

ADVENTIST REVIEW

**OCTOBER 2019: LIVING URGENTLY; LIVING PRACTICALLY
+ PERFECT, AND READY FOR JESUS + A CHURCH
THAT'S READY NOW + CONVENIENT AMNESIA +
COMING IN HOT + OUR MYSTERIOUS GOD**

The Church
I Want to
Belong to Is...

READY FOR JESUS





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TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:



- 1 Adventist-produced Vegan Burger Wins Innovation Award
- 2 Evangelistic Series in Cameroon Results in 800 Baptisms
- 3 Adventists In Germany Celebrate 100 Years of Ministry to the Hearing Impaired
- 4 Avondale Now a University College
- 5 ADRA Assists Hurricane Victims in Bahamas

75 YEARS AGO IN ADVENTIST REVIEW:



In 1944 *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Great Disappointment with a 72-page special issue. The issue contained messages from several General Conference officers and chronicled the progress of the Seventh-day Adventist movement in the years since the Millerites waited in vain for Jesus' return.

Jesus for Asia

...because people are dying without Jesus



Attached by Satan, Rescued by Jesus!

Priscilla is a Jesus for Asia Bible Worker in India. Part of the Hindu village she works in did not want anyone to teach them about Jesus. The villagers got together and conjured an evil spirit. It suddenly spoke to Priscilla while she was walking alone on the top of a hill. "You should not work for Jesus here! You have to go away from this place," the spirit said.

She was startled, but her confidence in God was strong. She replied, "I work for the Lord who created the heavens and the earth. You are Satan. You cannot command me. You go away!" The demon said the same thing again, and Priscilla replied the same way. Three times this exchange occurred.

After the third exchange, the demon took the shape of a man and came straight toward her. Afraid, she cried out, "Jesus, please help

me! Satan is coming to harass and trouble me. Give me strength to overcome Satan. Help me! Help me!" Immediately, Jesus took hold of her and carried her to the bottom of the hill, safely away from danger.

Priscilla rushed to her church and knelt to pray. "Oh Lord, if it is You who brought me from there, and delivered me from Satan's clutches, show a miraculous thing in front of these Hindu people so they can see that You are the living God!" As she prayed, a lady came running into the church...



For the rest of the story, scan the QR code, call us, or visit:

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Bible Workers are desperately needed to go into many unentered places in Asia. Many are eager to carry Christ to those who sit in darkness. You can sponsor someone like Priscilla in India for just \$90/month. No administrative expenses are taken from your donations. One hundred percent goes to support Bible Workers.

BILL KNOTT



All who are, in fact, "in Christ" are ready when He comes.

Graciously Ready

The warm, polished pews of the youth chapel glowed with more than the usual Friday evening sheen. There was a closeness, some would say a Presence, of which each teenager was sensible.

The earnest theology student presenting the message was closing his appeal. The whispering at the back was stilled, and even the tough guys trading jokes out on the cold front porch grew quiet.

"How many of you believe Jesus will come within one year?" the preacher asked, nodding solemnly as half a dozen hands went up.

"And how many think Jesus will return within the next five years?" he queried, searching faces, seeking affirmation. Most of the hands in the chapel went slowly toward the ceiling, some unsure, and not so eager. Mine was not one of them.

"How many of you think Jesus will come between five and 10 years from now?" he asked with sad finality, as though a longer wait had never crossed his mind. I slid my hand up, realizing in that tremulous moment I was in a distinct minority, and somehow less than faithful.

As I walked home along the frozen creek, staring at the belt of great Orion stretched across a diamond-studded night, I berated myself for the weakness of my witness. Would I really be

in college when Jesus came to my old Adventist town? Might there be a bride on my arm? Would I ever get to "serve the Lord"—or would I spend eternity listening to those who had given Him their 40—50—years?

I should have raised my hand with the majority, I concluded. That was the position of faith—to be certain; to not equivocate; to live with such single-mindedness that Jesus would come, must come. The words of the evening's quartet floated across the starlit snowfields: "Would your heart be right, if He came tonight?" "Yes," I said with all the warmth I could muster. I would try harder; I would be more diligent; I would be a better witness. I would make myself right with Jesus.

If you've been an Adventist for a year or more, you likely know this story. When baptistry waters close over our heads, we rise with an intense and linear focus: *Be ready when Jesus comes*. It's both the ache of every Adventist heart and the pledge of everyone serious about faith. All other realities must give way: this is the grand passion of our new-washed lives.

And as the days subside to weeks, and weeks to years, the love for Jesus—the certainty of His embrace—that once was all our grace and joy too often erodes into grim determination: *I will try harder; I will be more diligent; I will be a better witness.*

We catalogue the sins that everyone knows—and the ones that no one knows. We castigate ourselves for settling down, for buying cars, for raising kids; for taking two weeks' vacation when there's a world to be warned. We grow evasive when speaking of the Second Coming, and never raise a hand when someone dares to ask the question about "when."

Deficient in our grasp of grace and focused only on our personal salvation, we forget the declaration made by Paul, who likewise wrestled with the "when" of Jesus' coming: "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6). If we believed this truth—if we spoke more of the faithfulness of God than our unfaithfulness, and more about the tenacity of His love than the weakness of our affection for Him—our faith would find a resting place. All who are, in fact, "in Christ" are ready when He comes.

Then our "waiting" for Jesus will be that of longing for a cherished Friend, and not a gathering internal storm of faithless dread and insecurity. With Isaiah we will sing, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us" (Isa. 25:9). ▀

Bill Knott

We cannot heal corporately without an honest look at our past.

BARBARA YOUNKER, TOPEKA, KANSAS

THE CHURCH I WANT TO BELONG TO IS ... TERRIBLE!

I am 77 years old and have read the *Review* for at least 65 years. I have been waiting for more than 30 years for such an article. The Holy Spirit was certainly guiding every thought and word of Jared Thurmon (August 2019) as he wrote it. He must have prayed immensely before and after it was printed. I am sure the editorial staff had to give the OK.

Amen, amen, and amen! Thank you!

Ellen Walker

Cullowhee, North Carolina

As a Millennial who is part of a third generation Adventist church worker family, I see the converse of this article within our church on a daily basis. Unfortunately, I, too, see all the things this article speaks to. We as a world church are in a crisis of leadership.

Thank you for standing up and speaking out about this vital topic.

Jaclyn Knight

via Facebook

Praise God Jared Thurmon had the courage to write "The Church I Want to Belong to Is ... Terrible," and that the *Adventist Review* had the insight to publish this truth for our day. Thurmon wrote, "That day may not be today, but it will be one day."

May I suggest that "but it will be one day" is now. I believe that the Holy Spirit of God impressed our leaders to run such a daring revelation for our people at this time. It pointed out to me my true condition before God. This is possibly the best article I have

read on the subject since I joined the church 53 years ago. Thank you!

Joe Cote

Gray, Tennessee

Words fail me, but I had to write and thank you. May the Lord God make us into this "terrible" church. Only He can do it. Let us look to You, and not to ourselves. God save us.

Dixie Strong

Moore, South Carolina

THE LUCILLE BYARD AFFAIR

Thank you for sharing "The Lucille Byard Affair" (August 2019). We cannot heal corporately without an honest look at our past. You honor her memory and highlight our personal responsibilities for the world in which we find ourselves living.

Barbara Younker

Topeka, Kansas



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I certify that my statements above are correct and complete.
Bill Knott, Executive Editor/Director of Adventist Review Ministries

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.

IN A FEW WORDS...

PEACE IN THE VALLEY

Praise God! This is a miracle of grace. How inspiring! God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think.

Stephanie Johnson-Dingome, via web

MUSLIM REFUGEES FIND FRIENDS AT ADVENTIST PEACE CAMP

It is reassuring to hear of Adventists unashamedly responding to the needs of our Muslim brothers and sisters, whether parents or children. This is right. A big thank-you.

Milton Hare, via web

CLIFF'S EDGE—JESUS AND “GENOCIDE”

The doctrinal conundrum “Jesus and ‘Genocide’” (AR Online) is as old as the hills. How could a loving God, a loving Savior, order the killing of human beings whom He created? Goldstein swerved into a good explanation of this quandary.

To add to his explanation a bit: we humans must always be mindful of the fact that our minds and thoughts are not the mind and thoughts of God. He executes judgment and metes out punishment at His behest. It really ends there.

We will never understand it! Our minds are finite and carnal. Our reasoning is myopic at best.

Milton Tomlinson, via web

PATHFINDERS SEEK TO BREAK GUINNESS WORLD RECORD AT INTERNATIONAL CAMPORE

It was awesome to see the humongous scarf being raised and blow gently in the light breeze we had during our Sabbath service. There were a lot of “oohs” and “aahs.”

Susie Oskerson, via web



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“I’m here because I need to do my part to help encourage young people.”

William “Bill” Winston, p. 13

NEWS



Part of the special offering collected on August 3, 2019, at the ASI International Convention will go toward sponsoring picture roll sets for places with limited or no access to electricity. The project, which began in 2015, has already distributed 7,500 sets, but many more are needed. PHOTO: MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

ADVENTIST LAYPEOPLE EARMARK US\$1.5 MILLION FOR MISSION PROJECTS

**ANNUAL OFFERING AT ASI INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
WILL FUND LAY-LED OUTREACH INITIATIVES.**

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

The offering taken on August 3, 2019, at the 2019 Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) International Convention will be used to fund outreach and evangelistic initiatives around the world, leaders said.

At the end of the worship service at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville, Kentucky, board member Deborah Young reported that the annual offering amounted to US\$1,521,035, surpassing the goal of US\$1,250,000.

The amount of the offering goal

had been previously assigned to 35 mission projects around the world, and five additional projects will each benefit from 20 percent of the surplus, leaders reported.

According to the information shared with convention attendees, projects extend from supporting Adventist academies in the United States to helping fund well-drilling initiatives in Central America, food programs in Africa, and strengthening ongoing plans to share the gospel through the media.

The projects described below are a sample of them, as shared by ASI leaders.

SHOOTING ON BIBLICAL SETS

Little Light Studios (LLS) works to produce creative, cutting-edge media content used to share the gospel with Millennials. Last year LLS spent one week in Morocco, shooting with a world-class photographer. The goal is to travel to Morocco each year to shoot on biblical sets. The media content will eventually be offered on videomission.com, a Christian stock media company. ASI’s grant will go toward funding the capture of *The Major and Minor Prophets* footage in Morocco.

IN THE AMAZON JUNGLE

Amazon Lifesavers works to provide mission training schools in a pioneer program in the jungles of northwest Brazil. ASI funds will go toward sponsoring 10 pairs of church planters to reach 10 new regions for Christ in 2020. These individuals will live in jungle villages and share the hope of Christ’s soon return with local residents.

EMERGENCY ROOM MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

The One Day Church (ODC) project had the opportunity to purchase high-quality, surplus emergency room medical equipment for the One Day Hospital that ASI helped fund in Chad. This opportunity is the result of the generosity of Peter Smars, who works at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Grant funds will be used to

complete the purchase of the equipment and to procure and load the shipping container that will deliver the supplies to Chad.

STUDIES IN AGRICULTURE

Matteson Mission School in Norway has chosen to integrate agriculture into its curriculum. Grant funds will go toward updating the greenhouse by replacing a tarp and installing heating. A more functional greenhouse and longer growing seasons will allow students to receive better agricultural education.

FOR ORPHANED AND ABANDONED CHILDREN

The Los Pinos Children's Village in Guatemala was the first International Children's Care (ICC) program for orphaned and abandoned children. Although the Los Pinos facility has a beautiful church building, Sabbath School classes are taught in an elementary school some distance away. ASI funds will go toward the construction of Sabbath School classrooms for the Los Pinos church.

PICTURES WHERE THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY

The Picture Roll project launched by ASI has printed and distributed 7,500 picture rolls to church divisions that request them. Demand has risen for more of these colorful picture rolls. The East-Central Africa Division alone has requested more than 30,000 picture roll sets. Grant funds will go toward sponsoring picture roll sets for places with limited or no access to electricity. 📷



A member receives food for her family at the Menito Adventist church in West Venezuela during a distribution ceremony on June 1, 2019. PHOTO: WEST VENEZUELA UNION

ADVENTIST FAMILIES RECEIVE FOOD AID IN VENEZUELA

THE PROJECT WAS CARRIED OUT THANKS TO AN ANONYMOUS DONOR AND LOCAL CHURCHES.

BY INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

Thousands of Seventh-day Adventist families in western Venezuela recently received food aid thanks to contributions from a donor and local churches. The aid was necessary because of rising economic challenges in the country.

“Our hearts go out to those who have challenging needs in Venezuela, which

includes our dear church members,” said Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson. “What a privilege to help facilitate the generosity of the donor to assist our church members, all to God’s glory.”

Orlando Ramírez, executive secretary for the church in West Venezuela, said it was a blessing to receive such a generous donation. “Because of an anonymous Adventist donor facilitated by Wilson, thousands of our most vulnerable families benefited from this compassionate gesture,” Ramírez said.

The donation, together with additional funds collected from local conferences, was called A Gift of Life and benefited 3,030 families in dozens of local churches. Each family received roughly a week’s worth of groceries containing brown rice, cereal, corn-meal, whole-wheat flour, oats, granola, soy protein, and other items, explained Ramírez, who oversaw the project.

“Many of our brothers and sisters were so thankful for the help and the sense of unity in the church with this assistance,” Ramírez said.

“The minimum salary and the salary of the general population doesn’t allow for most of the products to be obtained in sufficient quantities for all family members,” Ramírez said. “Every Venezuelan citizen has to be creative and adapt to consuming the most accessible foods, mostly carbohydrates, with what they can afford.”

Everything about the Gift of Life project entailed miracles along the way, Ramírez said. From the sizable donation, to the Adventist owner of a business who facilitated the purchase of food products at cost, to church volunteers who assembled the food boxes, to transportation to the 10 local conferences, and delivery to vulnerable families who benefited in West Venezuela, it was all a blessing to witness, Ramírez said.

“Transportation of the groceries took more than three months . . . amid power outages across the country,” he explained.

Church administrators, department directors, district pastors, and church elders witnessed the joy and tears of many of the families who were given the food at their churches, Ramírez said. “We pray that God rewards this spirit of love and kindness,” he said. 📷



Volunteers at the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, United States, carry an 800-pound (360-kilogram) neckerchief to the place where they would unroll it. PHOTOS: ADVENTIST REVIEW

PATHFINDERS BREAK GUINNESS WORLD RECORD AT INTERNATIONAL CAMPOREE

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SCARF AND SLIDE ARE DISPLAYED IN OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN.

BY LINDSEY GENDKE, FOR TEXAS CONFERENCE NEWS

What was hoped to be the world's largest "neckerchief and woggle" (scarf and slide) arrived in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on August 12, 2019, for the Chosen International Pathfinder Camporee.

Measuring approximately 300 feet (91 meters) from tip to tip and 150 feet (46 meters) from the center to back tip, the scarf was created by Pathfinders in Texas and weighs approximately 800 pounds (360 kilograms). The shield for the slide, designed by Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists members, measures about 10 feet (three meters) tall and weighs about 500 pounds (227 kilograms).

Marilyn Boismier, Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Pathfinder coordinator; Ruben Albarran, Texas Conference North Dallas-area Pathfinder coordinator; and Lloyd Clapp, retired Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Pathfinder director, worked out the logistics for the undertaking.

"This project appealed to me," Boismier said, "because I like to make things, and I like math; the design was an exercise in math." The designers, Boismier and Clapp, worked through concepts and cal-

culations, consulting with others, pricing materials, and praying before they were ready for the action phase. Both the scarf and slide were completed in stages and consisted of separate, smaller projects to put them together.

Once Boismier had worked out the details, she handed off the project to Albarran, who enlisted approximately 250 North Texas Pathfinders to sew the scarf together, mostly at the Seventh-day Adven-

tist Church Family Life Center in Richardson, Texas.

The process required a group effort, with an average of seven to 10 people per day showing up to create what Boismier describes as an "assembly line" to pin and sew the 64 pieces of polycotton, which amounted to approximately 800 pounds (360 kilograms) of fabric.

What began in April 2019 was completed at Celebration Park in Allen, Texas, on Sunday, July 28, where more than 100 volunteers unrolled the scarf and held it for seamstresses to stitch the final seams.

Clapp worked on the slide's logistics in Louisiana. "The design we ended up creating was to put the shield on the front of the slide with three hoops on the back side to feed the scarf through it," Clapp



Partial view of a massive neckerchief, as volunteers help unroll it at the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, United States, on August 12, 2019. PHOTOS: ADVENTIST REVIEW

said. The biggest challenge was working out how to make the hoops on the back. “We had planned to use two-inch [five-centimeter] tubing in a six-foot [two-meter] circle, but each time we contacted potential suppliers, it was way too expensive. So we prayed about it, and God gave us the idea of the hay bale rings. Then I found a vendor who sold them to us for a very reasonable price.”



At the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, United States, volunteers help unroll a 300-foot-long (91-meter-long) Pathfinder neckerchief, thought to be the largest in the world.

The slide project took about four weeks from concept to completion and involved the help of eight skilled individuals, including welders, fabricators, and sign designers.

