverbs 16:9 beautifully captures this, affirming that while we may plan our course, it is the Lord who establishes our steps. In *Steps to Christ* Ellen White emphasizes the importance of relying on God's providence, asserting that it directs our paths with wisdom and purpose.¹

Resilience

The Christian journey is fraught with trials, yet resilience empowers believers to endure and emerge stronger. The biblical account of Job exemplifies resilience in the face of adversity, echoed by James 1:12, which promises a crown of life to those who persevere. Resilience, then, is not mere survival but thriving amid challenges, shaping character, and deepening faith amid trials.

Opportunity

The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 underscores the importance of recognizing and seizing opportunities. In *Christ's Object Lessons* Ellen White highlights the joy in using and developing our talents for others and God's kingdom.² Recognizing and embracing opportunities aligns with the Christian's call to be faithful stewards, witnesses, and active participants in God's plan.

Motivation

My motivation to love is fueled by the love of Christ, my secure salvation in Christ's righteousness, and my determined desire to follow His example. Colossians 3:23 encapsulates this principle, urging believers to work for the Lord with all their hearts. Motivation, derived from genuine

love for God and others, transforms tasks into meaningful acts of service.

Insight

Prayer and Bible study is crucial for navigating life's complexities. Proverbs 3:5, 6 advises trusting in the Lord and not solely on human understanding. This is possible only through gaining insight through prayer and biblical wisdom to come into alignment with God's will.

Significance

Recognizing one's purpose and significance is grounded in the belief that each person is uniquely created in God's image (Gen. 1:27). We are assured, "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."³ Understanding one's significance empowers Christians to live purposefully and to participate joyfully in character development.

Eternity

An eternal perspective offers hope beyond transient trials. Second Corinthians 4:17, 18 reassures believers that momentary troubles lead to eternal glory. This ever-present perspective provides comfort, strength, and resilience, encouraging believers to focus on ultimate heavenly treasures beyond earthly possessions.

This acrostic serves as a blueprint for a victorious Christian life. It forms a cohesive framework, empowering believers to live purposefully, navigate challenges with faith, and find hope in tough times. As we embrace these principles, we embark on a transformative journey and radiate the light of Christ. ✨

¹ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), p. 125.

² Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1900, 1941), p. 326.

³ Ellen G. White, *My Life Today* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1952), p. 218.

Delbert W. Baker, Ph.D., is director of research and development for the Regional Conference Retirement Plan/Office of Regional Conference Ministries in Maryland.



**THE ACROSTIC
PROMISE SERVES AS
A BLUEPRINT FOR A
VICTORIOUS
CHRISTIAN LIFE.**

TOO MUCH INFORMATION?

Evaluating sources and claims in an age of information overload

MARINA F. GARNER

Life today is filled with an abundance of information. Many streams of information vie for our attention all the time. Ours is an age of information overload. How are we to deal with this situation? How might we filter all this information toward discerning what is true and what is good?

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects, among other things, one's capacity to attend to a task for extended periods. In alignment with the disorder's name, physicians and psychologists have often described the person with ADHD as lacking the capacity to hold their attention (hence attention *deficit*) on a task. More recently, however, mental health professionals have pushed back on this description. For many, it is not so much an attention deficit disorder as an *abundance-of-attention* disorder. The difficulty, then, for people with ADHD is to allocate their attention appropriately in the presence of the abundant amount of information that they detect around them. For this reason the name for the disorder has been criticized by specialists in the field as misleading.¹

Perhaps an analogous phenomenon can be found in our dealing with the massive stream of information that we encounter daily. The Internet—and our access to it at the tip of our fingers—has provided us with the incredible possibility of knowing so much so quickly. On the other hand, the dizzying effect of information overload has been linked to increased levels of mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression.² In addition to mental health issues, information overload has raised personal philosophical and religious problems. With social media accounts, websites, and advertisements vying for our attention, the most critical question is “How should I filter all this information to absorb solely what is true?”

RELIABLE SOURCES?

One of the answers we tend to give to this question is that we should always be attentive to the origin of the information we consume. That is, if the origin is from an unreliable source, we should be suspicious of that information. If, however, it comes from a source that is considered reliable, then it may be trustworthy.

The problem with taking this answer too far is that philosophers (specifically those working in the field of logic) have long discredited arguments that depend on what is known as the genetic fallacy. A fallacy occurs when someone refutes or supports a statement or belief based on erroneous arguments (or, as logicians would say, invalid arguments). The genetic fallacy occurs when a belief or an argument is evaluated based solely on its origin or history. Usually this line of argument is used to discredit a belief based on its origin, though it could also be used to support a belief. We hear arguments such as “Well, you cannot believe the content of this video because X created it, and everyone knows X is a sketchy guy.” Such evaluations are used quite frequently when discussing an issue: the political or religious alignment of the proponent, ethnicity, race, education, source of income—and the list goes on.

The problem with this fallacy, of course, is that the origin of an idea does not necessarily affect the truth of that idea. What truly matters when we evaluate information, be it a belief, a statement, or an argument, is the *truth of the content*, not the person who

“How should I filter all this information to absorb solely what is true?”



proposed it or their motivation to do so. Whether the content of the video in the example above is true or false is what matters, not that the “sketchy guy” was the person behind that content. Put simply, unreliable sources can set forth true claims, and typically reliable sources can sometimes set forth false ones.

To criticize the genetic fallacy is not to say that we should not take the origin of information as important data to evaluate content. In fact, the origin of information, especially in a digital era, is a crucial factor in our systems of processing information overload. Suppose the origin of a piece of news, historical tidbit, scientific discovery, or theological interpretation is from a source that we consider dubious or overly biased. In that case, we feel justified in taking it with a grain of salt. We seem justified in thinking that the reliability of the *source* of our information is directly related to its *truth*. Hence the oft-quoted advice to “check the sources.” What, then, is the difference between the genetic fallacy and the idea that the origin of information matters when it comes to our acceptance of it or not?

ASSESSING RELIABILITY

This puzzle has led some philosophers to propose a distinction between erroneous approaches to considering sources (fallacious genetic reasoning) and appropriate ways of considering sources (nonfallacious genetic reasoning). Instead of hinging a claim’s veracity on its source, we must test the *methods* on which that source frequently relies. If someone uses forms of reasoning that tend to lead to true statements (be they scientific or biblical interpretation methods), we seem justified in believing them when they propose something. If they do not, the belief might still be true, but we will be justified in being more suspicious of it. If, for example, we follow an influencer on social media who consistently relies on materialistic/atheistic reasoning to arrive at their conclusions, we are justified in being suspicious of the conclusions they bring forth. In other words, considering our theistic worldview, solely materialistic reasoning is an unreliable method of arriving at truths.

So what are the questions that we must ask to assess the reliability of a cyber source? Here are a few suggestions:

Does this person/institution/organization utilize the Bible as one of their sources of authority to argue for their position?

If so, is their use of the Bible responsible—do they consider the context of the passage? Do they have access to the primary languages of the passage? Do they take the whole Bible into account in their reasoning?

If not, are their claims in harmony with biblical principles, and do they back them up with trustworthy methods, such as peer-reviewed scientific studies?

Does this person/institution/organization tend to be overly sensationalist or controversial to attract attention and gain more followers?

THE BEREAN WAY

Answering any of these questions in the negative would be sufficient grounds to be guarded when it comes to this source. This, however, does not absolve us from assessing the very content of the information provided. The quick access we have to an array of information on the Internet often gives us the false impression that we do not need to do our “homework” to evaluate the input. On the contrary, it is more necessary than ever that we do the work that the Bereans so honorably did after Paul and Silas visited them: “They received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men” (Acts 17:11, 12, ESV). To do the same about the cyber information we take in daily, we must take it upon ourselves to (1) take the time to evaluate the arguments made and the methods utilized to arrive at them (1 Thess. 5:21); (2) pray over such information so that God can illuminate us regarding its veracity (John 17:17); (3) claim the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit of wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8); (4) be careful with sources of information that tend to utilize unreliable methods of arriving at the truth (Matt. 16:21-23).¹

¹ Alison Pritchard, “The Attention ‘Deficit’ Myth,” <https://chadd.org/adhd-news/adhd-news-caregivers/the-attention-deficit-myth/>.

² One study among many is Joseph Ciarrochi et al., “The Development of Compulsive Internet Use and Mental Health: A Four-Year Study of Adolescence,” *Developmental Psychology* 52: 272-283.

Marina F. Garner is assistant professor of religion at Loma Linda University.

POTLUCK IS THE POINT

Isometimes like to tell my church members that if they must choose between attending the church service or attending potluck, choose potluck. Potluck—fellowship lunch, eating together—isn't in addition to the thing. It *is* the thing. It is church.