Both the scarf and slide were displayed on Saturday, August 17, using two large cranes the same day the announcement was made that the Guinness World Records organization had certified the scarf and slide as the world’s largest. ▀



At the 2019 International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, United States, an attendee of the NextGen Ice Cream Social engages with a church leader. PHOTO: MYLON MEDLEY, NORTH

AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

NORTH AMERICA TACKLES AGING PASTOR POPULATION

AT CHOSEN INTERNATIONAL CAMPOREE, NEXTGEN EVENT AFFIRMS THOSE WHO ANSWER THE CALL TO MINISTRY.

BY MYLON MEDLEY, NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

On the final day of the 2019 Chosen International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Pathfinders with a desire to become a pastor had the opportunity to mingle with church leaders of the North American Division (NAD) to learn more about pursuing a career in ministry.

The ice-cream social served as the launch of NextGen, an initiative of the NAD Ministerial Association, which is seeking to address the projected low number of pastors who will be able to minister throughout the division within the next decade as current pastors retire.

“The average age of a pastor [in the region] is about 55, and the baby boomer generation is cresting for retirement,” said Ivan Williams, director of the NAD Ministerial Association. “We’re recruiting because, over the next seven to 10 years, 2,500 out of the division’s 4,300 pastors will be eligible for retirement.”

“We need young people to consider having the torch passed to them,” Williams said. “God called me when I was 13, and I pursued that journey to be a pastor. People who succeed in life have a sense of calling while they’re young. I think it’s about being faithful, and God will bless with success. We see a litany of people throughout our history whom God used at a very young age.”

Donna Jackson, associate director of NAD Ministerial, who

“We’re almost in crisis mode.”

also organized the social, said the overall goal of the event was to uplift the Pathfinders who have already felt God’s call. “I’m shocked by how many had it on their minds already,” Jackson said. “The last thing we want to do is put pressure on young people, because God may not be calling them to do this. God is the one who calls. We’re here to support what God is already doing.”

In preparation for the event, Jackson invited all the officers of conferences and union conferences to call for representation. The response of the 150 leaders who pledged their support and presence was overwhelmingly positive, she said.

“We wanted the young people to be able to look in the eyes of their leaders and see the personal care that they have. Administrators sit in committee meetings all the time, dealing with the hardest problems in the church. They have joyful experiences, but it isn’t easy to have that personal touch,” Jackson said. “We thought it would be good for both, but especially for young people to know that their leaders are approachable and that they will give them their attention.”

William “Bill” Winston, president of the South Atlantic Conference, has been involved with ministerial recruiting over the years and has witnessed the decline [of pastoral candidates] with his own eyes. He remembers when there were 40 to 50 graduating theology students emerging from a school like Oak-

wood University. In 2018 a survey of incoming first-year students studying theology in Adventist schools across North America revealed that the largest class had just 15 students.

“I’m here because I need to do my part to help encourage young people,” Winston said. “I’m at the end of my ministerial career, and I see the challenges of recruiting and finding people committed to the gospel ministry. We’re almost in crisis mode. We need to start much earlier than we do. We need to identify people and get them involved in the church now.”

A SPECIAL FEELING

Approximately 1,000 young people attended the social and shared testimonies about why they wanted to become a pastor. Samuel Castro and Belinda Rodríguez, a husband-and-wife pastoral duo that pastors three churches in the Oregon Conference, accompanied their 16-year-old daughter, Ashley, to the social, who recalled the exact moment she felt God’s calling.

“We were having Communion at my church, and my mom was leading the service. All of a sudden I just started crying,” Ashley Castro said. “My mom asked, ‘Are you OK?’ I responded, ‘I really want to do it. I want to be a pastor.’ It was this funny little feeling in my chest; I just wanted to help.”

Ashley was 15 at the time. She had already demonstrated a passion for service by helping children and leading a music ministry.

“We all just cried together,” Rodríguez said. “This is going to be an awesome path for her. As parents, it’s the greatest experience to have her follow us.”

Rodríguez is excited to be able to help her daughter understand her calling at such a young age, an opportunity she did not have when she accepted the call herself.

“[Ashley] is full of energy. She’s become more and more convinced of her calling. We are blessed to be able to do ministry together as a family,” Rodríguez said.

THE FUTURE

Organizers said they hope the ice-cream social inspired their fellow church leaders to use the model and hold similar events in their territories. NAD president Dan Jackson told attendees during closing remarks that this model should be followed every summer at camp meetings.

Further, the NAD Ministerial Association has organized a committee to help the NextGen momentum. “The committee has youth pastors, lay members, Pathfinders, and church leaders at all different levels,” Williams said. “We’re going to roll out more details during next year’s CALLED convention for ministers.”

The Ministerial team collected contact information for all of the attendees at Oshkosh who expressed interest in becoming a pastor. “We want to stay in touch with them through the years,” Williams said. ▀



NEW EDITION OF ANDREWS STUDY BIBLE RELEASED

BIBLE STUDENTS WILL NOW BE ABLE TO REVIEW STUDY NOTES IN THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.

BY ANDREWS UNIVERSITY NEWS

The Adventist Church's most comprehensive one-volume Bible-study resource has just extended its reach, according to an announcement by Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University.

On September 5, 2019, the university released the long-awaited New International Version (NIV) *Andrews Study Bible*. In addition, nearly 700 new students at Andrews received a complimentary copy from the university, continuing a tradition that began in 2011, but this time featuring the NIV.

"We've been planning on this for many years," Luxton said. "The *Andrews Study Bible* was first published by Andrews University Press just before the General Conference session of 2010 in the New King James Version [NKJV]. It's been a huge blessing to the church in its regular retail, evangelism, prison ministry, and electronic formats, all in the NKJV. But we knew right from the beginning that a large segment of the church finds value in a more contemporary English translation."

The *Andrews Study Bible* was partially funded by a grant from the General Conference in 2008, as arranged by then Andrews president Niels-Erik Andreasen, according to Ronald Knott*, director of Andrews

University Press. Knott said that a formal project committee of General Conference leaders and Andrews administrators oversaw the project and delegated development to Jon Dybdahl, former president of Walla Walla University, who served as general editor. Dybdahl put together a team of more than a dozen scholars, approved by the project committee, who wrote the study notes and general articles. Since its publication in 2010, nearly 150,000 copies of the NKJV *Andrews Study Bible* have been sold.

Knott said that in addition to the thousands of study notes, the most important feature of the Bible, generally not found in other study Bibles published by evangelicals, is the linked theme reference system that connects in a systematic way many of the key teachings of the Bible.

"This is the core of the value of the *Andrews Study Bible*," Knott said. "You can trace any of nearly 30 key themes or teachings of the Bible, starting almost anywhere, to get a broad understanding of how the Bible addresses these important topics. That system is supported by a rich theme index in the back, along with other study notes."

The process of adapting the content of the study notes from the

NKJV to the New International Version was a long and sometimes tedious task, according to Scottie Baker, editorial and marketing coordinator of Andrews University Press. "Each note had to be evaluated for its continuing relevance and rewritten to correlate with the translation of the passage. That meant that some notes could be dropped because the NIV translation made the matter obvious," Baker said. "Other times, new notes had to be written to address issues raised by the new translation. All the book introductions, articles, and front matter had to be adjusted carefully. And of course, we used this as an opportunity to strengthen existing content. All of these matters were referred to Dybdahl for his oversight."

"In 2008 Dr. Andreasen said that the ultimate purpose of the *Andrews Study Bible* was to 'produce a work that is academically credible, theologically sound, practically useful for the individual lay reader, and permitting wide distribution in Adventist evangelism,'" Luxton said. "That purpose has been lavishly fulfilled in the years since and will be even more so now with the new edition in the NIV."

The NIV edition of the *Andrews Study Bible* is the second major product in the University Press's Bible study line, according to Knott. He said a third major product is deep into production right now. The *Andrews Bible Commentary*, also funded in part by the General Conference, is a concise yet com-

prehensive passage-by-passage one-volume Bible commentary authored by a team of more than 40 scholars under the general editorship of Ángel Rodríguez, former director of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute (BRI). The *Andrews Bible Commentary* is scheduled for release in 2020.

“Andreasen, and now Luxton, in their broadly influential roles for the world church as presidents of the university, have a dream that no matter how small a member’s theological library may be, the *Andrews Study Bible*, in either the NKJV or the NIV, and the *Andrews Bible Commentary*, which is designed for either, can give that member the basics for understanding the message and mission of this movement,” Knott said.

Publisher Thomas Nelson controls the New King James Version of the Bible, and the New International Version is controlled by Biblica (formerly the International Bible Society), which licenses the NIV in North America through Zondervan. Thomas Nelson and Zondervan are both owned by HarperCollins, which has licensed Andrews University to publish both translations for the *Andrews Study Bible*.

The *Andrews Study Bible* appearing in the NIV is the first time the same language (English) has the study Bible in two different versions. The resource is also available in Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian. 🍌

* **Disclaimer:** Ronald Knott is the brother of Bill Knott, executive editor of *Adventist Review*.



Superbom has spent five decades developing nutritious and tasty meat substitutes, like the new Gourmet Vegan Burger.

PHOTO: SUPERBOM

ADVENTIST-PRODUCED VEGAN BURGER WINS INNOVATION AWARD

IN BRAZIL, A SUCCESSFUL HEALTHY FOOD OPTION IS SHOWCASED AT INTERNATIONAL EVENT.

BY SUPERBOM PRESS OFFICER, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

Gourmet Vegan Burger, a product recently launched by Adventist-linked Superbom, won second place as the First Ingredients (FI) Innovations Awards’ Most Innovative Product. Superbom specializes in manufacturing healthy food products, and the FI Innovations Awards are given by food industry experts in South America.

“Gourmet Vegan Burger is the first plant-based food product to win this award,” said Superbom research and development director Cristina Ferreira. “For us, it is a way of recognizing all our pioneering and innovative work in the meat substitute business.”

SUPERBOM VEGAN BURGER

According to the food company’s marketing department, Gourmet Vegan Burger includes all the characteristics of ground beef and a visual similarity and flavor identical to animal meat. It comes at the right time, they said, as the number of vegans has skyrocketed in several countries around the world.

“It seeks to meet growing demand in Brazil for options without animal products but that taste good and have nutritional benefits,” company experts said.

“These new consumers are vegetarians, vegans, flexitarians [people who exclude most but not all meat consumption], sportsmen, and advocates of healthy eating.”

INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The company said it invested about 9 million Brazilian reais (US\$2.2 million) in technology, research, and testing to arrive at the ideal product formula. The product, according to Superbom, is free of allergens, transgenics, preservatives, and artificial colors, but it still has 15 grams of protein, a good protein amount for meat substitutes.

The nutritional benefits of this food extend to the high-fiber content that is rich in vitamins A, B9, and B12, company experts said. And the same applies to the burger’s amount of iron and zinc.

“Even with more than 50 years developing meat substitutes, we always strive to innovate,” Ferreira said. “In this case, besides making an effort to understand the Brazilian market, we sought international references from thriving markets. We plan to keep on investing in innovation and quality,” she said. 🍌



AVONDALE NOW A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

THE MILESTONE IS THE NEXT STEP IN THE SCHOOL'S 122-YEAR-OLD JOURNEY.

BY BRENTON STACEY, ADVENTIST RECORD, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

In its 122-year history, perhaps no milestone since its founding has been bigger: Avondale College of Higher Education is the first higher education provider in Australia to become a university college under standards administered by the national regulator.

The addition of Avondale to the “Australian University College” category is also the first time a higher education provider has qualified for a change of category since the federal government established the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). It “increases quality and choice for students, and further bolsters Australia’s world-class tertiary education sector,” said Anthony McClaran, Avondale’s chief executive officer.

TEQSA approved the change of category application on August 28, 2019, as Avondale officers stressed the importance of that milestone.

Becoming a university college is “the next step in our journey to become an Australian university,” said Ray Roennfeldt, vice chancellor and president. He acknowledged “God’s faithful leading and the commitment and professionalism of our

leaders, staff members, and past and present students who have supported us on the journey.”

Mentoring partner Charles Sturt University is “delighted” by the announcement. Vice chancellor and president Andrew Vann said Avondale’s academic standards and ethos have “impressed” him and his colleagues. “We look forward to your continued growth and development.”

Kwong Lee Dow, emeritus professor and former vice chancellor of the University of Melbourne, who will present Avondale’s graduation address this year, lauds the achievement as “richly deserved, reflecting as it does the sustained commitment of the leadership of the college to the highest quality in education across your fields of study.” It also provides “welcome diversity within our national university system,” he said.

Chancellor Glenn Townend, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific, sent his congratulations. “This is another milestone in your distinguished history. You have always provided quality Adventist tertiary education for people who want to

serve the community and God. Well done, and God bless.”

Staff members and students attending or watching the first meeting of Avondale’s bi-annual Festival of Faith received the news on September 2, 2019. Jane Fernandez, vice president for quality and strategy, who led Avondale’s application, joined Roennfeldt to make the announcement. “University college status is a celebration of Avondale’s arrival in the community as a leader within the independent sector, and as a fully engaged participant across the spectrum of the Australian higher education community,” she said. “It opens new opportunities for Avondale to increase its sphere of influence by enabling us to welcome a broader range of students into our fold.”

It is something that will continue to foster Seventh-day Adventist values, ethos, and mission, said Stephen Carrow, vice president for academics. “We will always empower our graduates to be the hands and feet of Jesus in service to all people.”

Established in 1897, Avondale is a member of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist system of universities and colleges. It enrolls more than 1,000 students in 24 higher education and six vocational education and training courses across two campuses, one in Lake Macquarie and one in Wahroonga, New South Wales. ▀



REGIONAL CONFERENCE LEADERS VISIT THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER.

A group of North American regional administrators and pastors recently visited a center in Ciudad Juárez, México, where migrants refused entry into the United States are housed, pending asylum interviews at the border. Hygiene and grooming supplies were delivered to the migrants, funded by the nine regional conferences—historically Black church administrative units—in the United States.



ADVENTIST CHURCH LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS BUILDING PROJECT IN MONGOLIA.

A groundbreaking ceremony was recently held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, for the Gateway International Education Corporation. The building is being constructed to house various mission and community-related activities. Regional leaders reported that several institutions will be established under the corporation, including an international academy, a vocational school, a wellness center, and an agricultural center. The Adventist Church in Mongolia has approximately 3,000 members.



CONFERENCE ATTENDEES LEARN HOW TO BECOME DIGITAL DISCIPLES.

More than 150 people from around New Zealand gathered at Auckland University of Technology in Manukau to attend a Digital Discipleship Conference. Aiming to inspire and empower churches and individuals to be and to cultivate digital disciples, the conference brought together a community of people from different generations who are passionate about using technology and the digital space to share their faith.



ADVENTIST WOMEN MEET IN GHANA. More than 4,000 women from 22 countries across the West-Central Africa Division (WAD) gathered from July 29 to August 3, 2019, in Kumasi, Ghana. Kwame Nkrumah University's stadium was the chosen venue for the congress, themed "Saved to Serve." Programs included a parade of nations attended by Ghanaian officials and WAD leaders. The division also launched a 2020 devotional book entitled *Balm of Healing*, written by African women for African women.



HURRICANE RELIEF IN BAHAMAS. In the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Adventist Church leaders in the Bahamas have been part of the relief process. The National Emergency Management Agency of the Bahamas has asked the Church to supply baby and children's clothing. Meanwhile ADRA has been on the ground since before the storm and continues to provide aid, including food and water. There are seven Adventist churches with more than 3,000 members on Grand Bahama.



ADVENTHEALTH SEEKS TO FREE NURSES FROM PAPERWORK TO FOCUS ON PATIENTS.

The AdventHealth network recently received preliminary results of a pilot project that could revolutionize the patient-care model across the United States. The model frees nurses from a large portion of the paperwork that their work entails, allowing them to spend more time focusing on patients and their needs. During the pilot nurses were paired with a care team assistant, whose duties include the responsibility of documenting patients' care under a nurse's supervision.



ADVENTISTS CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF MINISTRY TO THE HEARING-IMPAIRED.

The Adventist Deaf Community in Germany celebrated 100 years of organized work at the Grindelberg Advent House in Hamburg, Germany, on August 3, 2019. The centennial commemoration took place under the theme "Still Living With Jesus Today?" The event aimed to celebrate the ministry's achievements, to draw attention to the situation of those who are hearing-impaired within the Adventist Church, and to strengthen their faith.

JESUS IS REALLY COMING SOON

Or is He?

SHAWN BRACE

I recently sat around a restaurant table with four others discussing pressing developments in the political world. My friend Mike had, a few weeks before, recruited all of us to start a philosophy club. A couple of the guys are professors at the local public university, while the rest of us either dabble in philosophy—like me—or are pursuing graduate degrees in the subject. We all come from various Christian persuasions and certainly fall on various points of the political spectrum.

As we sat there reflecting on the current political climate in the United States—and the rest of the world—something surprising came out of my mouth. We were all miffed about the incredible polarization that has unfolded around the world, where moderates don't seem to exist anymore, lamenting that there doesn't seem to be any hope of returning to some sort of balance. We wondered about whether any solution even existed.

Then, almost without thinking, it came out of my mouth: "Guys," I suddenly offered, "it feels like Jesus is coming soon."

Almost as soon as the words came out of my mouth, I sort of checked myself—both because, not knowing a few of the guys very well yet, I wasn't sure what their views were on Jesus' second coming and, to be honest, lately I've been wondering about my own views.

Because here's the reality: as a lifelong Seventh-day Adventist, I may or may not suffer from "signs of the times" fatigue. Over the nearly four decades of my life I have heard hundreds of sermons, and preached scores of them myself, about how Jesus is not only coming—He's coming *soon*. You have too.

In fact, if we were to be honest, we would have to admit that we as Adventists have rarely if ever failed to take advantage of a world crisis to sound the Second Coming alarm. Think back to all the world's major events over the past century—to World Wars I and II, to the moon landing, to September 11, to the Great Recession of 2008, to Pope Francis addressing the U.S. Congress, just to name a few—and reflect on how often Adventist preachers and writers leveraged these events to proclaim that we are, alluding to Daniel 2, "in the toes of world history," and how Jesus *must* be coming *soon*. Some, perhaps on the fringes, have even gone so far as to set dates.

Yet here we are. Still.

LIVING WITH THE TENSION

This trend long predates our lifetimes, of course. Our denomination was founded nearly 160 years ago for the express purpose of proclaiming this "present truth" message of Christ's *soon* return. Even older than the denominational organization were Adventist publishing efforts—starting what would quickly become known



“Guys,” I suddenly offered, “it feels like Jesus is coming soon.”



The primary task of Christ's disciples, both then and now, is to get on with the work of witnessing to the resurrected Lord.

as the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* as a means to disseminate this urgent news.

All this has led some critics to conclude that our church has exerted a lot of energy “crying wolf”

Yet honesty also demands a recognition that we live in a constant tension. There is no doubt in my mind that an honest reading of Scripture—of Daniel and Revelation, of Matthew and the Old Testament prophets—reveals that we are living in a unique time in human history, a time of unprecedented upheaval, on the doorstep of Christ's return.

In fact, it's not simply Seventh-day Adventists who believe this. Even as the United States, for one, becomes increasingly post-Christian, a sizable percentage of Americans believe that “by the year 2050 . . . Jesus Christ definitely or probably will have returned to earth.” When the Pew Research Center asked this question, 41 percent of respondents answered in the affirmative, including one out of every five persons who are religiously unaffiliated.¹

All this is, of course, not simply a theological tension or debate. The question of whether and when Christ returns is not a mental exercise. It's more analogous to a wife aching for her husband to return home from a long business trip than a mathematician solving an elaborate equation.

After all, if we truly believe, as I do, that the heart of the Christian message centers on communion with a Person—relating to a God who has thoughts and feelings and emotions and longings toward us, and has designed us to reciprocate—then it seems we would have an infinite longing for reunion with Him, in the flesh. “This is eternal life,” Jesus said, “that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). This is not a trivial theological exercise.

So what are we to do—living in this tension? Not only do we genuinely, and rightfully, believe that Jesus is returning *soon*, but we really *want* Him to as well. Yet we can get our hopes up only so many times. We don't have the emotional or mental capacity to sit on the edge of our seats every time the Pope has tea with another world leader.

LEARNING FROM THE APOSTLES

If anyone knows what it's like to live in the midst of this tension, it was the early church. Before ascending to heaven, Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He would “come again” and “receive” them to Himself (see John 14:3). As the disciples, with mouths wide open, watched Jesus vanish into the clouds, two angels stood beside them, announcing that He would “come in like manner” (Acts 1:11).

This would have been overwhelmingly joyous news to the disciples. Think about it: they had just spent more than three years with God—the most loving, compassionate, charismatic being in the universe, to say the least. To watch Him disappear from their presence would have been extremely troubling—no doubt depressingly so.

The best analogy I can come up with is the utter despondency I felt recently as I got into my car to drive to the airport on my way to Australia for two weeks, leaving my wife and three young children behind. As I looked at them in the rearview mirror, I felt as if my heart was being ripped out.

To say that I couldn't wait to return home would be an understatement. Yet what I experienced is such an inadequate comparison to what Jesus experienced as He ascended to heaven. It probably approaches the emotions of the disciples as they watched Him disappear.

It's not surprising, then, that the disciples were eager to know *when* they would be reunited with Jesus—and how they could know when this moment was approaching. We are familiar with Jesus' answer in Matthew 24, of course, having heard scores of sermons on the chapter. But His words for the disciples in Acts are equally as important and informative—and better address what *our* role is during the extended delay.

“It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority,” Jesus told them. “But you shall receive power

when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:7, 8).

In other words: don’t get overly focused on all the “signs of the times.” Yes, we are to understand Matthew 24 and Revelation 13 and all the pertinent passages—most of which were not yet “present truth” to the apostles living in the first century. But the primary task of Christ’s disciples, both then and now, is to get on with the work of witnessing to the resurrected Lord, both in word and deed.

Interestingly, it is fascinating that as a part of His “signs of the times” sermon in Matthew, Jesus finished His whole exposition by announcing that those who would experience eternity would be those who treated the “least of these”—the hungry, the imprisoned, the foreigner—with grace and love (see Matt. 25:31-46). In Matthew’s telling, this was the *very last* teaching Jesus shared before going to the cross—the climactic end of His public teaching ministry.

Don’t miss the important connection: we can’t stop at Matthew 24. Chapters 24 and 25 are one long sermon in response to how we can know Christ will be coming soon. We will know Christ is coming soon not only when we see upheaval in the world but when we see works of justice and compassion in the church.

So being Second Coming people means living with hopeful expectancy of Christ’s return while also pursuing His healing mission in the world. It means proclaiming His truth and, just as important, living it out.

This is how we live in the tension.

LEARNING FROM CONTEMPORARY JEWS

Just a couple days after my declaration to my friends in the philosophy club, I found myself sitting at a different restaurant table with another friend. He’s an older Jewish gentleman, with a philosophy degree from Yale and an architecture degree from MIT. We meet every few weeks to discuss a whole gamut of topics, ranging from religion to politics to philosophy to life. And yes, Jesus often comes up in our conversations, though my friend is nowhere near a believer in Christ’s Messiahship, as far as I can discern.

I was even more shocked by what he said in

reflecting on our current political climate than what I had said a few days before. He offered that there was about a 20 percent chance that the next presidential elections in the U.S. wouldn’t happen. He went on to say that in his opinion there’s a 50 percent chance that the U.S. military will have to step in, either siding with Congress or the president to make sure the elections take place.

After I recovered from my utter surprise, I realized that I was now at liberty to share my own shocking perspective. “I was just saying the other day,” I remarked, “that it seems like the end of the world is near and that Jesus is coming back soon.” I then went on to explain how we Adventists believe this has all been predicted in the book of Revelation—admitting, however, that we don’t want to get too extreme with our prognosticating.

He found it interesting, politely acknowledging the perspective. Then he shared something fascinating. “Jews believe,” he said, “that before the end of the world and the messianic age, God has given us the task of perfecting the world. God created us to join Him in works of justice and compassion.”

Then it dawned on me: this is what it means to be expectant Second Coming people. We passionately proclaim Christ’s soon return, and we recognize and humbly announce the signs of the time. But in the meantime we participate in God’s mission of healing the world, doing works of justice, compassion, and love. This is essentially what Ellen White said was our end-time task, pointing to Isaiah 58 as the “special work now before us.”²

After all, Jesus *may not* come tomorrow, but we know there will always be fellow humans who need our help tomorrow. Only the Second Coming can and will ultimately set everything aright.

Until then, however, borne of our deep appreciation for His grace and forgiveness, we relentlessly pursue His mission in the world, proclaiming and demonstrating His love. ♣

¹ www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2010/07/14/jesus-christs-return-to-earth/, accessed July 19, 2019.

² See Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1952), pp. 29-34.

Shawn Brace, a pastor in Bangor, Maine, United States, is married and has three children. The family’s ministry has increasingly focused on mission, discipleship, and incarnating the gospel in their neighborhood and city—a journey that can be tracked via their podcast, Mission Lab.



A CHURCH THAT'S READY NOW

What does it take?

On one of my visits to our paternal grandparents when I was about 6 or 7 years old, I heard my grandpa praying that he “would be ready if Jesus came during the night when he was asleep.” I queried this strange prayer, and he explained to me that if he prays that prayer before going to bed, then it counts as if he were keeping watch during the night and Jesus would consider him ready, although he was asleep. That was his guileless understanding of the words of Jesus, “Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” (Mark 13:35-37 NKJV).*

As a teenager I considered it strange when I heard my fellow believers praying at the start of the

divine service, “And, dear Jesus, come soon; we have been waiting for You so long.” Yet after a rather masochistic sermon hammering on our deficiencies in reaching sinless perfection, I heard [usually the same] people praying, “Thank You, Jesus, that You have not come yet, because we are not ready” The contradiction was not lost on me. But instead of being funny, I found the conflicting perceptions between our desires and reality rather disturbing.

DISTURBING DATA

As a pastor, I witnessed many members struggling in the last hours of their lives with assurance of salvation. Somehow, in their minds, readiness for Jesus was measured in terms of personal sanctification. When the results of the European Value-Genesis came in some years ago, it was disturbing to see that so many of our young people had a great misunderstanding of the process of salvation and the role of God’s grace and our works: 84.1 percent agree with the statement “I know that to be saved I have to live by God’s rules” (64.8 percent definitely, 19.3 percent tend to); and 73.2 percent agree that “I am worried about not being ready for Christ’s return” (35.8 percent and 37.4 percent).

In oft-quoted words: “Houston, we’ve got a problem.” We believe God’s words, “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:18). We all want to be ready and help not only our loved ones, but also the larger world to be ready for Jesus’ second coming. But in the experience of too many, readiness is connected with the level of their sanctification.



STAYING BALANCED

How do we keep the tension between faith and works, grace and deeds, our efforts and God's sovereignty, without falling into a ditch? On the one hand, we need to say as Jesus taught us, "When you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'" (Luke 17:10, NKJV). There is always room "to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (2 Peter 3:18, NKJV), to be more sanctified, committed.

At the same time, the closer we come to God, the more sinful we see that we ourselves are; we can see how much more work the Holy Spirit still must perform in us.

There's a real danger that pursuing sanctification itself as a goal may get off track and become individualistic, even narcissistic. The scribes and Pharisees in Jesus' day thought of themselves as very holy, yet they could not love anybody different from them. They were too absorbed with themselves.

The New Testament never defines spirituality or sanctification in the individualistic terms that satisfied them. It is defined in terms of community. Even the well-known picture of Jesus knocking at the door is addressed to a local church, not an individual (Rev. 3:20). The message there is that we need the armor of God corporately, as a church community (Eph. 6:10-20).

Paul writes, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Phil. 2:14). As the community matures there is less grumbling and arguing, and more grateful hearts. Bitterness and resentment are replaced by collective servanthood in the spirit of love.

Unfortunately, all of us know people in the church, both local and on all levels of organization, who are growing more cantankerous and bitter, who champion a fighting spirit, and yet who are thought of as committed and sanctified people.

It is important to understand that the Bible defines sanctification within the context of community. If we do not see the role of community, the pursuit of spiritual growth becomes distorted in a way that makes it all about the individual.

We can get preoccupied with how we are performing spiritually, or how spiritually fulfilled we feel, and how ready we are for the second coming of Jesus. Meanwhile, we forget to live a life of

servanthood and love. We become spiritually narcissistic. Often when I talk to people who have stopped coming to church, I hear, "I do not get much out of it lately." But Christianity is not an individual sport! We are not Christians merely for self's sake, just for what we get out of it individually. Rather, as Jesus left heaven and lived His earthly ministry for our sake, so we reveal Him by lives lived in sacrifice for the sake of others.

ACHIEVING THE GOAL

The goal of sanctification is to be more loving, gracious, caring, and generous (John 13:34, 35; Gal. 5:22, 23). There is a huge difference between being sanctified and being sanctimonious. Yet people get them mixed up. The goal of sanctification is being a community of loving persons who love and serve other people.

Jesus must remain in heaven "until the time comes for God to restore everything" (Acts 3:21). At His coming He will complete the restoration of relationships: my personal relationship with God and our relationships with one another in the type of community He wants to have on this planet.

Imagine then, before the second coming of Jesus, the community of God in which He already works: a community of justice in a world of economic and ecological injustice; a community of generosity and simplicity (of being able to say "enough") in a world of consumer satiation; a community of selfless giving in a world of selfishness; a community of truth, humility, and boldness in a world of relativism; a community of hope in a world of disillusionment; a community of joy and thanksgiving in a world of entitlement; a community that experiences God's supernatural presence in a secular world in which all days are the same and nothing is exceptional or supernatural.

A lot more could be said about the Holy Spirit's work *in* us (sanctification) and *through* us (mission). But we also need to pay attention to the work of the Holy Spirit *around* us. God has not given up on His people, or on His world. He is at work not only *in* and *through* us, but also *around* us: can we see Him?

We might be closer to the Second Coming than most of us realize! 

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EATING IN THE END TIME

Eschatological food

Some Seventh-day Adventists ask: Does our diet have anything to do with our salvation? Yes and no. Or, perhaps, no and yes.

MORE ABOUT NO AND YES

No first, because the greatest heresy about our salvation is giving or claiming human credit for it. Neither food, nor lifestyle, nor intellect, nor sweat till exhaustion helps anyone develop a pathway to salvation, or advance on some existing redemption road: salvation results from a positive response to the gift of Jesus and His redeeming grace. But even the capacity to believe we're saved is from outside of ourselves, a gift of God that precludes any creaturely boast (Eph. 2:8).

Yet Scripture's own explanation of our absolute dependence on God for salvation explicitly connects human behavior with salvation: God's salvation re-creates us in Christ Jesus for good works He programmed beforehand, "that we should walk in them" (verse 10, KJV).

We are not saved by fork and knife; neither are we perfected by our pedometers. But better behavior is part of God's salvation program. Good works are part of God's expression, through saved persons, of His miracle of salvation. So while we are not saved by our diet, once saved, our eating, drinking, and living all reflect on God's name and character (1 Cor. 10:31). He works in us the willing and doing of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13); our choices for our bodies are enlightened and will not dishonor or disrespect Him, our Savior and Master (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Redeemed individuals ask naturally, "How can I live a better life?" They want to know what they can do and say now that will further God's kingdom; that will show their participation in the good works He ordained for them long ago. "What should I read or watch now? How should I engage my time now?" They feel the need to live more in harmony with how Jesus would live. Individuals who have accepted Jesus are new persons; old habits change (2 Cor. 5:17), including nutrition habits.

GOOD WORKS EATING HABITS

Better nutrition is more than just eating wisely to lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. The principal reason for Adventism's unique health message is not reducing health bills and living longer. It's to be more effective and productive in honoring God: the efficiency of our work for God depends largely upon our physical condition.¹ Eating right—quality, quantity, time[s]—often makes the difference between living to life's full potential or not.



We are not saved by fork and knife; neither are we perfected by our pedometers.

An unhealthy lifestyle can prevent us from enjoying the most meaningful relationships, especially our partnership with Christ. Sleep deprivation, unmanaged stress, and the use of unhealthy substances can affect our memory and depreciate the quality of both our service to God and our relationships with others. Inactivity encourages the advancement of disease processes and alters the quality and length of our ministry.

In the same way, unhealthy food choices may impact our physical and mental health and limit our useful service to God. Moreover, our bodies are God's temple/sanctuary (1 Cor. 3:16). They deserve the best care.

So as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, diet does matter. Whatever promotes physical health (healthy diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, etc.) promotes the development of a strong mind and a well-balanced character. Therefore, we are encouraged to preserve all our powers in a condition that will enable us to give the best possible service, the most glory, to God (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

And who doesn't want the best for their bodies? If certain foods are known to undermine good health and increase the risk of disease and death, it would only make good sense to avoid them, thus possibly lengthening and increasing the quality of our productive lives.

For example, scientific data shows an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, some cancers, obesity, and diabetes from the consumption of meat. Hundreds of research papers show the value of a regular use of fruit and vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds, to significantly lower the incidence of those chronic diseases. No wonder that among those who are waiting for Jesus' return meat eating will cease to form a part of the diet.²

Furthermore, God has assigned us the stewardship of earth's resources (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:8-15). Science recognizes that a diet with a rich focus on plant products is more sustainable of life on earth with a low environmental impact. A plant-based diet consumes less of the earth's resources and produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions. The health of the planet, as well as our own health, depends upon the food choices we make.

A diet based mainly upon whole plant foods

with the use of some minimally processed and fortified foods has strong scientific support. Heavily processed and refined foods, especially those containing large amounts of fat, salt, and/or sugar are not the healthiest choices.

God chose a plant-based diet for our parents in the Garden of Eden. Ellen White saw that discarding the use of all animal products, dairy included, is in our future, because of increasing disease in animals.³ Where fortified plant foods are yet unavailable, or poverty limits food choices, discretion should dictate the pace of dietary reform.⁴

Whatever dietary preferences we choose (omnivore, pescatarian, dairy-free, gluten-free, vegetarian, etc.), diet should not be used as a standard for measuring others. Paul admonishes clearly enough: "Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat," and vice versa. For "the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking" (Rom. 14:3, 13, 17).