Notice: nowhere did Jesus ever say something like “The kingdom of heaven is like a pastor who stood up to preach . . .” Instead He compared the kingdom of heaven to a banquet, and did much of His ministry around tables—to the point where the Pharisees accused Him of being a “glutton and a drunkard” (Matt. 11:19, NIV). He supped with Simon, dined with Mary and Martha, and performed His first miracle at a wedding feast.

Even more poignantly, as N. T. Wright notes in reference to the Last Supper: “When Jesus wanted to explain to His followers what His forthcoming death was all about, He didn't give them a theory . . . He gave them a *meal*.”¹ Indeed, for Jesus, in the words of Tim Chester, “doing lunch was doing theology.”²

It shouldn't surprise us, then, that when Revelation paints a picture of the culmination of all things—when Christ and His people are finally united in that “blessed hope” for which we all wait—John describes it as the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9). And when the grand invitation goes out to all to accept Christ, we encounter culinary imagery again: “Let him who thirsts come,” John thus writes. “Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

It's at the table where God's kingdom is beautifully expressed and experienced. When we sit together, we com-

municate the relational heart of God. We show that God's character is one of loving persuasion—expressed through joy-filled conversation and laughter—rather than one-sided coercion. We show we're all equal at the foot of the cross, as we value each person at the table, inviting them into the orbit of God's embracing love.

We also declare our dependence on God—demonstrating the truth of the gospel—as we consume the bread and the drink upon which our lives depend. Thus, as Ellen White has said: “The family board becomes as the table of the Lord, and every meal a sacrament.”³ Indeed, she further proposed, the “cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf” of bread, demonstrating that no one—saint or sinner—eats his or her daily food, “but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ.”⁴

For all these reasons, and many more, I, as a pastor, would much rather sit at a table and talk *with* people than stand behind a pulpit and talk *at* people (pastors should do less “sermonizing” and more “personal” work anyway, according to Ellen White).⁵ It's at the table where God's kingdom and character are most poignantly experienced and felt—and it's where I want to be. ▀

¹ N. T. Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2016), p. 182.

² Tim Chester, *A Meal With Jesus: Discovering Grace, Community, and Mission Around the Table* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2011), p. 21.

³ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898, 1940), p. 660.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 143.

Shawn Brace is an author, pastor, and church planter in Portland, Maine, whose most recent book, *The Table I Long For* (Signs Publishing) details his journey into a mission-centered life. He is also a D.Phil. candidate at the University of Oxford, researching nineteenth-century American Christianity



**IF YOU MUST
CHOOSE BETWEEN
ATTENDING THE
CHURCH SERVICE OR
ATTENDING
POTLUCK, CHOOSE
POTLUCK.**



SEVEN PHASES

*The development of
the publishing work*

ALMIR MARRONI

The invention of the printing press in the 1440s marked a significant technological advancement, signaling the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern age. Gutenberg's invention became a tool for the Protestant Reformation, facilitating the revival of truths long forgotten and rectifying distortions introduced by the dominant church.

During the Reformation the distribution of literature surged in both intensity and speed. Then the emergence of literary romanticism and the establishment of book fairs in various European cities in

the eighteenth century led to the widespread adoption of reading as a popular and impactful societal habit. Hence, it comes as no surprise that there was a vigorous distribution of papers and small books at the onset of the Advent movement in the nineteenth century. Even prior to the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Millerites already had a rigorous system to spread William Miller's teachings through publications.

In the following paragraphs we consider seven phases of Adventist literature distribution, beginning with William Miller and his associates.

Not everyone can preach, but everyone can share books, pamphlets, and magazines.

MILLERITE MOVEMENT (1839)

In 1839 William Miller and Joshua V. Himes initiated a venture of mass production and distribution of magazines and pamphlets. The content concerned the imminent fulfillment of Bible prophecies, especially Daniel 8:14, which pointed to the cleansing of the sanctuary, interpreted by Miller as referring to the second coming of Christ.

The first Millerite periodical was the *Signs of the Times* magazine, followed by more publications. LeRoy Froom recorded the distribution of 6 million periodicals between 1843 and 1844.¹ At that time the population of the United States was 19 million, which means that proportionally, one publication was delivered for every group of 3.2 people. It is not by chance that Miller and his urgent message reached all regions of the country. If he had focused only on preaching from the pulpit, the impact of his message would have been much smaller. Not everyone can preach, but everyone can share books, pamphlets, and magazines.

ADVENTIST MOVEMENT (1848)

After the disappointment of the Millerite movement, Adventist pioneers, in addition to their belief in the imminent return of Jesus, rediscovered other Bible truths, including the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath.

In November 1848, after a vision, Ellen White said to her husband: “I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear around the world.”²

James White must have pondered the meaning of “success from the first” as he dedicated countless hours to writing and hard work to gather just enough money to initiate the project. Seven months after Ellen White’s vision, as *The Present Truth*, an eight-page paper, emerged from the press, the pioneers organized a private and emotional dedication ceremony at the Belden home.

“The date was July 1849. The little pile of papers was laid upon the floor. Then the brethren and sisters gathered about them and with tears in their eyes pleaded with God to bless the little sheet as it should be sent out. Then the papers were folded, wrapped, and addressed, and James White carried them eight miles to the Middletown post office. Thus the publishing work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church began.”³

With heartfelt prayers the pioneers held those papers, recognizing that only God could arrange each page, each word, in a manner that

would be fruitful. Gradually their work bore fruit. Letters from readers brought two exciting pieces of news—some people expressed that after reading the papers, they decided to observe the Sabbath. Other letters were accompanied by much-needed financial contributions.

Soon new publications were added, and in 1852 the purchase of a small press marked the beginning of the Review and Herald, the first Seventh-day Adventist publishing house.

What lessons do this humble beginning teach? When God’s people follow His vision, success is granted. The pioneers’ self-denial, sacrifice, hard work, and passion for mission paved the way for church growth.

TRACT SOCIETIES (1870)

Adventist literature distribution kept increasing over the next two decades, prompting the leaders to initiate a new venture. The Tract Societies, first established in the 1870s, functioned as bookstores where members and the public could access Adventist publications.

Commenting on the importance of having literature available to church members, John



A colporteur in Japan loads books for delivery.

PHOTO: ADVENT REVIEW AND SABBATH HERALD, JUNE 2, 1927

With the first colporteurs in the 1880s, the church gained more mobility to penetrate unreached territories. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the church reached the four corners of the globe; most often, the message first arrived through publications sent from North America or through the hands of missionary colporteurs.

Where the preacher's voice could not reach, there the literature evangelist planted the seed. People who would otherwise have not known the truth received it from the consecrated hands of a colporteur.

STUDENT LITERATURE EVANGELISM (1900)

At the start of the twentieth century Ellen White provided guidance and counsel on engaging students in canvassing work. She outlined a comprehensive list of advantages that young people would gain by participating as literature evangelists at the conclusion of the school year. She emphasized that by engaging in canvassing work sharing God's message, the youth would cultivate a deep relationship with Jesus, strengthening their own Christian identity and beliefs. Furthermore, they would nurture and enhance talents that would equip them for future responsibilities. Another significant benefit: proceeds from book selling have empowered thousands of youth to generate funds for their school fees.

Loughborough wrote: "The most important result of the establishment of the Tract Society work among us has been the influence which it has exerted in the direction of creating and increasing a missionary spirit among the local church organizations."⁴

REGULAR COLPORTEUR WORK (1880)

Richard Godsmark placed tracts and papers in the hands of George King, a stammering young man who dreamed of becoming a preacher: "Here is the message, son. Let these preach for you. Take them out and sell them. You don't need to hold meetings in order to sell these. Visit people in their homes."⁵

By selling those tracts and magazines King pioneered the Adventist colporteur work. A couple of years later, at his request, the Review and Herald printed *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, by Uriah Smith, the first subscription book for literature evangelism.

WIDE DISTRIBUTION INITIATIVES (LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY)

In the late twentieth century Adventist publishing houses increased the production of small sharing books, aiming to encourage church members to distribute publications regularly.

In 2006 the world church approved the Missionary Book of the Year project, seeking to reignite missionary passion for literature distribution.

Missionary books are designed to achieve three primary objectives: present our most distinctive beliefs; promote widespread and mass distribution; involve every church member in the distribution effort.

Since 2007, missionary books have been translated into more than 120 languages, with a global distribution exceeding 700 million copies. Notably, *The Great Controversy* alone has reached 150 million copies.