For the early church, eating provided a venue for fellowship (Acts 2:42; Rev. 3:20) that did much to promote unity. While God's kingdom is not defined by eating patterns, we should make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification, and not allow food choices to create chaos in the church (Rom. 14:19, 20), at potlucks or elsewhere.

ONE LAST WORD

A good diet is not the only ingredient of a healthy lifestyle. Along with good food choices, one must get regular and adequate sleep, engage in regular physical activity, drink plenty of clean water (colas won't work), properly manage stress, have meaningful relationships with God, friends, and family, and much more. When our total lifestyle honors God, it backs up every argument in favor of His kingdom and soon return. 🍌

¹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 242.

² Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938), p. 380.

³ Ellen G. White, "The School and Its Work," *Australian Union Conference Record*, July 28, 1899. For a similar comment on eggs, see Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 7, p. 135.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 320.

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TIM TIEDEMANN

THE CHRISTIAN HIKE

Walking with Jesus in the here and now, not just in the future.

Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31).

The Lord can be found in stillness. He invites us to join Him there. For me, the quiet place I go to be with Jesus is found on a mountaintop.

Getting to the top of a mountain isn't simple. Similarly, walking with Jesus daily isn't always akin to a Sabbath afternoon stroll in the park. Honestly, it's more like a hike. A tough hike—often breathtakingly gorgeous, sometimes exhausting, but always invigorating. The Christian version can take you to the brink of despair before the glorious view is finally revealed.

JOY IN THE JOURNEY

There are usually no shortcuts to the end of any worthwhile hike. "I wish we could magically be transported to the summit

without the hiking!" said no one ever at the start. But a lot of people will say it when they're exhausted. What they mean is "I wish it wasn't so hard!" They want to fast-forward through the tough parts straight to the reward.

But what they fail to realize is that part of the joy of getting to the top is, in fact, the journey. All the memories of the trail—especially the difficult ones—are cherished and laughed about later, but only among those who were on that hike. The bonding experience of overcoming common hardships to reach a destination is much like that in the song of the redeemed: a song that can be sung only by those who share this Christian hike together (see Rev. 14:3).

I am reminded of a particular hike I did in Sri Lanka. With palpable excitement we surveyed the trail as it stretched away before us. The lush landscape looked like a scene from *The Lord of the Rings*. In the distance was our ultimate goal: a hazy mountaintop glowing through the rain and mist, as if someone had used an Instagram filter on it.

This hike stands out in my mind because everyone on it encountered so many difficulties along the way, but the mood of the group stayed positive. For months after the trip, the five of us laughed and talked about all that happened on it. Jonathan forgot his raincoat and shivered the whole way home. Debbie's shoes broke, so she completed the hike in socks. Margaret's knees gave her problems, and she had to use a walking stick at the end. William took a wrong turn and ended up at a different viewpoint. I would suddenly disap-



pear because I kept falling in the tall grass clumps. Near the end of it we were so wet and tired that Jonathan, William, and I lay down in those grass clumps, waiting for the others and staring into the falling rain. We felt strangely at peace, bonded with each other; most important, we felt closer to God.

CATCHING SIGHT OF THE BIG PICTURE

C. S. Lewis wrote: “A glimpse is not a vision. But to a man on a mountain road by night, a glimpse of the next three feet of road may matter more than a vision of the horizon.”

When our group started our hike, we caught a glimpse of our destination, but somewhere along the way we lost sight of it. The trees, the hills, and the mist obscured our vision; and all we could do was focus on the trail ahead of us. So often we want to know what’s going to happen next, what God’s endgame is. Or we want every moment to be a glorious view, such as a vision of a lovely waterfall. But during a hike every single step counts. Every day of our lives counts. We may feel that what we do today is unimportant, but that need not be so. God is there in the mundane, the ordinary, and the boring. And if we look closely, we will start to notice the little butterflies flitting across our paths, or the wildflowers snuggled in the grass by the side of the trail, or the chameleon camouflaged among the leaves.

But the most amazing thing about this Christian hike is the One who has gone before us. He has cut the trail where there was only wild overgrowth before. He has faced despair and encountered every obstacle you and I face today. In the final hours before His ultimate sacrifice, He wanted to give up, but He didn’t. For my sake and yours.

So today, on each step of our Christian hike, just like the one I did in Sri Lanka, we must realize that there is no way forward but through it. But knowing that Jesus has been here before, we look around and see bits of higher ground here and there, just enough for a step, and just close enough to jump to. Although our shoes get soaked completely, and our clothes get splattered with mud, we make it through to the other side.

During a strenuous uphill climb, when we give it our all but feel as if we’re getting nowhere, we are not left without hope. The One who went before has left a map more accurate than any Google map. There’s even a GPS to help us: we cannot get back on track until we realize we are not on the trail

We may feel that what we do today is unimportant, but that need not be so.

anymore. For encouragement, we know we are in the last stages, near the end, and that gives us a little hope.

It’s OK to turn to one another, as my friend Jonathan did, and say, “I. Can’t. Breathe.” It’s OK to struggle; to realize that we need food, or water, or rest. This is where we are happy to have company and it’s always OK to ask for help, for this is how we encourage each other to keep going.

AT OUR OWN PACE

Everyone hikes at their own pace, so naturally we may reach the end at different times. Getting to the end first doesn’t mean superiority to anyone else: the victory at the end is what counts, regardless of how long it takes or how difficult it was.

I loved watching the faces of my friends as they emerged slowly out of the gloomy, dripping woods. The appearances of frustration and misery immediately gave way to looks of wonder and hushed awe. Debbie said to me, “I was so angry with you for bringing us on this hike! That last part was so hard. But it was worth it.”

Jesus said, “Follow Me.” Thankfully, He hiked our difficult trails—every single step of the way—without shortcuts. By walking the trail He walked, we learn, but never alone. When we stand at the beginning of the trail, we can say, “I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?” (Ps. 121:1). And we can say with certainty, “My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (verse 2). And “the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore” (verse 8).

Jesus is not with us just at the end, or only when we are in trouble. He says, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” He watches over us during every single step of our Christian hike. He is taking us to be with Him in that place of eternal peace and joy. ♣

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VICTORIA KUBIAKI

LIVING URGENTLY; LIVING PRACTICALLY

*A church that makes
day-to-day sense*

We are a people birthed in hope, with a longing in our ecclesiastical heart for the second coming of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). This hope sustains our lives amid the challenges of life. This hope reminds us that we are strangers and aliens in this world, pilgrims passing through on our way to a better home (1 Peter 1:2, 3). Without this hope we simply become another ism, another religious offering in the supermarket of religiosity.

ANOTHER REALITY

There is another reality, however, a reality of life in a hopeless world: poor neighborhoods I have traveled to where there is no hope; where families I ministered to were just then

experiencing the pain of loss, and the pain of loss without hope.

As a Seventh-day Adventist theologian I belong to a church whose soul and psyche and name shout “Hope!” Our faith is faith in the Lord who conquered death and the grave; who guaranteed His promise to return for us by coming out from that hole in the hillside to demonstrate that He is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25). We live hope, for we live knowing that His Word is true: “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also” (John 14:3, NKJV).*

So I ask now, as I asked myself then, how can that hope, the blessed hope, make a real difference in the lives of people who often lead hopeless day-to-day lives?

As an answer, I see and hear in the ministry of Jesus the call to a life characterized by two paramount considerations: urgency and practicality. Christ’s teaching on the final judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 is every human’s inescapable challenge to be a harbinger of God’s kingdom in an often hopeless world.

In the parable “all the nations” are “gathered before Him” (verse 32, NKJV). He proceeds to separate all humanity into two, and only two, groups: not according to tribe, ethnicity, size, epoch, status, wealth, IQ, or otherwise. He likens one company to a flock of sheep and the other to a flock of goats. As simple as it sounds, these two companies are so fundamentally different that they are irreconcilable with each other. Their classification here will stand for eternity.



In His report Jesus Himself plays all the tough roles: He is Lord and Ruler, bathed and enthroned in glory and accompanied by a retinue of angels. From His psychologically elevated position He probes as inquisitor and mandates as judge. He also makes major speeches.

He says to the sheep: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world" (verse 34). And to the goats: "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (verse 41). Whether of invitation or of rejection, these are definitive declarations, irrevocable sentences. The goats must "go away to eternal punishment," while the sheep are given "eternal life" (verse 46). But neither sheep nor goats can fathom why "the Son of Man," all arrayed "in his glory" (verse 31) relates to them as He does.

WHAT ALL THIS MEANS

The Son of Man coming in glory references imagery from Daniel 7:13, 14. This Son of Man, both king and shepherd, is a union of awesome royal power and meek solicitude toward just one person. From the throne, He uses His authority to separate His flocks all grazing in the same pasture. The sheep receive the place of honor and inherit God's kingdom (Matt. 25:34). These sheep, the blessed ones, demonstrated their faithfulness by performing acts of loving-kindness, apparently without even knowing what they were doing. They lived both urgently and practically because this was in fact how Jesus lived.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus announces the arrival of God's kingdom as He cures the sick (e.g., 8:28-9:8; 9:18-38; 12:9-14; 14:34-36; 15:29-31), welcomes those who are despised (9:9-13), and provides food for those who are hungry (14:13-21; 15:32-39). The urgency of His kingdom announcement, and its eschatological arrival, motivate Jesus across the Gospel narrative. Jesus invites us to carry on His ministry by living urgently and practically (10:5-15, 40-42).

The blessed ones of the parable performed practical deeds of mercy with no idea that they were ministering to Christ. Jesus says that whenever they gave food to the hungry, welcomed strangers, clothed the naked, or visited those sick or imprisoned, they acted in kindness toward

Jesus Himself. They simply blessed others with whatever blessings God gave them.

On the other hand, those who have ignored the needs of the disadvantaged insist that they have never seen Jesus. They have not followed in Christ's footsteps. They have not continued to do the work that the Master has called them to do (Matt. 24:45-51). They have not displayed the spirit of the meek and mighty King-Shepherd.

In this parable, judgment is based on "unknowingly" seeing Jesus in other people and serving them by meeting their specific needs: "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, *when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?*'"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" (Matt. 25:37-40). It is astounding that the King-Shepherd identifies with the least in such a concrete way. The King sees Himself in others. To live urgently and practically for Him means living with spiritual specificity: value the one person in need.

By personally, intimately, and spiritually knowing the One who is coming a second time, we are equipped to serve and meet human need the first time the opportunity presents itself. To live urgently, hopefully, and practically in the face of human brokenness is to know that time is short (Rev. 12:12), and to "unknowingly" see this same Jesus who will come in the future in His people in the present. His coming is at the door, not uniquely because of the "signs of the times" or a prophetic timetable but rather because He said so (Rev. 22:12), and we know that His word never fails.

To live urgently and practically is to realize that so many don't know Christ, and to seize the joyful privilege of loving them just as we love Christ. Far from making us irrelevant and alien, or uselessly preoccupied with only celestial things, the blessed hope compels us to act in loving service to and for Jesus right here and right now. 📌

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**PERFECT,
AND
READY
FOR JESUS**

Of trying—or not—to do “perfect”



DENIS KAISER

In my late teens I tried to convince other people of the possibility, and need, to live a perfect, sinless life. Since Jesus calls us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48), the case seemed obvious to me. Scripture describes holiness as a prerequisite to see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). The church's unwillingness to strive for sinless perfection therefore seemed to delay and thwart the materialization of Jesus' return.

Asked whether I myself was perfect, I countered that my personal weaknesses and imperfections were no argument against the possibility and need to achieve sinless perfection. Little did I know, however, the futility of that discussion. I further failed to grasp the gravity of sin and the profundity of perfection. Like me, many people have experienced, and still do experience, struggles over the proper relationship between law and gospel.

Such struggles have marked the history of our church from the 1840s to the present day. Navigating past the extremes of perfectionism and lawless grace is not an easy task, yet reflections about living with Jesus in the endtime will certainly prove fruitful.

PERFECTION AS UNSELFISH LOVE

Without pondering more deeply about the depth of both sin and perfection, we often tend to view sin merely as wrong actions and perfection as right actions. Overcoming sin and reaching sinless perfection therefore seems to be a simple goal. Except that such thinking fails to grasp the depth and true nature of both sin and perfection.

When I was younger, the word "perfect" in Matthew 5:48 immediately seemed to indicate "sinlessness." It took me years to comprehend the context of Jesus' statement. His call to be "perfect, as [our] heavenly Father is perfect," comes at the conclusion of His discourse about love for one's enemies, something that the Father continually exemplifies (verses 43-48). Luke renders that injunction at the end of the discourse on love for one's enemies as follows, "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:27-36). Jesus therefore defines perfection as unselfish, other-centered love.

Sadly, we focus too often on the prohibitory side of the Ten Commandments. We lack any proper sense of the scope of divine love, of its implications for the care and well-being of our fellow humanity

(parents, spouse, children, employees, strangers, etc.), of animals, and, indeed, of all the flora and fauna around us that God, in love, gave us from the beginning for our own good. Keeping God's commandments properly involves us expansively and profoundly with life, time, honor, family relationships, property, reputation, and mental sanity (see Ex. 20:2-17; Deut. 5:6-21). God delivers us so we can be instruments of His redeeming grace to others.

The apostle John defines sin as the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and I used to understand that statement as a definition of sin as a mere action. Once again, it took me years to grasp the context of that statement—the entire letter discusses unselfish love versus hate for others. True love is not self-centered. God is love (1 John 4:8), and as God's children, we should love too.

This insight has led me to a shocking realization. My keeping of God's law and striving to overcome sin is sinful if I am concerned primarily with my right and wrongdoing. A self-centered keeping of the commandments, driven by selfish motives and a failure to care about the well-being of other people, is a sinful enterprise that misrepresents the character of God.

ASSURANCE IN CHRIST

A behavior-oriented Christianity suggests that the fight against sin is the primary battle of a Christian. Ellen White noted, nevertheless, that "the greatest battle" we have to fight is to surrender our will to God.¹ In fact, we cannot even give our will and heart to Him. We can only ask God to take our heart and to work in us.² When we accept Christ and consent for the Holy Spirit to work in us, He produces new life in our hearts (Rom. 6:4, 11-14; 8:9-11; Gal. 2:20, 21; Eph. 2:5, 6; Col. 1:27; 3:1-10).

This continuing "new life in the soul" shows that the Christian experience supersedes a mere intellectual faith in Jesus and a simple cognitive consent to the beliefs of the church. A claim to divine grace, without yearning for the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in one's mind and life, ignores Christ's call for repentance (*metanoia* = change of mind) in Matthew 4:17. The ethics of the new life of Jesus' followers, described in Matthew 5-7, have their root in a change of mind, something that only the Holy Spirit can produce.

We lack any proper sense of the scope of divine love.

Another vital part of our Christian experience is assurance of salvation. Yet at this very beginning and fundamental point, our spiritual grasp is sometimes pathetically feeble. We fail to understand the very ground of our assurance. Striving for perfection and overcoming of sin can never be a safe foundation for our assurance of salvation because “the closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes.”³ We will realize more our own helplessness and need of Him.

True assurance therefore cannot come from placing our trust in the growth of our character. Justification by the merits of Christ is the only essential and objective ground for our assurance, something that we accept through faith (Eph. 2:4-10; Rom. 3:23, 24; 4:16; 5:1; 6:23; 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Gal. 2:16, 21; John 1:29; 1 John 2:2; 1 Tim. 4:10; Titus 2:11). When we repent of our sins and confess them to Jesus, we can take Him at His word and cling to Him, trusting that He has forgiven us and is changing us (1 John 1:9).

LOOK AND LIVE

At the 1883 General Conference session Ellen White passionately attacked Adventist legalism and those who were “talking fears and doubts” as to whether or not they were saved. She noted, “Brethren, you have expressed many doubts; but have you followed your Guide? You must dispense with Him before you can lose your way; for the Lord has hedged you in on every side.”⁴ Referring to Jesus’ dialogue with Nicodemus that recalled the incident of the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness, she stressed that “all who looked upon that serpent, the means that God had provided, were healed; so in our sinfulness, in our great need, we must ‘look and live.’” And she offered a compelling summary: “Look away from self to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.”⁵

Observing the proliferation of sin around us and realizing our own insufficiency will drive us closer

to Jesus. The lives of those who cling to Jesus and trust in His power to work in them will be characterized by a growing perfection in other-centered love. Trying to determine how far we have progressed in perfection is an effort doomed to futility.

First, we will never have an objective perspective of ourselves before Christ returns. Trying to focus on ourselves will only produce spiritual and emotional despair. Second, only God can produce true perfection in us by shedding His divine love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). By focusing on Jesus, we turn our eyes away from self and allow Him to work in and through us.

READY FOR JESUS

The Bible links the end of God’s salvation program to at least two events: the gospel proclamation in the whole world (Matt. 24:14), and the need for a judgment over the wicked (Acts 17:31). Ellen White saw the worldwide gospel proclamation and the proliferation of evil as two parallel developments. She said Christ will come “when the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people.”⁶ The statement concludes a chapter⁷ that portrays Christ as helping those in need and sharing the gospel with everyone, activities she viewed as manifestations of Christ’s character of unselfish love. Thus, understanding that oft-quoted statement as a reference to mere sinless perfection hardly does justice to the true breadth of its implications.