INTERNET AND DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

Globalization and the Internet have opened new avenues for literature distribution. To reach a global audience, the church has been adapting to the changing landscape by utilizing online platforms, ebooks, and digital resources. Translation of publications into various languages has also increased. Adventist literature in digital format can be accessed through church-owned websites and apps, aligning with contemporary communication trends.

Today both print and digital publications collaborate in proclaiming the three angels' messages, each serving distinct purposes to reach a diverse global audience. The decision between print and digital formats depends on the target audience, region, and preferences. It's crucial to acknowledge that electronic media is more vulnerable to censorship and restrictions.

Using digital publications is easier, faster, and economically efficient. There will come a time, however, when printed books will stand as the enduring voices, persisting when sharing electronic media is curtailed.

The wider distribution of printed books ensures that more “voices” will be heard even if digital censorship arises.

CONCLUSION

As we celebrate the 175th anniversary of Seventh-day Adventist literature in 2024, let’s reflect on the pivotal role of books, magazines, and tracts in presenting the truth to the world.

The birth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church marked a crucial moment, with pioneers dedicating themselves to publishing the present truth. Subsequent phases underscore the resilience and

adaptability of Adventist literature distribution, emphasizing its role as a primary tool available to every church member eager to reach people for God’s kingdom. The journey continues, as literature remains indispensable to the church’s mission of sharing the everlasting gospel. 📖

¹ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1954), vol. 4, p. 628.

² Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1953), p. 1.

³ Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1882, 1945), p. xxv.

⁴ J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, Mich.: General Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, 1892), p. 290.

⁵ M. Carol Hetzel, *The Undaunted* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1967), p. 31.

Almir Marroni is director of the Publishing Ministries Department at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

MISSIONARY BOOKS

Designed for ease of sharing, both by topic and by graphics, missionary books have been an opportunity for Seventh-day Adventists to engage in distribution of spiritual literature since 2006. These images represent a small sample of the books that have been shared over the years.

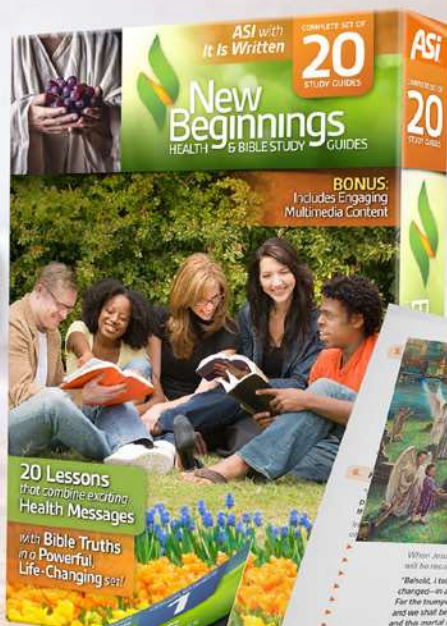


NEW BEGINNINGS HEALTH & BIBLE STUDY GUIDES:

A Healthy New Way To Share Biblical Truths!

Each Kit Includes:

- 20 Health/Bible Lessons
- Video Introductions
- Exciting Health Topics
- Engaging Bible Studies
- Written by John Bradshaw, Risé Rafferty & Lyndi Schwartz



Health & Bible Studies Combined!



Order Now! Special Introductory Price: \$10.99 | itiswritten.shop



The only contact we had was 10 years ago when I wrote him to express my gratitude for that brochure.

17 YEARS LATER

ALMIR MARRONI

While attending a literature evangelist convention in Brazil several years back, a colporteur approached me timidly and handed me a folded paper. When I opened it later, this is what it said:

“Pr. Marroni:

“As I heard you recount stories of literature evangelists working in different regions, I recognized the name of one of them whom I haven’t met yet, but who played a vital role in my spiritual life. I don’t know how, but a brochure titled ‘He Is the Way,’ with the address of Milton Geraldo Martins, literature evangelist in Nova Friburgoburgo, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, reached my hands in 1991, in the city of Pocinhos, Paraíba, where I lived.

“Through this brochure I became acquainted with the Adventist message. I kept the brochure for six years. In 1997 I received Bible studies by correspondence and was baptized in 1998. Then I sold my little cow, some sheep, and came alone to São Paulo. Three years later I discovered literature evangelism, and for almost six years now I have been a canvassing evangelist. Milton Martins doesn’t know that I am also a colporteur, but he knows that I am an Adventist. The only contact we had was 10 years ago when I wrote him to express my gratitude for that brochure.

“I would like to hear from Brother Milton how this brochure stamped with his address ended up in the interior of Paraíba state, a place located 2,000 miles away.

“I am grateful for this message that changed my life. If you ever meet Milton, tell him about me and thank him on my behalf. Please inform him that I am now His disciple.

“Josenildo Limeira Porto.”

What a testimony! Two things stand out to me in this story.

First is the unlimited geographical reach of the written Word. A brochure, magazine, or book can travel and reach people in places far distant from where we are. This is how the church expanded to all continents of the earth since the first Adventist publications began to circulate.

Brother Milton Martins, besides selling books and magazines, had the habit of freely sharing brochures and small books. Every donated piece of literature bore a stamp with his name and address.

The second interesting point is the length of time the message remained “incubated.” Josenildo received the brochure, and only seven years later he decided to dedicate his life to Jesus through baptism.

Seventeen years after Josenildo first received the brochure, he and Milton met for the first time when a media team brought them together to record their incredible story. Witnessing this encounter was like foreseeing the festive celestial gathering between those who shared the message of salvation in Christ and those who accepted Him as Savior.

You and I can be used by God to multiply stories like Josenildo’s. Sharing the hope of eternal life is the greatest and most significant mission of a Christian. Let’s all be messengers of hope. 📌

Almir Marroni is director of the Publishing Ministries Department at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

A person in a graduation cap and gown stands on a rocky ledge overlooking a city at night. The city lights are visible in the background, and the person is looking out over the city.

SEEKING WISDOM

*Faith and
science in
education*

TIMOTHY G. STANDISH

Following one of Marvin Wray's excellent sermons, a visitor walked up to me in the church lobby. "So you're working on a Ph.D. at George Mason University?" he asked. I was about a year into my dissertation research, which involved lab work 18 hours a day, six days a week. It sounds hard, but my fellow graduate students and I happily kept on working as if we were having the time of our lives.

A healthy human mind craves knowledge, which explains the early appearance of "Why?" in many toddlers' vocabularies. The further one studies, the more profound the questions become and the more interesting the answers, until it becomes obvious that our precious store of knowledge represents a tiny fraction of all there is to discover. The privilege of expending so much effort to expand our knowledge of nature was and is one of the greatest pleasures of my life.

ADVANCED EDUCATION

I was happy to tell our questioning visitor about the wonderful education I was enjoying, and got as far as "Yes" before being cut off by a tirade about me being a smart fellow who was wasting my time with an education when I should be spreading the gospel. I was left stunned and wondering if we could

possibly be reading the same Bible, the one that tells us that Jesus Himself spent at least 30 years preparing for His ministry. Pastor Wray must have seen my startled expression as he appeared from nowhere and guided my questioner away. I quickly exited church with my equally shocked wife, who was sacrificing so much for my education.

Was the visitor's harsh inquisition justified? Was I ignoring the Bible by seeking an advanced education? I studied two species of worm that most people have never heard of, yet belong to a group vital for life's existence. Technically I was engaged in "taxonomy": classifying and naming organisms. A Bible reader need only make it to the second chapter of Genesis to discover that taxonomy was humanity's very first "job." God wanted Adam to learn of his need for a wife (Gen. 2:18) through naming the animals. Adam noticed that animals existed in male and female pairs, but a human female was missing (verse 20). Adam's research revealed his incompleteness. God then crowned His creation using a unique means to make Eve. Adam's and Eve's creation divides humans, made in God's image, from the animals (Gen. 1:27). Lots of research and education occurred during the sixth day of Creation week!

In the most idyllic setting and with the Creator



Knowledge through Christ-centered education and research is central to sharing the gospel.

Himself as their teacher, Adam and Eve teach another lesson: humans have free will, which, then as now, they regularly use to choose both what they know to be right and what they know is wrong. A profound difference exists between having information, “you shall surely die” (Gen. 2:17), and using it with wisdom. Information, wisdom, and knowledge are very distinct things.

MASTER TEACHER

After Eden, God again became humanity’s teacher. Jesus never called Himself a carpenter, but He did say: “You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am” (John 13:13). In the colleges and universities of the day—the synagogues and temple—Jesus taught for more than three years, leaving His pupils “astonished” (Matt. 22:33). Why? They had all the information He used in the Old Testament. There is a key to knowledge that they lacked: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov. 1:7).