The story of redemption has only one hero—Jesus. Being perfect in Him means that the Spirit produces His fruit in us, revealing through us heaven’s love and care for the well-being and salvation of other people. This active expectancy seen in perfect love is the most attractive tool of evangelism. This love draws people to Jesus and accelerates the gospel proclamation. As Jesus finds us in such active expectancy, we are ready for His coming. 🍌

¹ Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1896), p. 141; Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn, 1923), p. 216.

² Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1900), p. 159.

³ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), p. 64.

⁴ Ellen G. White, “The Christian’s Refuge,” *Review and Herald*, Apr. 15, 1884.

⁵ Ellen G. White, “Effectual Prayer,” *Review and Herald*, Apr. 22, 1884.

⁶ White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 69.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-69.

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THE PSALMIST'S COPING FORMULA

M. Scott Peck wrote in his book *The Road Less Traveled*: "Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it."

David knew that reality when he wrote Psalm 23. Evidence? These words: "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (verse 4).

Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved passages in the Bible. Let's focus on eight formulaic truths in its masterful verse 4 that may provide RAMPWAYS to a fresh way of connecting and cooperating with God's providence.

Any problem—despondency, discouragement, darkness, even death—we can successfully navigate. These principles and affirmations provide RAMPWAYS to the better future God has for us.

REALITY: "Even though I..." The world has been horribly blighted by sin and evil. Unfortunately, this evil resides in us as well. Sin is with us at birth, and often, because of our lusts, it is inside us by invitation. We all have our valleys (see 2 Tim. 3:12). *We will experience sin's impact!*

ABILITY: "... walk..." We all can keep walking, persevering physically or spiritually (see Phil. 4:13). We are not admonished to skip, run, or jog; no heroics, just walk. When darkness falls and we can barely walk, we will. *We will keep walking!*

MIND-SET: "... through..." By God's grace and His staying power, we will survive our trials, whatever they are. "Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing

comes in the morning" (Ps. 30:5). *We will endure this!*

PROBLEM: "... the darkest valley..." Again, there will be valleys, shadows, and death in this vale of tears. No one is exempt. Our character and stamina are shown by how we handle our valleys (see 2 Tim. 2:3). *We accept this valley!*

WEATHERED: "... I will fear no evil,..." "Since God is with us, we can choose not to fear. Why? Because we're His children, and "the one who is in [us] is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). In fact, we already know, as we enter the valley, that though there will be pain and suffering, "God works for the good of those who love him" (Rom. 8:28). *We will be encouraged!*

ASSURANCE: "... for you are with me..." This is our anchor. God is with us always, everywhere (see Matt. 28:20). Through water and fire He is by our side (see Isa. 43:2). *Lord, we embrace Your partnership!*

YIELDEDNESS: "... your rod and your staff,..." We need much character work. God's discipline may often be difficult, but it is for our good (see Heb. 12:6). *Lord, we accept your providence!*

SPIRIT: "... they comfort me." God's rod and staff are controlled by the Holy Spirit. He is our friend and comforter (John 14:26). What to some may be bruising, we accept as a blessing. *We accept what God allows!*

By God's grace we will emerge from this valley.

TRANSFORMATION TIPS
DELBERT W. BAKER



**ANY PROBLEM—
DESPONDENCY,
DISCOURAGEMENT,
DARKNESS, EVEN
DEATH—WE CAN
SUCCESSFULLY
SURVIVE.**

Delbert W. Baker is vice chancellor of Adventist University of Africa, near Nairobi, Kenya.



Harrison Mann shares with his Spencerville Adventist Academy classmates what he learned about Joseph Bates at the Bates family home in Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

SOMER KNIGHT

RESTORING OUR ROOTS

Revitalizing an awareness of historic Adventists and their stories

I was preparing to lead my first Adventist history tour to New England as the sophomore religion teacher at Spencerville Adventist Academy. While I had several years of teaching about the Adventist movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries under my belt, I couldn't say I particularly enjoyed the material, or, outside of my own research, felt very prepared for the task (I had been exposed only to two, 10-week courses in the subject in 16 years of Adventist education).

One of my colleagues, Mindi Nix, had heard I would be leading the trip and offered to send along some notes from her husband, Jim, one of the Adventist Church's preeminent historians. She was excited we were going to visit the home of Joseph Bates, one of the cofounders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "You know about Bates, right?" she asked.

Of course I knew about him. I knew that he was a sea captain, and was convinced about the seventh-day Sabbath.

She followed with, "But do you know about his adventures? He had some great adventures! Have you read his *autobiography*?"

I had not, but my interest was piqued. I picked up a copy at the Adventist bookstore on the way home, and was hooked: shipwrecks, grave robbers, shark attacks, imprisonment, a man who sailed to London across the Atlantic just to find a book and sailed all the way back home with it, and an author who radically shifted the culture on board his ship to coincide with his convictions.¹

Bates's life was complicated, intriguing, even dire. In reading the bigger picture of his life, I discovered more than a theologian or policymaker: I discovered a person.

I started reading about other Adventist pioneers. I discovered such people as Anna Knight, nurse/teacher/preacher/missionary extraordinaire; poet, artist, and hymnwriter Annie Smith; her brother, a patent-holding inventor named Uriah; and Bible teacher, missionary trainer, fundraiser, requested speaker Hettie Haskell; all with fascinating personal histories and a contagious passion for communicating the gospel and mission in a myriad of constructive ways.

These were people I had never heard of, despite my saturation in the Adventist culture.

My reading led to a sense of camaraderie with the pioneering Adventists who came before me. I felt compelled to change the way I taught and presented Adventist history. I redirected my



Adventist history students to discover the *people* I had been reading about, Adventists who loved Jesus and invested their whole lives into a movement that they felt was biblical, timely, and urgent.

On the tour my students presented material they had learned about in the geographic places that were connected to their pioneers. The student who selected Joseph Bates recounted the sea captain's "adventures" while standing in the Bates family's front yard.

Unfortunately, not many students will likely have the opportunity to experience Adventist history this way.

NOTHING TO FEAR?

Ellen White, a major pioneer—cofounder and prophet of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—wrote the oft-quoted statement: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history"²

Yet over the past three decades, studies of Adventist and other Protestant youth and young adult behavior show a dwindling of congregational involvement and church attendance. In 2000, after a 10-year longitudinal study of hundreds of Adventist young adults, Andrews University professor Roger Dudley described an alarming trend in the findings of the Valuegenesis study: "As we have seen, 40 percent to 50 percent of those who are baptized members in their midteens will drop out of the church by the time they are halfway through their 20s. This is a hemorrhage of epic proportions."³ Fewer than half of Adventist youth were still active in the long term.

He continued: "The disengagement of such a large percentage of well-educated young adults who should now be assuming leadership in the church threatens the future viability of our movement."⁴

Dudley finally observed: "They [young adult Adventists] are rejecting Adventism, not because they are irreligious or lack commitment to Jesus Christ, but because they are searching for a deeper, more satisfying, more relevant church experience."⁵ There are certainly reasons to be fearful of the future when the future may be characterized by the presence of fewer young adults.

I live in southern California, where desert heat can easily wither much of what we try to grow. Thriving vegetation teaches that a strong, well-de-

veloped root system plays a critical role in anchoring and nurturing each plant to maturity. My own Gen X and subsequent generations seem largely rootless when it comes to our Adventist heritage, as though the underground system has been severed. *We do* seem clear about how the Lord has led our church, but uninformed about the complex but committed community that carried the torch of Adventism before us. This lack of a root system may be unraveling our sense of identity, stalling the momentum and movement of our denomination.

BUILDING ON THE PAST

In 1903 Ellen White wrote: "The record of the experience through which the people of God passed in the early history of our work must be republished. . . . We must study to find out the best way in which to take up the review of our experiences from the beginning of our work."⁶

"Many of those who have since come into the truth are ignorant of the way in which the Lord wrought. The experience of William Miller and his associates, of Captain Joseph Bates, and of other pioneers in the Advent message, should be kept before our people."⁷

While the first and greatest goal of Adventist education is to connect learners with Jesus Christ and help them develop a relationship with Him, a secondary goal has to be to equip students as connected and contributing members of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. Adventist education does provide opportunities for students to be introduced to the history of Adventism, but the ways in which it has been presented have often been brief, and less than memorable and meaningful.

The current Encounter curriculum recommends only one five- to six-week long Adventist history unit throughout the entire high school experience.

The Crossroads curriculum series that has been widely used over the past 20 years of academy Bible instruction prescribed one quarter focused on the ministry of Ellen White and the major movements of the denomination's development structurally and institutionally. While several individuals were named, their inclusion served mostly to explain the major developments as a whole, but the accompanying worksheets and Bible studies do little to create a sense of community or relevance.

Young adults are remarkably moved by stories

of authentic, dedicated people who began with a wrong answer (1844) and dedicated themselves to the pursuit of present truth. We could be inspired by the account of Adventist forerunners who began their association with each other in adversity, but created a spiritual movement based on diversity of gender, denomination, occupation, age and generation.

We can connect to a community that had in common a passionate desire to know and be with Jesus. These people were progressive, active, intentional, anti-slavery, pro-health, pro-education, and engaged personally to the point of building schools, churches, hospitals, and communities. We can invest in a community that didn't duck

tough conversations or abandon projects that carried a message of hope and the everlasting gospel throughout the world despite intense personal sacrifice.

Although our founders were not always initially correct, in line with each other theologically, or in agreement on priorities and plans, they steadfastly fixed their focus on Jesus and citizenship in His kingdom to come (see Heb. 11; 12).

A better exposure to more of the people and perspectives that formed the denomination may inspire that sense of camaraderie, enable young contemporary Adventists to metabolize and take in stride the current challenges facing our denomination, and link them to a movement with a message that points to the God who is on the move, and is, indeed, coming soon.

GO DEEPER

To discover more about the people involved in our rich denominational history, check out the following resources:

- *Tell the World*: This professionally produced film traces the history of the Seventh-day Adventist movement from William Miller's proclaiming Christ's return to the individuals who eventually became its founders.
- In print media I highly recommend the series *Heartwarming Stories of Adventist Pioneers* (volumes 1 and 2), by Norma J. Collins.
- If you want to go old school, believe it or not, a set of Adventist history felts called "Ellen White and Pioneer Felt Stories" is available at Adventist Christian bookstores.
- If you want to level up, there's an Adventist Heritage Pathfinder Honor, and an app called Pitcairn designed to help you get it! Don't let the Oshkosh fervor die out before exploring this honor!
- *Adventist History Podcast*: Matthew J. Lucio has a ministry researching and presenting Adventist history. He adds new episodes on the (ahem) twenty-second of every month.

RECONNECTING

In addition to redoubling our efforts to connect young adults with warm relationships and a relevant local church experience, let's revisit how to connect these younger generations to our faith predecessors. Let's commit to going deeper into our history than the great disagreement of 1888 or the organizational skirmishes of the early 1900s.

Let's tell our pioneers' stories in authentic, honest, modern, and compelling ways, developing resources that create in young Christians a sense of identity and heritage, pride and belonging.

Instead of a church experience that is, as the colloquialism says, a mile wide and an inch deep, let's take inspiration from our brothers and sisters who gave generously, invested personally, and lived lives deeply rooted in the gospel. Let's shift from an outgoing tide of talent, passion, and training to a rising swell of inspired, Christ-enamored, passionate, connected, informed, inspired, and rooted young Adventists. ▀

¹ Joseph Bates, *Autobiography of Joseph Bates* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1868).

² Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White: Being a Narrative of Her Experience to 1881 as Written by Herself* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 196.

³ Roger Dudley, *Valuegenesis*. p. 60.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases* (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1993), vol. 17, pp. 344, 345.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

Somer Knight has served the church as a teacher, school chaplain, and pastor. She is working on a master's degree in theological studies.



CHILDIMPACT INTERNATIONAL

Previously Asian Aid USA

Child Impact International is a fully supportive ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist church and a member of ASI.

Its outreach is to take children based on need and sponsor them in an Adventist Mission school.

Child Impact operates in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and supports a project in Papua New Guinea.

Child sponsorship is a very effective outreach as the children are given an education and introduced to Jesus. The impact is wider as the child's family are given hope and the mission school gains financial support.

Child Impact International

PO Box 763, Ooltewah, TN 37363

email: support@childimpact.org

phone: (423) 910-0667

childimpact.org

Key outreach for Child Impact International includes:

Where needed most fund

This fund allows us to cover emergency needs and any operation requirements in the USA or the countries where we operate. This fund is critical to our operation as needs always arise. **There is an urgent need now for this fund.**

Child sponsorship

You can sponsor a specific child or contribute to our **Un-sponsored Child fund**. Sponsors receive correspondence and a school report from their child.

Orphanages

Child Impact supports three Adventist church orphanages in India including Sunrise home which it funds 100%. These homes give **HOPE!** to those who have no hope.

Special Needs schools

Child Impact fully funds a Blind school and Deaf school operated by the church in India. These schools serve rural India which is very poor and give these children an education would never have.

You can make a big **IMPACT** supporting these schools.

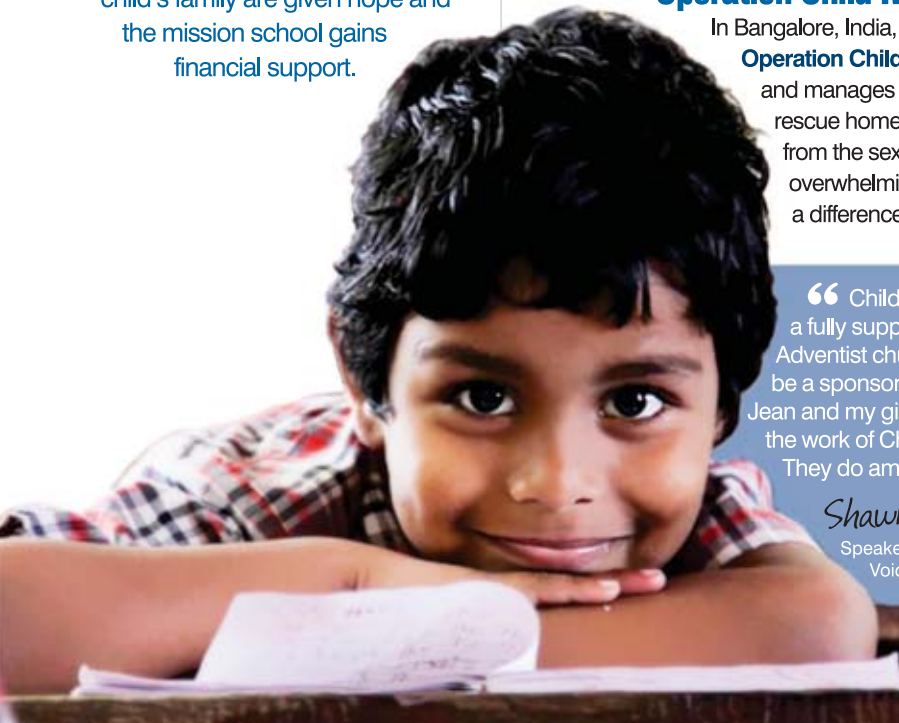
Operation Child Rescue

In Bangalore, India, Child Impact, through its **Operation Child Rescue** program funds and manages a rescue operation and rescue home for trafficked girls rescued from the sex trade. The problem is overwhelming but this program makes a difference in their lives.

“ Child Impact International is a fully supportive ministry of the Adventist church. My family are excited to be a sponsor of a child with Child Impact Jean and my girls have visited her and the work of Child Impact in India. They do amazing work! ”

Shawn Boonstra

Speaker/Director
Voice of Prophecy

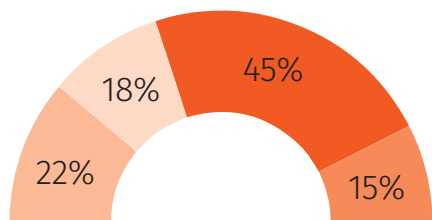


APPARENT SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE IMMINENCE OF THE SECOND ADVENT

The graphics in these two pages represent data from two thoroughly unrelated sources. One is the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, through its unit of Archives, Statistics and Research [ASTR]; the other is the Pew Research Center. The data may surprise, astonish, amaze, and maybe even unnerve. Hopefully, more than anything else, it help to show where the Church is on some specific issue, where we can help each other to be, and how we may best distribute our resources and offer up our prayers.

—Editors.