Recently many people, like my after-church inquisitor, have questioned the value of an expensive university education,¹ even a Christian education. In secular universities, particularly the most expensive and elite, the biblical foundation has

been removed. There is no “fear of the Lord,” and where there was once knowledge, a cesspool of bad and often ancient discredited ideas swamps students, faculty, and administrators alike. In this environment information does not and cannot turn into true knowledge. In fact, knowledge is lost rather than found. Should education be abandoned?

Jesus criticized those who “err, not knowing the scriptures” (Matt. 22:29, KJV), but in Scripture only one person criticizes someone’s great learning, the pagan Festus. He shouted, “Much learning is driving you mad!” (Acts 26:24) while Paul was revealing eternal truths to him. From Eden to the Temple where Jesus taught, to the school of Tyrannus, where Paul taught in Ephesus (Acts 19:9), the pursuit of knowledge is a constant theme of Scripture. Scientists such as Solomon (1 Kings 4:33, 34) are presented as examples of the faith whose knowledge drew diverse people to God. When we have knowledge to share, others will be drawn to the Creator through us too. Knowledge through Christ-centered education and research is central to sharing the gospel. Ellen White warned, “Those who are uneducated, untrained, and unrefined are not prepared to enter a field in which the powerful influences of talent and education combat the truths of God’s Word. Neither can they successfully meet the strange forms of error, religious and philosophical combined, to expose which requires a knowledge of scientific as well as Scriptural truth.”²

I’m glad I didn’t follow misguided counsel to abandon education for the cause of Christ. No education is perfect, but I am convinced that there is no greater institutional power for good on earth than a genuinely Christ-centered Bible-based education. Understanding that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge lays the necessary foundation on which to build true knowledge from our study of the creation. It turns our research into an act of worship and equips us to reach out to a world thirsting for “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). 🍀

¹ Douglas Belkin, “Why Americans Have Lost Faith in the Value of College,” *Wall Street Journal*, <https://www.wsj.com/us-news/education/why-americans-have-lost-faith-in-the-value-of-college-b6b635f2>, accessed Jan. 24, 2024.

² Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 81.

Timothy G. Standish, Ph.D., is a senior scientist at the Geoscience Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The decision to replace Uriah Smith in 1897 was somewhat divided. There were those on the publishing board and General Conference (GC) Committee who felt it was time to conclude Smith's editorship. Others, while they understood the issues, weren't as resolute. The committee invited Smith "to counsel" with them. What followed was a questioning of Smith regarding where he stood on certain issues. While the answers they received didn't completely meet their expectations, the committee voted, some reluctantly, to reappoint Smith as editor.¹

At the Autumn Council concerns about Smith resurfaced. This time the GC Committee and publishing board met together for an open assessment of the paper. Editors Uriah Smith and George Tenney were both present. While it was said that the comments should not be regarded as criticism, their list was long and specific. There was: a drop in subscriptions; not enough focus by the editors on the paper; a desire for "real live issues for this time"; a need to give "the trumpet more of a certain sound"; a problem with articles "written above the average reader"; "a lack of interest in the first-page articles," and the thought that the president could be included more often.²

A final observation came from Alonzo T. Jones: "The editorial columns of the *Review* have failed to contain the third angel's message for the last six years; and until that is changed, we cannot expect that part of the *Review* and *Herald* to prosper. When that is changed, there will be no difficulty in raising the subscription of the paper to 15,000, or to its limits."³ By the next day, A. T. Jones was editor and Uriah Smith his associate.⁴

EAGER EDITOR

Jones took to his role with enthusiasm. His first issue announced lowering the subscription price from \$2.00 to \$1.50 per year. Those who had paid the \$2.00 would get a bonus subscription to the *Christian Educator*.⁵

The *Christian Educator* was relatively new. Its purpose was to emphasize home education from an Adventist perspective. Jones effected an arrangement with this publication perhaps to excite interest and boost subscriptions. Since the *Educator* was monthly, the *Review* would carry weekly

Below: General Conference (GC) leaders pause from setting up tents for the 1913 General Conference Session in Takoma Park, Maryland. W. A. Spicer, GC secretary, and former *Review* editor is center (hand on hip) and A. G. Daniells, GC president, is fourth from the right on front row.

Searching for Stability

MERLE POIRIER

The editor changed three times in 12 years.



lessons expanding on the material. In January 1898 The Home School department appeared. These materials for ministers, teachers, and parents included lessons in Greek as well as science experiments for children. In April 1898 The Home School in the *Review* ended, and students were encouraged to subscribe to the *Christian Educator*.⁶

Other changes involved the appearance of the paper. By 1899 large department headers were added, often with some form of design or flourish. Advertisements were more prominent and often shared illustrations or samples. A health column, Sabbath School lessons, a science column, and a sunset calendar were all added. The Home Section expanded to include recipes, child-rearing counsel, health messages, and helpful instruction such as “How to Prepare Toast.”⁷ It seemed Jones was intent on making the *Review* a publication no Adventist could do without.

Of course, this included meeting spiritual needs as well. A. T. Jones was especially interested in the Holy Spirit, so much so that he wrote an editorial on this topic each week for more than a year. A new department, The Sermon, was added, often written by Jones himself. More Adventist authors were included, and less from other Christian sources.

ENTICING READERS

Tasked by the publishing board to increase subscriptions, Jones employed several ideas within the pages of the *Review*. Teasers appeared on the back page with such messages as: “Therefore you cannot allow your subscription to expire now: you must read these coming articles.” In this instance the anticipated articles were about the beast and the third angel’s message.⁸

Another method was to use yellow address labels on lapsing subscriptions so when the paper arrived the subscriber would be alerted to renew. Announcements outlined in black warned readers to look for the yellow address label.⁹ A surprising tactic was to list the names of five random subscribers whose paper was up for renewal.¹⁰ A more direct approach was a personal letter to subscribers from Jones. His creative marketing made an impact as he raised the subscriptions by 20 percent.¹¹

Jones’s ingenuity may have brought in more subscribers, but his sharp tongue and combative style began to wear on leadership, including Ellen White. This led to another change in the masthead.

Jones was removed, and Uriah Smith was back in the editor’s chair. An announcement in the paper by A. G. Daniells revealed that this move would allow Jones “to be again free to engage in evangelistic work in the field.”¹² He assured readers they were in good hands with Smith.

HE’S BACK

The change in the appearance of the *Review* was quick and dramatic. Gone or reduced in size were the flourishes, design, banners, and other items of visual interest. The paper essentially returned to its former text-filled pages. Back were the editorials Smith did so well, hammering the theology and doctrine he felt so vital. He embraced the idea of preparing a people and used every column inch necessary to do the job.

While Uriah Smith had confessed during the 1888 crisis that he had behaved badly, it did not mean he agreed with Jones and Waggoner. He tenaciously held to former prophetic interpretations, to the exasperation and consternation of others. A. G. Daniells sought to remove Smith when he printed a series of articles that held to the former view of the law in Galatians.

A minority meeting of the GC Committee—six individuals with six invitees—discussed the issue and unanimously voted to appoint W. W. Prescott editor of the *Review*, demoting Smith to associate editor.¹³ Throughout his tenure with the *Review*, Uriah Smith appeared unaffected by the decisions that impacted his position, but this one, at least privately, seemed to deeply offend him. Making matters worse, within a short time of learning the board’s decision, Smith suffered a serious stroke. Those who cared for him believed the decision had been a catalyst. While it may have been and he reportedly found the demotion difficult, no bitterness appeared, as Smith, in an editorial three months later, noted his seventieth birthday and more than 50-year association with the *Review*.¹⁴

W. W. Prescott, sensitive to Smith’s feelings, spoke privately with him about the plans for the paper. Prescott said he had no intention of taking Smith’s place. Smith would remain at the top of the masthead, while Prescott assumed the role of managing editor. But it was made clear that Prescott would make the editorial decisions.

On March 6, 1903, as Uriah Smith walked to the office carrying written remarks for the upcoming



GC Session, he collapsed from another stroke. He lapsed into a coma and died that afternoon. A full-page photo with his signature was on the cover of the next *Review*, with five interior pages devoted to his life sketch and tributes, including words from his “message for the church” he carried the day he died.¹⁵

A NEW EDITOR, A NEW REVIEW

A new pattern had emerged—when the editor changed, so did the paper. Within six weeks of Prescott’s appointment, the overall size of the paper decreased, but the number of pages increased to 24. Instead of an article on the first page, Prescott introduced a full-page photo. He rearranged the page order, placing an advertisement on page 2, followed by editorials. Ellen White, who traditionally had been on the front page, was moved to page 8.¹⁶

With Daniells as president and Prescott as editor, the *Review* took a decided and intentional turn toward shaping the church. Daniells desired church unity, and what better tool than the church paper? Prescott, a former educator, was directed to use the paper as an instructional tool—to reform, guide, counsel, and assist members in their understanding of spiritual things and Christian living.

At the time, John Harvey Kellogg and the GC administration were at odds. Since the Battle Creek Sanitarium fire, Kellogg had become increasingly independent of church leadership, and began to share certain theology out of step with Adventist beliefs. The publishing board gave Prescott a specific mandate: “Keep constantly before the people, the distinctive doctrines of this denomination.”¹⁷

The same year fire destroyed the sanitarium, the publishing house also burned to the ground. Prescott, serving both as editor and president of the publishing house, was tasked to move the entire publishing operation from Battle Creek first to Washington, D.C., and eventually to its final

home in the Takoma Park area. It was an arduous process and took its toll on both Prescott and Daniells. Both were close to exhaustion and nervous collapse. While the presses moved in 1903, it wasn’t until the end of May 1906 that the *Review* carried its permanent Takoma Park address.¹⁸

A report given at the 1909 GC Session demonstrated Prescott’s impact on the *Review*, but also highlighted why subscriptions were a constant concern. It was reported that the paper was sent to 53 countries outside the United States, and 16,176 weekly subscriptions¹⁹—but the *Review* was reaching only 18 percent of the membership.²⁰

While wrestling with the move, Prescott also became embroiled in a theological controversy related to the interpretation of Daniel 8:13. A “new view” presented by Prescott was strongly opposed by Stephen Haskell, who represented the “old view.” One of the main contentions involved understanding what Ellen White meant in a statement written in 1850, almost 60 years earlier. The debate continued for two years. When pamphlets were distributed to attendees of the 1909 GC Session, there was so much talk that they put the agenda aside for two evenings to discuss the topic, reaching no resolution. Eventually leadership chose to deal with this controversy as they had before—remove one of the persons in question. This time it was Prescott who was reassigned to city evangelism, leaving the editorial chair vacant once more. ❖

¹ GC Committee Minutes, Mar. 26, 1897.

² GC Committee Minutes, Sept. 23, 1897.

³ GC Committee Minutes, Sept. 24, 1897.

⁴ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Oct. 5, 1897.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Jan. 4, 1898.

⁷ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Sept. 14, 1897.

⁸ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Apr. 24, 1900.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 19, 1900.

¹¹ George Knight, A. T. Jones (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 2011), p. 191.

¹² *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 14, 1901.

¹³ Minority Meeting of the GC Committee, Feb. 15, 1902.

¹⁴ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Apr. 29, 1902, pp. 3, 4.

¹⁵ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Mar. 10, 1903.

¹⁶ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Apr. 8, 1902.

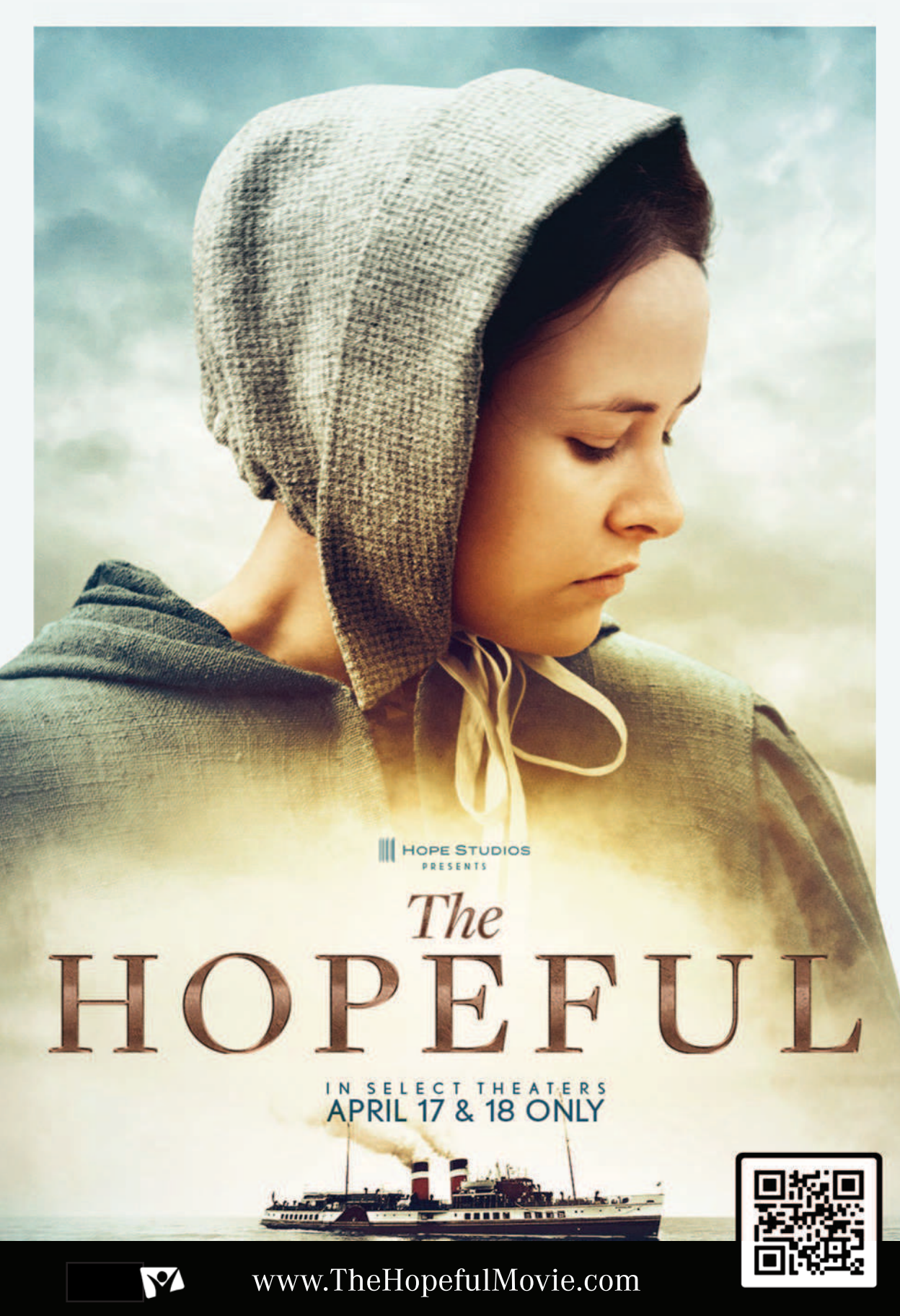
¹⁷ Gilbert M. Valentine, W. W. Prescott (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 2005), p. 199. One of W. W. Prescott’s editorials is found on page 60 of this issue.

¹⁸ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 31, 1906.

¹⁹ *General Conference Bulletin*, May 19, 1909, p. 72.

²⁰ *Annual Statistical Report*, 1909, Table No. 3.

Merle Poirier is the operations manager for *Adventist Review*.



HOPE STUDIOS
PRESENTS

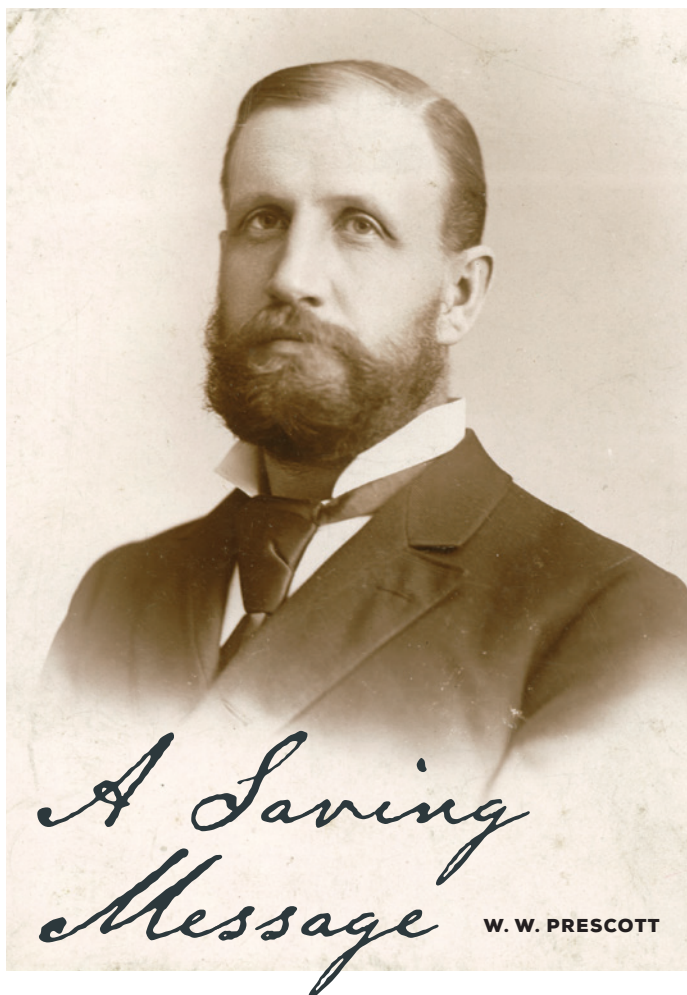
The

HOPEFUL

IN SELECT THEATERS
APRIL 17 & 18 ONLY



www.TheHopefulMovie.com



This month features an article from June 30, 1903, in the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald in which W. W. Prescott emphasizes the importance of discerning truth in the last days.—Editors.