Survey by Adventist Archives and Statistics:*



QUESTION STATEMENT: I EXPECT THE WORLD TO END WITHIN THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

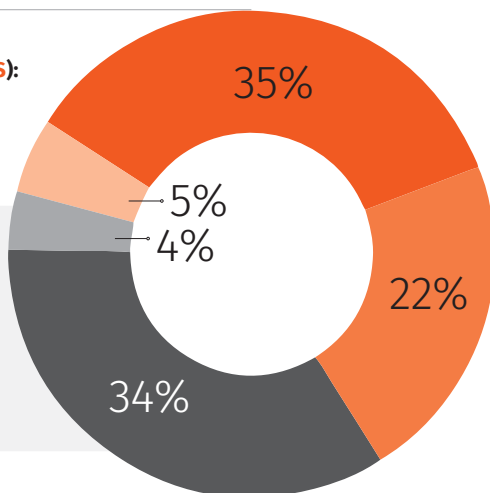
- 22% Strongly agree
- 18% Agree more than disagree
- 45% Strongly disagree
- 15% Disagree more than agree

SECOND COMING IN MY LIFETIME (56,280 RESPONDENTS):

- 4% Strongly disagree
- 5% Disagree
- 35% Not sure
- 22% Agree
- 34% Strongly agree

OF THE ADVENTIST WORLD DIVISIONS:

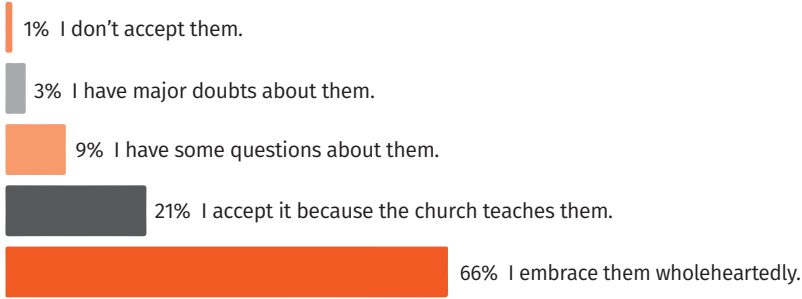
The South Pacific Division has the highest percentage of members who strongly agree with this statement. The Euro-Asia, Trans-European, and North American Divisions have the highest percentage of members who are unsure about whether Jesus will come in their lifetime.



*2017-2018 GLOBAL CHURCH MEMBER SURVEY CONCERNING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS REACH THE WORLD 2015-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN, META-ANALYSIS FINAL REPORT, OCTOBER 2, 2018 [MINOR REVISIONS: AUGUST 2019].



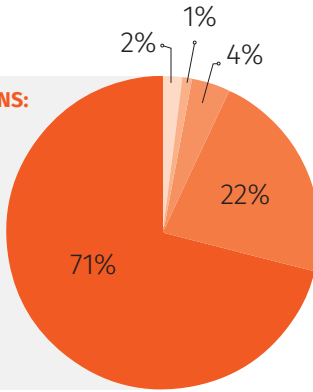
END-TIME PROPHECIES (54,572 RESPONDENTS):



OF THE ADVENTIST WORLD DIVISIONS:
 Except for the Southern Asia Division (38 percent), most respondents in all divisions wholeheartedly accept end-time prophecies and more than 80 percent in all divisions agree on the soon Second Coming.

OF THE ADVENTIST WORLD DIVISIONS:

The Inter-American Division has the highest percentage of members who embrace it wholeheartedly.
 The Northern Asia-Pacific Division has the highest percentage of members who are unsure.
 The Southern Asia-Pacific Division has the highest number of members who don't accept it.



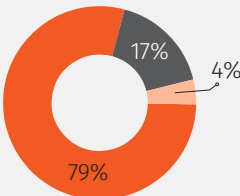
SECOND COMING VERY NEAR (57,247 RESPONDENTS):

- 2% I don't accept it.
- 1% I have major doubts about it.
- 4% I have some questions about it.
- 22% I accept it because the church teaches it.
- 71% I embrace it wholeheartedly.

The Pew Research Center did a similar poll among 2,003 American adults. Of the respondents, 1,670 identified as Christian.*

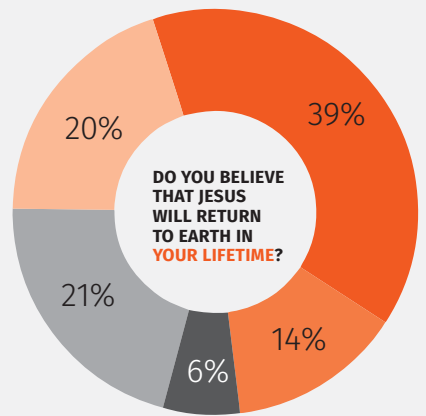
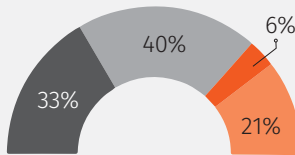
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST?

- 79% Yes
- 17% No
- 4% Don't know



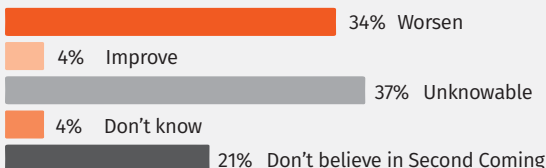
IS THE TIME OF THE SECOND COMING REVEALED IN BIBLICAL PROPHECIES?

- 33% Yes
- 40% No
- 6% Don't know
- 21% Don't believe in Second Coming



- 20% Yes
- 39% No
- 14% Unknowable
- 6% Don't know
- 21% Don't believe in Second Coming

BEFORE THE SECOND COMING, THE WORLD SITUATION WILL . . .



*JULY 6-19, 2006,

**EMBRACE
THE
NEGATIVES**



YOUSRY GUIRGUIS

Thomas Lambie, a medical missionary to Ethiopia, wanted to buy land for a mission station. Ethiopian law did not allow land to be sold to foreigners, but Lambie found a way to buy the land. Ethiopians could purchase land. So Lambie gave up his American citizenship, became Ethiopian, and bought the properties needed. Later, in honor of Lambie's great work in Ethiopia, the United States restored him his citizenship. How typical is Lambie's undaunted spirit?

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIANITY

For the many who think of Christianity as a way to wholeness and happiness in life, here is a somewhat arresting claim: the first great principle of Christianity is negative.¹ Consider Jesus' words: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).² In Matthew's account Jesus speaks to Simon Peter at a time when Peter becomes carried away, whether by a compliment from Jesus sent in his direction (see verses 17-19), or simply by ebullience, fairly standard for him. Peter has undertaken to turn Jesus away from the idea of suffering and dying. He begins to rebuke Jesus: "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You" (verse 22). The rebuke draws an appropriate denunciation from Jesus: "Get behind Me, Satan. You are an offense [stumbling block] to Me" (verse 23).

Instead of being a building stone, Peter is a stumbling stone, a rock in Jesus' way, a stone out of place. Those who would like to follow Jesus soon learn that the journey is no slick, smooth trip.

DENY, TAKE, AND FOLLOW

Verse 24 of Jesus' response to Peter includes three third-person imperatives—"deny," "take up," and "follow"—that emphasize the definite and terminal nature of the action. The first verb, "deny," carries comprehensive import, indicating total disowning.³ The verb can signify "to disclaim any connection with," "to repudiate." Jesus is not speaking of giving up certain selfish benefits, but of rejecting all links with our selfish nature. This total repudiation is how we begin to follow Jesus: "The decision to renounce the self and to take up one's cross stands at the beginning of the disciple's journey."⁴ It is one way to describe the miracle of conversion, and it clearly is not trivial.

Jesus' third verb, "follow," is a present-tense command, signifying the continuous action a convert undertakes, the lifelong task of following Christ.⁵ Such following involves looking to and behaving like Jesus—walking His walk that honors God and serves humanity (see 1 John 2:6). Multiple Christian authors have sought to express the categorical character of this demanding truth.

Howard Marshall conveys its intimidating force: the person so committed "is already condemned to death"; their life in this world is "already finished."⁶ John C. Fenton writes: "The condition of discipleship is therefore the breaking of every link which ties a [person] to self."⁷

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, hanged at 39 years of age in a Nazi concentration camp, penned this compelling statement: "Just as Christ is Christ only in virtue of his suffering and rejection, so the disciple is a disciple only in so far as he shares his Lord's suffering and rejection and crucifixion. Discipleship means adherence to the person of Jesus, and therefore submission to the law of Christ which is the law of the cross."⁸

William Barclay explains: "It is obliterating self as the dominant principle of life in order to make God that principle."⁹

Ellen White summarizes its nonnegotiability: it demands even to "the laying down of life itself, if need be, for the sake of Him who has given His life for [ours]."¹⁰

Evidently, denying oneself as Jesus requires means living without a self-centered thought, with the mind devoted to Jesus and His work exclusively. The options are clear: "whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matt. 16:25).

Just like the Ten Commandments, then, the requirement to follow Jesus involves much exclusion and negation. Willingness to follow Him means embracing the negatives with all our heart: no entertaining or worship of other gods; no images to which to bow. Self-indulgence holds no fascination for us. Instead, we savor the privilege of adoring Jesus completely. For us, "duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure."¹¹

A PARADE OF HEROES

Reports of Old Testament champions of faith testify extensively to their embrace of the negatives of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Joseph, the savior of his brothers, "was maligned and persecuted" for

choosing virtue and integrity;¹² Daniel was flung to the lions for being “true and unyielding in his allegiance to God” (Dan. 6:10-16); Jeremiah, for speaking only what God put into his mouth (Jer. 1:9), “so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit” (Jer. 38:1-6).

The dynamic did not change when Jesus came to earth. His followers continued to embrace the negatives of abuse, rejection, and execution for believing the good news of their personal salvation, and determinedly sharing that truth of redemption for all humanity with everyone else—“every creature under heaven” (Col. 1:23).

Stephen was stoned for proclaiming the resurrected Jesus as Israel’s Lord and Redeemer, the antitypical Joseph (Acts 7:9-16) and wilderness sanctuary, as well as the fulfillment of the spiritual purposes and promises of David’s and Solomon’s Temple (verses 44-50).

According to tradition, Matthew is said to have suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword in a distant city of Ethiopia. Mark expired at Alexandria after being cruelly dragged through the streets of that city. Luke was hanged from an olive tree in the classic land of Greece. John was put into a cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped death in a miraculous manner and was afterward banished to Patmos. Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downward. James, the Greater, was beheaded at Jerusalem; James, the Less, was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the Temple, then beaten to death with a fuller’s club. Bartholomew was flayed alive. Andrew was bound to a cross, from whence he preached to his persecutors until he died. Thomas was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies. Jude was shot to death with arrows. Matthias was first stoned, then beheaded. Barnabas of the Gentiles was stoned to death at Salonica. Paul was jailed, battered and abused, stoned, and finally executed—beheaded at Rome by Emperor Nero—for taking salvation’s good news to the Gentiles faithfully, and preaching truth everywhere (Acts 20:18-27; 28:17, 23, 25-28; 2 Tim. 4:1, 2, 6).

Traditional, extrabiblical statements about the fate of Christ’s apostles¹³ sound quite similar to that of careful historical reportage on the treatment Jesus received for us, and what His known followers received for Him. Indeed, documented historical cases are sufficient to demonstrate that following Christ consistently involves embracing

the negative. We embrace the negative and stay in the passion of that embrace by staying in Jesus’ arms, held so closely that we can hear Him whisper into our ear again and again, “My grace is enough; My grace is all you need; I can be strongest for you when you are weak” (see 2 Cor. 12:9). The privilege of following Him is the privilege of being in His company all the way and all the time along the lifetime road of discipleship.

Our time on earth may be limited; our sojourn may be temporal. But the principles that started us out at the beginning of our walk with Jesus are eternal. One day soon all earthly journeying will end; our corruptible will put on incorruption; and sorrow, crying, death, and pain will cease.

But the spiritual dynamics of selfless living will not change when our mortal puts on immortality and death is swallowed up in victory. Rather, the delights we anticipate when we enter into glory will only taste delectable because self-denying, self-sacrificing living in time will have taught us the secrets that make eternity taste just right. Following the self-sacrificing Lamb wherever He goes will only bring us joy in eternity, because, in time, unselfishness has become our daily bread. ▀

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1986), p. 458.

² Scripture quotations are from NKJV, the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

³ Or “to the fullest extent”: W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark International, 2004), p. 671.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Ralph Earle, “The Gospel According to St. Matthew,” *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, ed. John Barton and John Muddiman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 77.

⁶ Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter, U.K.: Paternoster Press, 1978), p. 373.

⁷ John C. Fenton, *The Gospel of St. Matthew* (London: Penguin, 1964), p. 273.

⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 2015), p. 42. Note though, contra Bonhoeffer, that there is more to Jesus’ messiahship than suffering and rejection.

⁹ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), p. 176.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 288.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1991), p. 49.

¹² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 4, p. 525, as are all quotes from this paragraph.

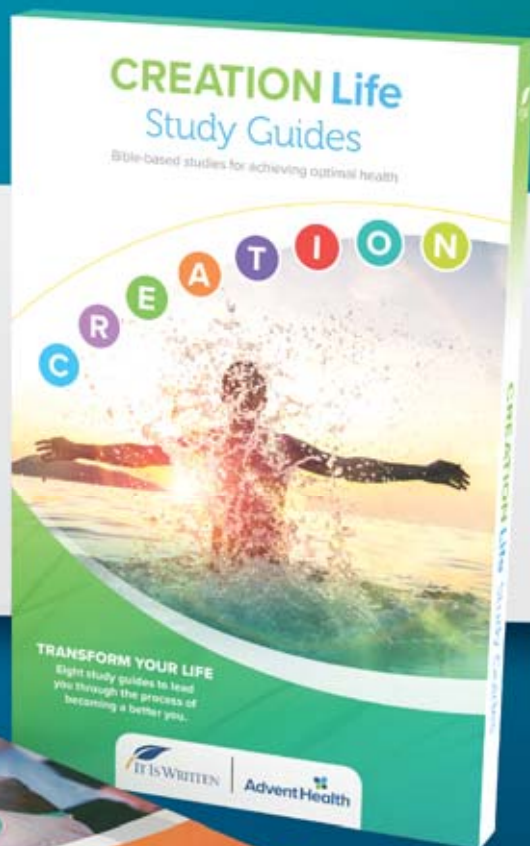
¹³ All from Paul Lee Tan, ed., *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: A Treasury of Illustrations, Anecdotes, Facts and Quotations for Pastors, Teachers and Christian Workers* (Garland, Tex.: Bible Communications, 1979), pp. 333, 334.

Yousry Guirguis teaches Old Testament theology at the Asia-Pacific International University in Muak Lek, Thailand.

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THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE

Can you have more than one?

The first happiest day of my life was September 1, 1947. That was the day I left five acres of unpicked cotton in the field and was driven to Collegedale, Tennessee, to attend Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University).

At the time, many freshmen, especially women, became homesick and went home after just a few weeks; some never returned from Christmas vacation. But not this Georgia boy: the happiest day of my life stretched into weeks and months.

Unlike some people who loved farm work, I couldn't get away fast enough. I was born in 1931 and grew up during the Great Depression. Times were tough. My father had been a successful merchant who had to close his business in 1929. He

paid off all his debts, but he had to move back to Georgia.

Making a living in the red clay following a plow pulled by two mules was difficult. Fortunately, we were able to eat the vegetables and fruit we raised.

In 1940 my sister, Ethel, left home to attend Southern Junior College. Now the only child at home, I had no one with whom I could communicate or lean on. I was isolated from other boys my age. My "friends" were my two dogs.

ADVENTIST TO THE CORE

Mother became a Seventh-day Adventist as a teenager, and had attended Winyah Lake Academy (now Forest Lake Academy) in Orlando as a senior. Her mother had died when she was 5 years old, and she had been raised by an older sister and her husband.

Mother worked odd jobs. At the age of 19 she met my daddy, and two months later they were married. He promised Mother he would quit smoking, but it took him 45 years to fulfill his promise. He did keep another promise, however. That was never to interfere with her religion, or with raising her children as Adventists.

We lived 70 miles from the nearest Adventist church in Atlanta, so church attendance was out of the question. But as far back as I can remember, we studied our Sabbath School lesson daily. Every Friday sundown we sang at least five songs to welcome the Sabbath, and again on Sabbath afternoon to close the Sabbath.

Along with singing, we had Sabbath School right in our home. We sang, prayed, read the

mission story, collected our pennies for mission offering, then studied the Sabbath School lesson all the way through.

We went years without seeing another Seventh-day Adventist, but we remained faithful. When Daddy asked Mother what she wanted for Christmas, she always said, "Just my church papers." *Review and Herald*, *Youth's Instructor*, and *Our Little Friend* continued to arrive by mail every year.

The Methodist minister went to Atlanta from time to time, always on Saturday. We had a good relationship with this wonderful man, so Mother asked if he would take us to church when he was going to Atlanta. I saw my first streetcar and said, "Look, Mama, that car is tied to that wire." I still remember how I was dressed (I think I was 6 or 7): short white pants, white dress shirt with sleeves rolled up, a necktie, and no shoes (it was summer).

In 1946 W. J. Keith and an intern visited us. Pastor Keith presented a Bible study. He was aware that I knew my Bible quite well, and he invited me to go to Atlanta and be baptized. That was the fifth time I had stepped into an Adventist church.

FARM TO COLLEGE

In 1947 I left for Southern Missionary College.

Not everything was rosy at Southern. At the time the school I went to in Georgia had only 11 grades. Most of my fellow college freshmen had attended school for 12 years. This put me at a disadvantage academically, as well as being younger than most of the other freshmen.