The Word of God declares that “in the last days perilous times shall come.”* These are the times when “some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” These are the times when some will become “overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life,” and thus be unprepared for the solemn

events which will occur in this closing generation.

These are the times when everything, even religion, is becoming artificial, and the inventions of the human mind are being substituted for divine revelation. These are the times when Satan is working “with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish,” trying to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.

But all these things were foreseen, and were foretold in the prophecies, and the very message was given for the world which would fully meet the

needs of the world in these last days. There is no other message aside from the third angel’s message which will do this. A general presentation of the saving principles of the gospel, while an essential part of this work, will not be a complete work in itself. There must be such an application of these general principles to the particular situation in the world just now, and to the needs of the people just now, as will satisfactorily answer the requirements of these peculiar times, and bring entire deliverance from all the forms of deception and all the varied temptations to new forms of evil which press upon the people of this generation.

An accurate portrayal of these perilous times is given in the prophecies which deal with “what shall be in the latter days,” and we are also instructed clearly concerning the exact setting in which the gospel should be preached in order that the working of Satan may be unmasked, and that the saving grace of Christ may be revealed. And it is only in and through these same prophecies that the closing message can be given.

This is both the incentive and the reward for a diligent study of the prophecies, that we may understand both the nature of the times and the saving message which alone will warn the people of, and save them from, the perils of these last days. ♣

* [W. W. Prescott], “A Saving Message,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 30, 1903, pp. 3, 4.

William Warren (W. W.) Prescott was an educator and church administrator, and served as editor of the *Review* from 1903 to 1909.



Hope for the Future!

Give a refugee the opportunity to receive vocational training at the Center for Hope in Rwanda!

After graduating high school, refugees in Rwanda face the challenge of finding a job. But, it doesn't have to stay that way. The Center for Hope provides faith-based vocational and entrepreneurial skills to start a business and become self-reliant. This year-round boarding school offers trades in tailoring, hairdressing, culinary arts, agriculture, and welding!

How YOU can help:

Your gift of \$50 a month gives the opportunity for a young man or woman to pursue a trade at the Center for Hope.

WWW.IMPACTHOPE.COM

Every gift you make goes to Christian Education, Nutrition and Safety!





GRANDMA GRAY'S *Lesson*

Grandma Gray sat under the vine-covered veranda, mending stockings. There were so many of them, but Grandma didn't seem the least disconcerted or worried over her task. But that was nothing new for her; she never worried. The dear old face was still beautiful, despite the lines that the sorrows of threescore years and 10 had written upon it—beautiful because of the peace of God, which rested there.

The autumn sunshine flickered through the ivy leaves and rested lovingly on the silvery head, and the soft breeze bore away the music of a sweet, tremulous voice. The tune was full of melody, but it was the words that arrested and held the attention of poor old Norah, the maid of all work, who was just hanging up her snowy clothes on the line under the maples. Grandma was singing her favorite hymn:

"He will perfect, in His good time,
That which concerneth me and mine;
Then blow, O winds! and roar, O sea!
He knoweth what is best for me."

Norah was feeling very sad that afternoon; she had left a sick child at home in the morning, and it was with a heavy heart that the duties of the day had been done.

It was only three months before that Milly, the baby, the sunshine of the poor home, was taken from her, and she had heard the dull echo of

It was just then that the voice of Grandma, singing her sweet, trustful melody, had come to her ear, and spoken to her heart like a message from heaven.

the falling clods upon the little coffin. It seemed then to her as though she could never say, "Thy will be done," and the burden seemed heavier with each succeeding day, till the poor heart had almost forgotten, in its misery, that there was anything left to be thankful for. But the song from the dear old lips touched her heart as though an angel had spoken to her. Could it be that the Lord *did* care, after all, and that He knew what was best for her, even though He had called her to a life of poverty and affliction? Her eyes were filled with tears, and from her heart a prayer arose for strength to suffer and to wait the Master's will.

And still Grandma Gray sang on:

"Though dark the cloud and black the wave,
That guiding Hand will surely save;
He sends my joys, He counts my woes,
That which concerneth me He knows."

This time the sweet, tremulous voice of the singer reached the ear of another of earth's weary ones.

Margaret Lee, the country schoolteacher, was just going home—if one who "boards 'round" can be said to have a home—after one of the most trying days of the season. Her head was aching, and her tired eyes were almost blinded by the hot tears that sprang unbidden to them, as thoughts of the far-distant home and loved ones haunted her. It had been almost a year since she had said goodbye to all that was most dear to her, and bravely taken up the burden of life in a strange place. Margaret was the eldest of a large family, and her dear father's dying words to her she could never forget. "Be a good girl, Maggie," he had said; "*be brave*, and help poor Mother care for the children." She was trying hard to heed the admonition, but today she feared she had made sorry work of it.

The day had been one of those peculiarly perplexing ones that are so well known to every teacher. Jimmie Brown had developed an entirely new species of mischief, and as he was a ringleader among the boys, the trouble was not long in spreading, until it seemed to the tired little woman that there was a spirit of anarchy in the very air. She felt

sure there would be more trouble the next day; and it did not increase her happiness any when, a few moments before, Johnnie Bradshaw had overtaken her, and paused just long enough to call out carelessly: "Say, Teacher, Father says I hain't comin' to school no more, cause he can't see's I'm learnin' none—nor I can't, neither," he added, slowly.

"O Johnnie!" was all the homesick, worried teacher had been able to say. She had tried *so* hard to do her best. She had lain awake hours and hours at night, too weary and anxious to sleep, planning how she could best add to the interest of her school, and *this* was her reward—*this* was all she had been able to accomplish. She felt almost as if the pitying Christ had forsaken her. *Did* He care for her troubles? Did He hear her prayers?

It was just then that the voice of Grandma, singing her sweet, trustful melody, had come to her ear, and spoken to her heart like a message from heaven. "He counts my woes. Yes, for even the very hairs of my head are numbered," she whispered, softly. "That which concerneth me He knows. Then He surely knows just how tired and homesick I am, and how earnestly I have tried to serve Him in my humble sphere. If He perfects that which concerns me, I feel sure He cannot forget me for an hour, and that even these little worries and troubles are sent by His loving hand, for my perfection."

And with this thought, sweet peace came into the troubled heart; while the dear white-haired singer, all unconscious of the lesson she had been teaching, continued her song:

"Then, as my grief His hand doth bring,
Why should I ever cease to sing,
Or cease to trust that love and care
Which doth protect me everywhere?
Then blow, O winds! and roar, O sea!
He knoweth what is best for me." ♣

Lillian Dale (L. D.) Avery-Stuttle was an Adventist writer and poet. Her poems and writings were found frequently in the pages of the *Review*. This story was printed in the October 19, 1897, issue.

THE SMALL BOY IN THE HOUSE



A Home and Health section was introduced into the Review early on and expanded as the years passed. These two pages would feature advice, recipes, tips for cleaning, or instruction related to rearing children. An example of such counsel was the following article from April 24, 1900. —Editors.

Mrs. Sangster^{*} has this wise word for the mothers of the small boys of today—the men of tomorrow:

“Look out, too, that the small boy is welcome in the parlor and in the sitting room. Let him stay where mother is, and bring his friends into the house, which should never be too nice or too richly furnished for his occupation. A boy who is freely given a place to play in the house, or out of doors, will not deface furniture, nor slide down the balusters. A place of his own he should have, and if he sometimes makes a little more noise than you think quite opportune, never mind; keep him happy and good. These two adjectives are nearly always found in conjunction; for the good boy is a happy one, and a happy boy is good.

“Keep your small boy’s confidence; encourage him to tell you the happenings of his day, and never be astonished at anything he says, at least not to the point of shocked amazement. Pleased amazement is rather flattering than otherwise.