I was also one of the most poorly dressed students. My clothes were no big deal in high school; all the students came from farm families. But at Southern I was ashamed and embarrassed by my clothes. My secondhand, 100 percent wool, double-breasted suit was too short in the arms and legs and definitely out of style.

I was introverted, bashful, and backward. I tried to make friends. But most students didn't want this "hayseed" following them around. They told me so!

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

But the Lord has a way of looking out for His children. All freshmen were required to take a one-hour, one-semester course called "college problems," taught by Kenneth A. Wright, the college's president. Students were required to stand,

say their names, where they were from, where they had attended high school or academy, and what they were taking as their major in college.

When it was my turn, my knees were knocking as I stood. I had never spoken to that many people in my life. I told the class in my Southern drawl, "My name is Arnold Cochran; I'm from Apalachee, Georgia." The other students never let me finish. They laughed, whooped, hollered, and slapped their legs. I just stood there with a grin on my face (I still grin a lot) and finally sat down, my face red with embarrassment.

After that class everything changed. My nickname became Apalachee, which many shortened to Appie. While 50 people might have remembered the name Arnold Cochran, 500 people knew Apalachee. To this day my college friends call me one or the other.

Since I had no money coming from home, and since every college student needs a little cash, I started a shoeshine business, making \$5 to \$10 every Friday afternoon, in addition to working three or four jobs for the college. Eventually I was accepted by most of the students.

BLESSED TO BE ME

The last thing my mother said to me before she died was "I'm so glad you left this hick town and made something of yourself."

I'm thankful for my mother, who taught me the Bible and the love of God. I'm thankful for my father, who was 100 percent honest. As a merchant and a farmer, he wouldn't cheat anyone, not one iota. Three months before his sixty-fifth birthday he quit smoking and was baptized.

I'm fortunate to have two happiest days of my life. The second one took place on June 14, 1951, the day Mary Chesney, with black hair and twinkling brown eyes, became my bride.

My mother taught me the Bible, my father taught me honesty, Mary helped build my self-esteem and put up with me. My heavenly Father gave me life and made it possible for me to enjoy eternal life.

I hope that soon we will all be in our heavenly home, where every day throughout eternity we can say, "This is the happiest day of my life!"

After he graduated from Southern Missionary College, **Arnold Cochran** lived near Chattanooga, Tennessee, and spent his career in sales and sales management.

When I married my husband, I became a part of his extended family. We lived next door to his parents and his grandmother, Olivia, who lived with them. By the time I met Olivia, she was a sweet elderly woman with the beginnings of Alzheimer’s. She had broken her hip and could no longer live in her own home alone, so her house was locked up and her car sold. She had a small room at my in-laws’ house with a few pieces of her own furniture and belongings.

I never thought about the home that sat empty in town until after she died. We then had to sell her house and split the proceeds among her children. They all had homes of their own and didn’t want or need to move into Olivia’s home.

We loaded up our car with boxes and set out to sort through Olivia’s belongings and pack everything up in preparation for selling the house. As we started to organize the first room, an overwhelming sense of sadness flooded me. This woman and her husband had worked many years to pay for this house to provide a home for their family. They had boxes of photographs and keepsakes that meant enough to them that they had saved them. Olivia had dishes that were used for special events. She had silver sets and china that she had used only for her church women’s luncheons, and dishes that were brought out only for holidays. She had things she had inherited from her mother that she had cherished.

Most of these belongings would be sold or packed away, forgotten in an attic. No one wanted them. Photos that meant enough to Olivia that she had displayed them on her wall were trashed because no one knew who those people were.

This haunted me. Someone else would be using Olivia’s things; someone else would be living in this home that she had worked so hard to pay for and to make comfortable for her family. I felt such grief!

PUTTING MYSELF IN HER PLACE

I finally realized that what was bothering me was putting myself in Olivia’s place. Is this what will happen when I grow old? Would my husband and I work for years to pay off our home and acquire treasures that one day would be sold to the highest bidder? If that was the case, at what point do I stop acquiring these things? What is the point of accumulating them at all?

God allowed me to wallow in these thoughts

for a while. Then He brought a few scriptures to my mind that gave me some perspective.

Matthew 6:19-21: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

And Matthew 6:31-33: “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (ESV).*

GAINING PERSPECTIVE

There’s nothing wrong with having nice things, providing a home for yourself and your family. There’s nothing sinful in handing down memories to our children in the form of earthly treasures. The sin comes when we live our lives with treasure-storing as our main goal. The sin comes when we give a great deal of time and attention to earthly treasures and neglect storing up treasures in heaven.



I had the wrong perspective. That happens every time we take our eyes off Jesus.

I’m happy that someone is making use of those things that meant something to Olivia. Olivia was a godly woman, so I have no doubt that she would not resent a stranger using them. Her real legacy was the example she set for her family and the obedience she gave to her Lord. That’s the legacy that I want to leave. ♣

* 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.

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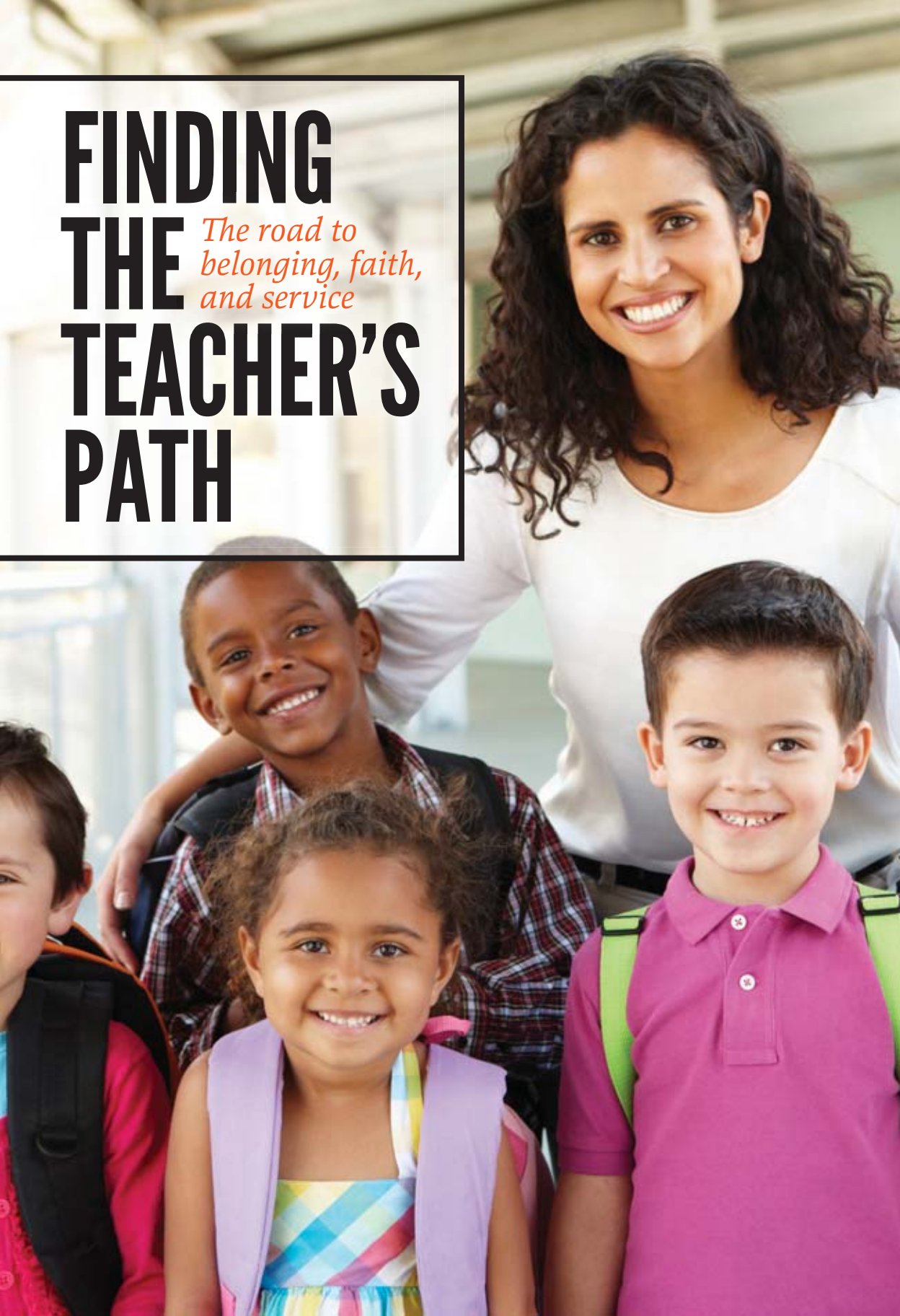
UP TREASURES

What's
the
point?



FINDING THE TEACHER'S PATH

*The road to
belonging, faith,
and service*



FAITH-ANN MCGARRELL

Thirty-nine years ago I entered the fourth grade at a small Seventh-day Adventist school. It was late September, several weeks after the official start of the school year.

BY WAY OF BEGINNING

My parents had just moved our family from Georgetown, Guyana, to a quiet, rural town in the midwest United States—from the equator to what felt like the Arctic.

Being a shy child, I did not readily adapt to the new school setting. My teachers were kind and I kept up with my work; but as one would imagine, I experienced culture shock in this my first Adventist school. As each day passed, I knew I could count on one person: Mr. G. Although not my homeroom teacher, Mr. G somehow knew my name and would merrily greet me whenever our paths crossed with a hearty “And how is Faith-Ann this morning?”

FINDING A PATH TO BELONGING

This simple act made me feel welcome when navigating the transition to a new culture seemed overwhelming, and I was certain I would never adjust.

I soon learned that Mr. G’s whole heart was intertwined with his students—from the quiet ones to those who had much to say. In *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, Ellen White notes that Christ in His ministry always remembered the children: “His large heart of love could comprehend their trials and necessities.”¹ And in *True Education*, “[Teachers]. . . should possess not only strength but breadth of mind; they should be not only whole-souled but large-hearted.”² Mr. G made it his mission to be “large-hearted” and “whole-souled” with his time, interest, and resources.

As part of what is now known as the Pathfinder Investiture Achievement program, I would later volunteer in Mr. G’s classroom—emptying trash cans, vacuuming, cleaning the chalkboards and erasers, and grading spelling and math quizzes. During the eight years that I either volunteered or worked as a reader in his classroom, he often “volunteered” me for activities I would not have pursued on my own, such as working in the school’s main office during the summer, answering the

telephone, assisting with registration, and tutoring. His favorite cheer was: “I know you can do it!”

When asked what I would study in college, I presented several choices, to which he chuckled and said, “I think you’re going to be a teacher.”

I, of course, disagreed.

My family relocated to Trinidad, and in subsequent years I found myself gravitating toward teacher-like activities: tutoring, teaching Sabbath School, and assisting teachers with grading papers. Before I knew it, I was passionately pursuing teaching as my profession. I felt “at home” in the classroom and could hardly wait to have my own.

FINDING A PATH TO FAITH

As I began my journey toward becoming a teacher, I learned that teaching comprised more than just the delivery of content. Parker Palmer, in his classic book *The Courage to Teach*, writes: “Teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or worse. As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together.”³

While an undergraduate student at an Adventist college in the Caribbean, I had the privilege of seeing this modeled by many committed professors. One memorable experience took place during the semester I enrolled in World Civilization I. I experienced the powerful impact of the teacher’s faith on students’ faith journey.

This was a dreaded course. The reading load, legendary. Professor L encouraged the class and gave suggestions for navigating the seemingly massive reading assignments; nevertheless, I was stressed out and on a path to certain failure.

Professor L began each class period by reading portions of the Gospel of John. He would engage the class in discussion about the passage shared, then he would pray for each of us. These were not hastily constructed prayers, but earnest prayers for our success and future endeavors. We were encouraged to form study teams and distribute the reading load. Some of us took the suggestion. The study team I was in decided to use John 14 as our focus, copying what we saw modeled each class period.

That semester, that course, is seared into my memory because I personally experienced the

It is more than prestige and status in a given community or enjoying the perks of the profession.

integration of faith with learning and found a path to a friendship with Jesus Christ—a friend interested in every aspect of not just the world and civilization, but of my daily concerns. While discussing world civilization, we also wrestled with God’s plan for humanity, and that led to thoughts about God’s plans for each of us individually. The Bible and prayer became more than a collection of words or eloquent utterances.

We prayed more for each other during those study sessions than we did to pass the course: we prayed about our families (some were far away from home with little to no support), our finances, and future hopes and aspirations. For my remaining undergraduate years, through graduate and postgraduate education, and even in my professional life, principles applied during that semester—personal and intercessory prayer, Bible reading and claiming God’s promises, and sharing the workload—have helped strengthen my faith walk and personal friendship with Jesus.

FINDING A PATH TO SERVICE

And so I became a teacher! One Sabbath while attending services at Pioneer Memorial church on the campus of Andrews University, I spotted a familiar profile. It was Mr. G! I had the privilege of “surprising” him with the news that I had indeed become a teacher. He laughed and said with confidence: “I knew it!”

Teaching is a sacred act. For the Seventh-day Adventist teacher, it is not just about completing lesson plans, grading student work, or supervising students in various activities; it is more than prestige and status in a given community or enjoying the perks of the profession. Instead, it is living simultaneously in the present and the future.⁴ Teachers “consider the highest good of their students as individuals, the duties that life will lay on them, the service it requires, and the preparation demanded.”⁵ Teachers’ work and calling involves guarding the

condition of their own soul, for this has a marked impact on the lives of those within their care.

In *Educating for Eternity* George Knight reminds us that “the primary aim of Christian education in the school, the home, and the church is to lead people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.”⁶ This is not a humanly directed task; it requires partnership with the divine—God, through the Holy Spirit. To partner with the divine is a “noble work”⁷—one of building character, both teacher and student; and it is work that “cannot be completed in this life, but will be continued in the life to come.”⁸

And yet, this is what Adventist, Christian educators are called to do every day! Individually and collectively, we engage in thinking about how best to prepare our students to live in this world, while anticipating a future world. The task may seem difficult and overwhelming; but we have help. We have a cheerleader who says, “You can do it!” In Jeremiah God says, “Call to me, and I will answer you” (Jer. 33:3); and we’re reminded: “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all” (James 1:5).

Each school year, regardless of what grade level I teach, I see students who remind me of myself: looking to belong, seeking faith, or navigating a path to service. Many, like me, find their way because of countless committed, dedicated Adventist educators like Mr. G and Professor L—educators who inspire hope, model large-hearted service, and see their students as God sees each of us: as characters fit for the kingdom.⁹

With whole-souled, large-hearted devotion, we can each continue to grow in Him “more fully to reflect . . . the light of the knowledge of His glory”¹⁰ through all eternity. 🍀

¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), p. 179.

² Ellen G. White, *True Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2000), p. 171.

³ Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), p. 2.

⁴ E. G. White, *True Education*, p. 174.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ George R. Knight, *Educating for Eternity: A Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Education* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2016), p. 70.

⁷ E. G. White, *True Education*, p. 189.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903, 1952) p. 22.

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OCTOBER 2019

It's been 201 years since William Miller quietly became convicted from Scripture that Jesus Christ would soon return to earth. That's a long time, especially when you consider it's been 502 years since Martin Luther not-so-quietly nailed his own convictions onto a church door. (How is it possible that the Adventist reformation has lived two fifths of the Protestant Reformation? And that the Protestant Reformation has now stretched to more than 70 sevens?)

It's been 175 years this month since the Great Disappointment. Jesus did not break through the clouds, leaving the first Adventists weeping and weeping until the day dawned. One hundred seventy-five years is a long time. Raise your hand if you were an Adventist living in October 1844 who thought we'd still be here in October 2019. That's what I thought.

It would be understandable for some Adventists to struggle with apathy today (even as Adventists today are probably glad they got the opportunity to be born). While our denomination continues to be one of the fastest growing on earth, these recent statistics from North America are sobering:

- 30 percent of North American members attend Sabbath School
- 50 percent of North American members attend church
- 16 to 26 percent of North American members return tithes or give offerings
- 50 percent of Adventist schools in North America have closed in the past 20 years
- 97 percent of North American members have not led a person to Christ (apart from family)*

What's happening? How are we doing?

And what's the antidote to apathy?

A global crisis? Certainly, if there were worldwide or even nationwide devastation, people would be driven to their Bibles and to their faith communities, as they were after September 11.

Many have experienced smaller-scale crises of faith, resulting in a stronger faith. (Indeed, when Adventists leave the church, then return, the leading reason, at 90 percent, is biblical preaching.)

But it shouldn't have to take a crisis, nor should we wish for one. There is a better way to renew our faith.

First, we must clear out the bad stuff, even some of the good stuff, from our lives. "The first step in spiritual renewal," writes Jim Cymbala, "is demolition." If we find that we have no hunger for God and His Word, we might be too filled with everything else.

Second, we must retrace the same journey as our spiritual ancestors: entering into the Scriptures for ourselves. Many years ago as a young adult, I had gotten apathetic and frustrated with the Adventist Church. I knew all the Adventist beliefs; what I didn't know well enough was the foundation of those beliefs, the Word of God itself. Taking a friend's advice, I read through the Bible in a month . . . and never really stopped. My apathy melted away, replaced by an unshakable confidence in God's Word.