“Give the little fellow an opportunity to earn some money. Let him have his regular daily chores, something which he is responsible for, and which he will be expected to attend to faithfully, but over and above this, let him weed the garden or go on errands or perform some allotted task, for which you will pay him. Nothing helps to develop real character in a lad more certainly than having work to do which has a certain commercial value—work which is worth doing, and which is done well.

“Lastly, bring the love and the fear of God to bear as a continual influence on your boy, not by word only, but by your own example, and always refer matters of which you and he are in doubt to the test of, What would Christ say about this? What would the Lord have me do? Life which keeps hold on the invisible is the only life after all for us and for our precious children.” —*Selected.* ♣

^{*}**Margaret Elizabeth Sangster**, who also wrote under the name “Aunt Marjorie,” was a Christian American writer and poet. While not an Adventist, she was a well-recognized name by *Review* readers. Her writings, especially her poetry and counsel for the hearth and home, frequently found their way into the *Review*, as this one did.

FINDING FORGIVENESS

I released the woman's hands after prayer. Her story was painful—a husband who had walked out on both their marriage and children, preferring another's company to her own. Who contributed to their breakup was largely irrelevant. Pain is pain, and forgiveness needs to be extended for healing to take root and flourish. "Thank you," she breathed, managing a small smile as she turned away.

The next in line took her place. A stooped man with gnarled hands took his hat off and raised his eyes to mine. I looked into his lined, weather-beaten face. *What had brought him forward after the message?* I searched his face for a clue. His light-blue eyes watered, but I couldn't tell if it was from age or emotion.

It's amazing to me how much we keep hidden inside, and the depth of such pain and sorrow. Every time I speak on the topic of healing from a biblical perspective, how God can take our brokenness and bring forgiveness, peace, and wholeness, I'm astounded at the number of people who resonate with this message. How often we strive to keep it together, while being ashamed that we still experience the reality of pain in this world. After all, we're supposed to be Christ's followers. *Shouldn't we have it all together?*

The old man's voice broke into my thoughts. "Jill, would you pray for me?"

I slowly brought him into focus. *Yes, those were tears in his eyes.* "How can I pray for you, my brother?"

He shifted his stance as his eyes dropped to the floor. "If I could truly know God has forgiven me, if I only knew that, then I would have peace."

I reached out and grasped his wrinkled

hands. "Have you asked God for His forgiveness?"

His voice dropped to a whisper. "Only every day." He looked up as the tears spilled over and rolled down his face. "Every day for the past 45 years."

My heart broke for him. *How is one prayer any different from 365 other prayers, offered in desperation over the space of 45 years? What level of pain existed in his heart? How can Satan so twist our minds that we feel we must earn forgiveness, or afflict our souls with more penance, before God will deign to answer?*

I reflected on the anguish in my brother's heart and the needless pain we often carry around. If I were to share what I'm seeking to learn, here are my keys to peace:

Don't allow shame or condemnation to separate you from Jesus. Instead, receive His freely offered forgiveness. After all, Jesus' blood cleanses every sin.

Don't listen to your feelings. Satan is good at doubt. Instead, accept by faith what God's Word says about you: you are forgiven, cleansed, justified!

Don't walk backwards, wallowing in the mire of regret. Instead, move forward in confidence, knowing whose you are.

Finally, speak openly of what God has done for you. Sharing your testimony encourages both you and others. ♣

Jill Morikone is vice president and chief operations officer for Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN), a supporting Adventist television network. She and her husband, Greg, live in southern Illinois and enjoy ministering together for Jesus.

JOURNEYS
WITH JESUS
JILL
MORIKONE



**SATAN TRIES TO
TWIST OUR MINDS
SO THAT WE FEEL WE
MUST EARN GOD'S
FORGIVENESS.**

GIVE A NATIVE AMERICAN CHILD A SAFE, HAPPY, AND MEMORABLE SUMMER

Support Summer Experience at HIS



Summer Experience at Holbrook Indian School (HIS) provides a safe space for students to continue the momentum of their intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth while maintaining access to vital resources that assist in breaking generational cycles.

Would you provide a safe, productive, and unforgettable summer for HIS students?



To support HIS Summer Experience, call (928) 524-6845 (ext. 109) or visit:

 **HOLBROOK
INDIAN SCHOOL**

Learn. Grow. Thrive.

HolbrookIndianSchool.org/hse



PETER N. LANDLESS

ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

NOISE, THEN QUIET

Deafness, diabetes, and dementia

Q: I'm 58, overweight, prediabetic, and going deaf. Loud music and loud machines have been my life. I saw on TV that hearing loss leads to Alzheimer's disease and I'm scared, but I'm also a realistic guy. What practical advice can you share?

A: We're sorry to hear about your situation and think that it's understandable for you to feel apprehensive about the challenges that lie ahead. Yet there is hope for you and your loved ones, who may also be concerned about your well-being. First, losing your hearing does not necessarily mean you will develop Alzheimer's disease, but be aware that diabetes increases your risk of both hearing loss and dementia. There is a correlation between hearing loss and increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia, and similarly there is a correlation between elevated blood sugar levels and hearing loss, but correlations don't mean cause and effect. Nevertheless, there is no treatment currently available to reverse noise-related damage completely, but you may be able to reduce the risk of further damage and maintain or improve your overall health. Hearing loss risk is gender-neutral, but studies show that young males are more likely than other people to engage in high-risk noise activities. You seem to fit the statistics.

Here's what we suggest that may help you navigate hearing loss and alleviate dementia anxiety:

- Health and hearing checkups with qualified physicians and audiologists are a must! If they prescribe hearing aids, wearing them correlates with longer life!*

- Protect your remaining hearing. Normalize your blood sugars, wear earplugs (earmuffs) in noisy environments, limit exposure to loud sounds, and choose volume-limiting settings on personal audio devices.

- Make healthy choices. Prioritize regular exercise, manage your stress, maintain a balanced diet, avoid smoking, and get consistent, adequate, restful sleep. These support your health and may reduce your dementia risk. (Consider enrolling in a diabetes reversal program online or at an Adventist hospital or lifestyle center.)

- Stay informed about advances in research and technologies and educate yourself about preventative strategies and available treatment options.

- Seek support and connection. Surround yourself with family, friends, church family, health-care professionals, and support groups that can encourage, guide, and assist you.

- Draw further encouragement from God's promises. Isaiah 41:10 (God is with you, strengthening and upholding you in times of fear and uncertainty) and Psalm 23:4 (even in the darkest valleys God is present, guiding and comforting you) are two excellent examples.

You may do well to allow God to use your experiences to minister to others, raise awareness, and advocate for accessibility and inclusion. Consider sharing

your story with young people; let them know that globally about 1 billion teens have some degree of noise-induced hearing loss owing primarily to high headphone volume and high-noise recreational activities. The prospect of hearing loss and potential dementia may be daunting, but there is hope for a fulfilling and vibrant life, regardless of hearing challenges. 🦋

* *Lancet Healthy Longevity* 5, no. 1 (January 2024): e66-e75.

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

There is hope for a fulfilling and vibrant life, regardless of hearing challenges.



3ABN School of Discipleship



FOLLOWING JESUS

3ABN's School of Discipleship Intensive



JULY 5 - 14, 2024

HAVE YOU
SIGNED UP YET?

3ABNSOD.COM
SPACE LIMITED TO 35 APPLICANTS
REGISTRATION DEADLINE 6/7/24



EDITORS' PICKS

“The Hopeful”

In April of this year, Hope Studios, the cinematic branch of Hope Channel International, will release their next film, “The Hopeful.” It starts with the call of William Miller after his experiences in studying the books of Daniel and Revelation. Through his encounters with Joshua V. Himes, Miller’s preaching and messages swell to become the Millerite movement. The film treats well the Millerite experience of the Great Disappointment. The focus then shifts to two of its followers, James and Ellen White, and their subsequent leadership.

The film clocks in at approximately 90 minutes and is an abridgment of the 150-minute “Tell the World” film from 2016. There are some notable differences, however. “The Hopeful” is prefaced with J. N. Andrews and his two children on their missionary voyage to Switzerland and epilogues with their arrival. Intermittently the children ask questions to their father, whose answers set up different flashbacks of Adventist pioneer history. The film also incorporates songs by two-time Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter Jonas Myrin.

Because the film is reduced, there may be some points of confusion. Whereas Hiram Edson’s answer of the heavenly sanctuary is depicted in “Tell the World,” the Great Disappointment doesn’t seem to be resolved in “The Hopeful.” Further, William Miller and Joshua V. Himes simply disappear halfway through the narrative. Moreover, one scene, in particular, was cut awkwardly, resulting in inconsistent eyelines.

Despite these minor observations, the film overall is one of high cinematic quality that captures the disillusionment, but also the spiritual passion, of those New England young adults. The narrative captures the difficulty, improbability, yet success of a small community becoming the global movement of Seventh-day Adventists. There are spurts of humorous dialogue; the main actors are convincing; and the visuals are simply striking. Overall,



this film explains well the historical and theological foundations of the Adventist Church, including the inception of the denomination’s name and its beliefs.

While seasoned Adventists may not gain new insights, other audiences may be inspired by our origins. Furthermore, it is a grand opportunity to invite any friend of the Adventist movement. On April 17 and 18 in select theaters across the country, many will learn of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath who created all in the beginning, and the Lord of the Advent who will return at the end. ♣

Reviewed by Justin Kim, editor, *Adventist Review*.



More information on your nearest viewing site may be found by scanning the QR code.



“A second evil which plagues the modern world is that of poverty. Like a monstrous octopus, it projects its nagging, prehensile tentacles in lands and villages all over the world. Almost two-thirds of the peoples of the world go to bed hungry at night. They are **UNDERNOURISHED, ILL-HOUSED,** and **SHABBILY CLAD.** Many of them have **NO HOUSES** or beds **TO SLEEP IN.** Their only beds are the sidewalks of the cities and the dusty roads of the villages.”

—Dr. Martin Luther King
Nobel Peace Prize address, 1964



See the impact you are making in Perú through the ADRA's

Warm Houses Project

Visit or scan the QR code:
[ADRA.org/warm-houses](https://www.adra.org/warm-houses)



LOOKING BACK

CONTINUED FROM P. 72

ventured to the Northwest Territory (today Washington, Idaho, and Oregon), where they pioneered some of the early work there. While there, their two daughters, Ella and Ethel, were born (1883).

CALLED TO AFRICA

On May 11, 1887, the Boyds went as part of the first pioneer group of Adventist missionaries to South Africa. Soon after their arrival, their daughter Ethel tragically died. They went to Kimberly, where they conducted evangelism, and raised up a church of 21 members in Beaconsfield. Maud specialized in training “canvassers” on how to distribute Adventist literature in homes since public preaching was difficult at best. On January 6, 1891, because of health challenges, the family returned to America just in time to attend the 1891 General Conference Session.

MISSIONARY TO THE SOUTH

Upon their return the Boyds were asked to serve in the Tennessee River Conference. Maud had a special burden to work to break down racial barriers in response to Ellen White’s resounding call to work on behalf of the downtrodden Blacks in the American South. She was so perplexed over the “color line” that she felt it unjust to have Black members sit behind White congregants. She came up with an innovative approach, creating an L-shaped church with a slanted pulpit that prevented anyone from sitting behind anyone else and thus promoted a more egalitarian space. This was an early effort by Maud to break down racial barriers.

“It will give them just as good a chance as the White people,” she wrote to Ellen White, “and yet no one can object, as they will be separate and yet all together.” She believed, following Mrs. White’s prophetic counsels, that it was possible for “both colors” to be able to “hold membership in the same church.” Maud worked earnestly to break down the “wall of partition between God’s children,” since “all [were] made ‘of one blood’ and all redeemed by one blood.” While they lived in a time of great racial prejudice during the post-Civil War Reconstruction period, they believed that they must keep trying to help establish the early Adventist missionary work in the American South. The efforts of Maud and Charles helped pave the

Maud had a special burden to work to break down racial barriers in response to Ellen White’s resounding call to work on behalf of the downtrodden Blacks in the American South.

way for later missionaries, notably James Edson White and his *Morning Star* boat, which reinforced these early efforts.

BIBLE TEACHER AND MENTOR OF MISSIONARIES

In 1898 the Boyds moved to Asheville, North Carolina. Tragically, soon after they arrived, Charles died, and was buried there. Afterward Ellen White requested that Maud assist her with the newly formed Avondale School. She spent the next nine years as a “highly respected” preceptress (women’s dean), matron (cook), and educator. She popularized cooking classes replete with samples of their cuisine in the dining room. She again led the Victorian Tract Society, and for a time went with her daughter Ella as a missionary to Tonga.

Later in life she returned to live with her sister in southern California, serving as a Bible teacher at the Loma Linda and Glendale sanitariums, where she became a popular Bible teacher. She returned for one year (1927-1928) to teach at Oakwood Junior College before returning one last time to Australia, where she died in 1937. She rests next to her mother, Susannah, in the Avondale Adventist Cemetery in Cooranbong, New South Wales, with her life as a testament to God’s ability to work in the life of this persistent and courageous missionary who in her later years trained another generation of missionaries. 🍀

* For sources used in this article, see a detailed article by the author as part of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=AAZ0&highlight=boyd>.

Michael W. Campbell, Ph.D., is director of North American Division Archives, Statistics, and Research.

THE LEGACY OF MAUD SISLEY BOYD

As a young girl, after her father died, Maud Sisley moved from England with her mother to live with her two older brothers in the United States.¹ They located to a farm in Convis, Michigan, where an early Sabbatarian Adventist minister, J. B. Frisbie, pitched a tent in their neighborhood. Her oldest brother, John, joined the church during these meetings, and soon afterward, so too did her mother. When James and Ellen White visited their family, they chose to move to church headquarters at Battle Creek, Michigan, so that Maud and her siblings could obtain an education. She worked part-time at the *Review and Herald* and was an early student of Goodloe Harper Bell's, the denomination's first full-time educator. Early on Maud had a heart for mission, donating some of her limited earnings to help support the emerging work.

**"ARE YOU WILLING
TO DO ANYTHING
THAT THE LORD
WANTS YOU TO DO?"**

MISSIONARY TO EUROPE

As an active member of the Tract and Missionary Society in Battle Creek she shared her sense of a call to be a missionary: "While kneeling in prayer about 7:00 one evening, I heard a voice distinctly ask me this question: 'Are you willing to do anything that the Lord wants you to do?' At this time I had been a member of the church for 10 years, and I had often thought I was willing to do anything. . . . [But] I now found that I had not made the wholehearted surrender that I had thought." As she wept and prayed, she surrendered her life to God. The next morning she received a call from the denomination's Foreign Mission Board to serve in Europe.



On November 17, 1877, Maud went with William and Jennie Ings to Europe. The group met up with J. N. Andrews and assisted him in publishing the church's first missionary paper, *Les Signes des Temps*. One special memory for her was being able to set the type for the very first Adventist publication in the Italian language. Not long after the Ingses moved to England, Maud joined them and gave Bible readings in homes as they conducted evangelistic meetings.

Maud returned to the United States to attend meetings of the General Sabbath School Association held in Battle Creek. Here she met a widower, Charles Boyd, and soon afterward tied the knot on December 8, 1879. They then traveled to Nebraska, where Charles served as conference president and Maud led the Nebraska Tract Society. They traveled by "covered wagon" across the region, then

CONTINUED ON PAGE 71

HEY, PATHFINDERS!

IMAGINE YOUR
AMAZING PATHFINDER PIN
DESIGN HERE!

Enter to win Adventist World Radio's 2024 PATHFINDER CAMPOREE PIN DESIGN CONTEST!



Use your imagination and help AWR360° share incredible stories of God's love. You can make your dream pin glow in the dark, or even have a slider, spinner, or glitter!

There will be at least 4 winners chosen—
one per age category. **All winners will:**

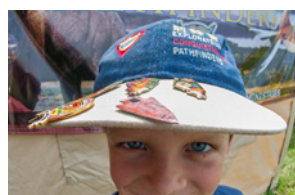
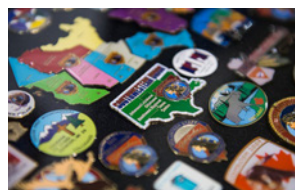
- ▶ See their pin debut at Camporee and receive **20 of their own pin plus 1 set of all the winning AWR360° pins!**
- ▶ Receive an **AWR360° Archeology Bible** and **"I Will Go" sharing book** (retail value: \$115)
- ▶ Be featured in AWR360°'s *Transmissions* magazine.

Get all the details and enter your design at:



awr.org/camporee

But hurry... the deadline is June 7!



**ADVENTIST
WORLD RADIO®**



AFCOE Onsite Outreach Training Returns!

BEGINS AUGUST 17, 2024



START AND GROW YOUR OWN MINISTRY
SPEAK PERSUASIVELY IN PUBLIC SETTINGS AND LEAD SMALL GROUPS
DEVELOP A VIBRANT DEVOTIONAL LIFE
IDENTIFY YOUR SPECIFIC CALLING IN MINISTRY
CONFIDENTLY SHARE YOUR FAITH WITH OTHERS—ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

ENROLL TODAY AT [AFCOE.ORG](https://afcoe.org)