This is the simple experience of the earliest Christians, the earliest Protestants, the earliest Adventists. It can be our experience, too—in October 2019—as Jesus prepares to break through the clouds. 🍂

*From presentations given by Lee Venden at Glacier View Ranch, January 6-9, 2019.

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THE LIFE
OF FAITH
ANDY
NASH



**WE MUST RETRACE
THE SAME JOURNEY
AS OUR SPIRITUAL
ANCESTORS:
ENTERING INTO THE
SCRIPTURES FOR
OURSELVES.**



BEGINNINGS AND REST

*Linking yesterday
to now*

LEN M. ARCHER

The words *creation* and *Sabbath* evoke the ideas of beginnings and rest. The dictionary defines creation as “the action or process of bringing something into existence.”

THE MATTER OF SABBATH

For millennia the Sabbath has been regarded as a day (or time) of religious observance and abstinence from work. Usually viewed as a weekly activity, the practice of Sabbaths has included the commemoration of many

events—weekly, monthly, yearly, and beyond.

The weekly Sabbath has been associated primarily with Jews, and now with Seventh-day Adventists. But almost all religious groups and human societies incorporate cycles of work and rest, activity and cessation from their regular routines to participate in religious or spiritual exercises.

In the beginning, a divine act of creation spawned new life on Planet Earth—fruitfulness and multiplication and a program for reproduction and continued creation. Such was the blessed reality of our Genesis beginnings (Gen. 1). Even in sin-blighted conditions in which death and disruption have injected themselves into God’s original schedule, life flows on in rhythmic periods: living and dying now function together, couched in a pattern of work and rest, a cycle of rigor and retirement, service and surrender. In an awkward sense, decay and decomposition fuel new birth and growth, creation and re-creation. Death and life somehow seem inseparable entities now, contributing to or detracting from the richness of existence.

THE ORDER OF SABBATH

At first Sabbath was entirely unrelated to tiredness and decomposition: there is no exhaustion in Genesis 1 and 2. But in Exodus there is a command to rest. The command is based on two important principles: beginnings and new beginnings; life’s birth and Israel’s rebirth.

The first directive honoring the Sabbath was to commemo-

rate the seventh day and keep it holy in honor of the God who created all things in earth's first week: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth. . . . Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Ex. 20:11).

Deuteronomy's reiteration of that first directive commands to keep the Sabbath day as an acknowledgment of what God had done for His people and what they must do for others. "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt" (Deut. 5:15). Creation and Sabbath are inextricably linked. The creation command was to take care of the earth, to work it and take care of it, to protect it and maintain it (Gen. 2:15), which requires active participation in the preservation of God's "very good" creation (Gen. 1:31)—a process in which humans and the Sabbath are inextricably linked.

At AdventHealth University our mission motto is "developing skilled professionals who live the healing values of Christ." The work of healing is the work of redemption and restoration.

Redemption is essential to the biblical concept of Sabbath. It is a term of commerce in which the lost is restored for a price, bought back in a restoration that brings about a new beginning. The art of healing and living whole is intertwined with Deuteronomy's restorative understanding of the Sabbath—the re-creation of a once perfect creation.

In the Sabbath, on a fallen earth, we acknowledge God again as the one who, in the beginning, commanded light to shine out of darkness (2 Cor. 4:6), be it the light of hope out of despair, or of wholeness after failure, tragedy, disappointment. The Sabbath is a place in which the destitute and broken can feel whole again.

Daryl Tol, president and CEO of AdventHealth's Central Division, describes the "personal transformation and wholeness characterized by health care as the driving force of the organization." For him, this is the ethos of health care—transformation of life in all our spheres by making whole again. The Sabbath is about restoration, beginning again; and that is what healing is about.

In a weekly memo to university students and staff, AdventHealth University president Edwin Hernandez wrote: "To create light, we—you and I—need to create a more enlightened world. A world enlightened by education. A world enlightened by courageous and uplifting faith. A world

Sabbath's pause and renewal offers a superior way of pointing to the Creator who is the Savior of re-creation.

that encourages such professionals as you to live out your values. To commit to caring and advancing compassion in our world. . . . to create communities of fairness, solidarity, justice, where caring for each other and our environment are part of our shared passion and collective efforts. The future Advent hope that we hold so dearly needs to inspire and inform what we do each and every day."

THE JESUS OF SABBATH

When Jesus walked on this earth His primary activity was that of healing and the restoration of life, especially on the Sabbath. There are seven recorded examples of miracles of healing He conducted on the Sabbath, to the ire of the religious hierarchy. Healing the man with the deformed hand (Mark 3:1-6); a hunchback woman (Luke 13:10-13); a man at a public pool (John 5:1-18); a mentally ill person (Mark 1:21-28); Peter's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31); a man born blind (John 9:1-16); and another man with abnormal swelling (Luke 14:1-6).

Jesus' acts pointed to His own, ample understanding of the Sabbath, one that involved the true meaning of worship and praise of the Creator. For the incense of praise and worship is more than sitting in pews, making music, and listening to the spoken word. In performing His miracles Jesus demonstrated the true elements of worship: mercy, compassion, and kindness; elements that celebrate creation's wonders and the Creator's love.

Through Him we understand the Sabbath's purpose as a day of re-creation and renewal, most wholly achieved through the uplifting of those who most need the lift; through re-engaging with fellow humanity for praise and worship after a harried week; through reminding ourselves of the "Egypt" from which He is constantly delivering

The language of love and caring, excitement and joy, is the language of Creation and Sabbath.

us; and through pausing to savor as much as possible the varied aspects of the wonderful works of creation. In a world in need of healing, Sabbath's pause and renewal offers a superior way of pointing to the Creator, who is the Savior of re-creation.

THE LANGUAGE OF SABBATH

The language of love and caring, excitement and joy, is the language of Creation and Sabbath: it flows from the children of God shouting for joy (Job 38:7); it is heard in the psalmist's celebration of his song for the Sabbath (Ps. 92); and it echoes in the exultation of crowds rejoicing at Jesus' Sabbath healing exploits (Luke 13:17).

This, then, is the language of true worship. And the language of Psalm 146, acknowledging the scope of God's goodness, care, and blessing, implies a connection of such language with the Genesis creation: "God made heaven and earth; he created the sea and everything else"; God is also ministering to society's most vulnerable, those who are poor, imprisoned, and blind (verses 5-10, CEV).¹ Indeed, the psalmist lists beneficiaries of God's goodness as "everyone who falls" (verse 8, CEV), and describes Him as looking after strangers, defending orphans' and widows' rights, giving "justice to the poor and food to the hungry," and routing the wicked (verses 7, 9). This God of care for the weak, this God of life and wholeness, this God of Creation and rest for the weary, is his God. In the end his enthusiasm for his God is unrestrainable: "The Lord God of Zion will rule forever! Shout praises to the Lord!" (verse 10, CEV).

By contrast, the prophet Isaiah (1:10-17) points out the failings of his people in worship—not because their songs weren't the right melodies, or their sacrifices were out of order according to prescribed ritual. Rather, it was their violence

against the widows and orphans (verse 17), their evil against the vulnerable of society that provoked God's anger. No matter how much they prayed, the Lord wouldn't listen while His creation was forgotten, neglected, or abused. For Isaiah, Sabbath worship and day-to-day caring went together: the climactic blessings of the Sabbath followed by worshippers' dedication to serving the needy (see Isa. 58).

AN EXAMPLE OF AND SUMMARY ON SABBATHKEEPING

On September 14, 2019, the Forest Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church embarked on a day of service. All services were suspended as church members donated thousands of dollars and food and clothing and fanned out through the community, providing services to numerous agencies that serve those in need. It was a demonstration of worship too infrequently practiced by those who profess the name of Christ.

In the end, worship—Sabbath worship or other—that is disconnected from justice, fairness, and healing, and that ignores oppression, is a distortion of true worship, and is abhorrent to God. For Jesus, "the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law."² For the Sabbath is a celebration of wholeness extending from earth's first creation to God's day of final and total liberation. We honor Him who is Creator, Healer, Redeemer, and Restorer by our celebration of rest.

Placed together, Creation and the Sabbath are a combined acknowledgment of our beginnings, our journey, and our responsibility to the God of our life who is Lord of all the universe. Keeping it expresses our acknowledgment to stand with God on behalf of each created being; to join with Him in lifting the fallen, healing the sick, feeding the poor, protecting the vulnerable and stranger, supporting the mentally and physically disabled, and working justly and mercifully to restore the image and glory of the Creator in all of His wounded creation. ✦

¹ Scripture quotations identified as CEV are from the Contemporary English Version. Copyright © American Bible Society 1991, 1995. Used by permission.

² Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898, 1940), p. 206.

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CONVENIENT AMNESIA

TAKE ONE.

*Checking in with the
Urban Dictionary*

JASON CRAIG

But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name,' then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it" (Jer. 20:9).*

I'm no psychologist—that's my wife's career—but the phenomenon of amnesia intrigues me. The prospect of forgetting long periods of time is somewhat troubling. Actually, the prospect of forgetting *short* periods of time troubles me as well. As I'm sure it seriously troubles her sometimes.

FOR EXAMPLE

For example, I recently went upstairs and forgot why I was

there. My wife's professional journals and textbooks give her phrases to use on me: "retrograde amnesia," "post-traumatic amnesia," and "dissociative amnesia."

Of course, these phrases were not invented to use on her husband. They were developed to describe a variety of illnesses. Nevertheless, I think I may have a contribution to make to her profession—at least, to her phrase collection. For what I couldn't find in her textbook sources was the phenomenon of *convenient amnesia*. You won't find this term in any textbooks or journals, or in your venerated Merriam Webster. But you will in the Urban Dictionary. According to my Urban Dictionary, convenient amnesia is the intentional forgetting of certain facts to twist things so that you cannot be proven wrong.

VALIDATION OF TERMS

While this definition may be available only in the Urban Dictionary, the phenomenon it describes has existed at least since the seventh to sixth century B.C. times of weeping prophet Jeremiah. Here he is: "But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name,' then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire" (Jer. 20:9). Jeremiah is clearly describing the reality of convenient amnesia. And what do you know? He's trying to forget conveniently about business he's got with his God.

But how does anyone succeed in not remembering God? Indeed, how does anyone explicitly choose and plan to forget

God? Yet here we have Jeremiah musing over plans of forgetting God, forgetting the things of God, forgetting that God Himself touched him on the mouth and told him, “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth” (Jer. 1:9). As a matter fact, “before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (verse 5).

After all God has done for Jeremiah, Jeremiah still reflects on the possibility of forgetting Him. Perhaps, though, we should not be too hard on Jeremiah before looking ourselves up in a memory mirror. We may ourselves try to forget God, not only when things are bad, but also sometimes when life is good. Thankfully, the Lord has provided principles to be learned from Jeremiah’s potential affliction, that may help us in these times.

PRESCRIPTION FOR HEALING

Because this affliction is a spiritual one, its solution needs to be a spiritual one: matters of the spirit make sense to the spiritual evaluator (see 1 Cor. 2:14). Here, then, is a three-part prescription of spiritual principles for curing this spiritual affliction.

Remember how it used to be: instead of being mad at God, sufferers should turn to remember how things used to be between them and God; what God said at the start of the relationship. Jeremiah’s lament about God’s deceiving him, about everyone’s making him a laughingstock (Jer. 20:7), implies that he has already forgotten something important. His Lord might well reply to his complaint, *Isn’t this precisely what I promised you, Jeremiah? Remember?* “You shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you; and you shall call to them, but they will not answer you” (Jer. 7:27). *Remember that, Jeremiah?*

Haven’t we all met in the mirror, perhaps, an individual who began a ministry for the Lord with great expectations, only to find that the plentiful harvest turns out not to be their lot? There may indeed be such a harvest; but not in the Lord’s plans for them. Such times demand that we remember our actual assignment, planting the seed, perhaps, and God’s commitment to be responsible for the rest.

Remember who your commissioner is: God, not we, defines our ministry and message: Jeremiah’s complaining about his work assignment may be strongly familiar (which is no validation): “And

Jeremiah’s complaint may be familiar, which is no validation.

you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house will go into captivity; and you will enter Babylon, and there you will die, and there you will be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have falsely prophesied” (Jer. 20:6). That’s Jeremiah’s work.

How much would he have preferred, “Ten thousand will fall next to you, but it won’t touch you” (see Ps. 91:7)! Or “Coming out with your hands up!” Or “Your breakthrough is on the way” or “Everyone in your row is gonna be millionaires!” Sorry, Brother Jerry! You get to do “Doomsday!” Sorry, teacher, preacher, servant of God—“Fire and brimstone!” is legit too! You just need to listen to your Great Commissioner. It will settle and impel you quite enough.

Give your heart a chance. Jeremiah admits this: when he determines not to carry out his assignment, he is forced to concede that “in my heart it becomes like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it” (Jer. 20:9).

So preacher, teacher, doctor, lawyer, postgrad, first-year student or otherwise, give your heart a chance: your God put something in you—not for you to hide it and die, but for you to share it and live; you and many besides who hear from God through you.

So forget it, dear child of God: forget about convenient amnesia! 🗡️

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Jason Craig is a student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He and his wife, Krissy, preach from the same text (see pp. 58, 59).

COMING IN HOT

TAKE TWO.

Can we be silent in the presence of injustice?

"But if I say, 'I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name,' his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot" (Jer. 20:9).

KRYSELLE BAPTISTE-CRAIG

Through the years, decades, and centuries that the United States of America has suffered its racial divides, one astonishing element of its history has been the deafening silence of many who self-identify as Christian. God's calls to justice through His ancient prophets, for the stranger, the orphan, the widow, the oppressed (Jer. 22:3), clearly show where He stands with regard to this nation's historic systems of human oppression and exploitation—slavery, sharecropping, prison camps, segregation, discrimination, devaluation, and privilege. God's voice has resounded in echo of His demand through Moses to "let my people go" (Ex. 5:1; 7:16; 8:1, 20, 21; 9:1, 13; 10:3, 4). It appears that our dominant culture's acknowledgment of the presence of oppression is finally reaching the status of being politically correct.

The impetus to dismantle the systems that perpetuate oppression is present, though it seems to have become socially acceptable among many Christians to have "a form of godliness" that acknowledges past injustices, while "denying its power" (2 Tim. 3:5) by not working to close the gaps of inequality.

In the current climate, absent any major initiative toward creating a racially inclusive society, absent also major public programs for active learning about "others," fear may now be an element of communal sympathy; ignorance a socially accepted standard; insecurity an insulation from responsibility; confusion an excuse for inaction; and obliviousness the argument for institutional absolution.

Letting go and letting God has been difficult work for today's Jeremiahs.

A CHALLENGING CALLING

Their ancient model, the prophet Jeremiah, struggled with his calling. It made him a social outcast, living in perpetual discomfort as God's Word through him assailed the status quo. Jeremiah wanted



White supremacists clash with police in Charlottesville, VA August 12, 2017

to protect himself from the scorn of those who knew that his proclamations for social justice were right but undermined their standard of living.

It must be difficult to know that the only thing separating you from comfort and acceptance is your mouth. Perhaps this is why many Christians keep silent on the subject of race.

But we can learn two things from Jeremiah's dilemma that may aid in any quest for racial reconciliation within American Christianity:

First, we have an active choice: when Jeremiah contemplates silencing the Word, he recognizes that he has options. He may choose to obey God and speak His Word, or to rebel against God's wishes. Jeremiah could choose to keep fighting a losing battle with God; or he could let go and let God use him for His divine purposes.

As followers of Christ in a world that needs inspirational moral leadership in the area of justice, Christians too must decide whether to hold back or let God use us: to embrace differences in Christ; to become uncomfortable in the name of truth; to bless the oppressed. Or we can continue protecting ourselves from ridicule by slinking back, holding our peace, and muttering prayers to heaven while the fire of the Word reminds us how thinly veiled is our hypocrisy and how anxious God is to bring His relevant message through us.

Second, wrestling and struggle build muscle: Jeremiah's wrestling was necessary for his own strengthening. The temptation to abandon God

led him to seek God in prayers of complaint. His conversations with God led to a conversion moment in which he resolved to choose God's way and let the fire of God's Word flame out on what God knew needed burning.

CALLED TO ACTION

God's Word is indeed like fire. It necessitates action, a response from the human heart. The Word comes in hot to burn out the selfishness and superiority we've learned and inherited. We all have the choice to allow the process to refine us as people of God, or to let it define us as rejecting His love. The social challenge American Christianity faces is whether or not to love one another as Jesus does; whether or not to relate as God requires.

And what does God require? "To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Fairness, caring, and meek obedience is God's requirement for all. Discrimination is a hot topic. But God has fire for burning it away, purging the guilty of their dross and bringing us all out shining as Heaven's gold. Being part of His better world begins where we are in the one we occupy. And there's no spiritual sense in waiting until later to live for Christ, show His love, and make our corner of His universe a better corner because He is in that space with us. ♣

Kryselle Baptiste-Craig is passionate about encouraging authentic relationships through the power of Christ. She and her husband, Jason, preach from the same text (see pp. 56, 57).

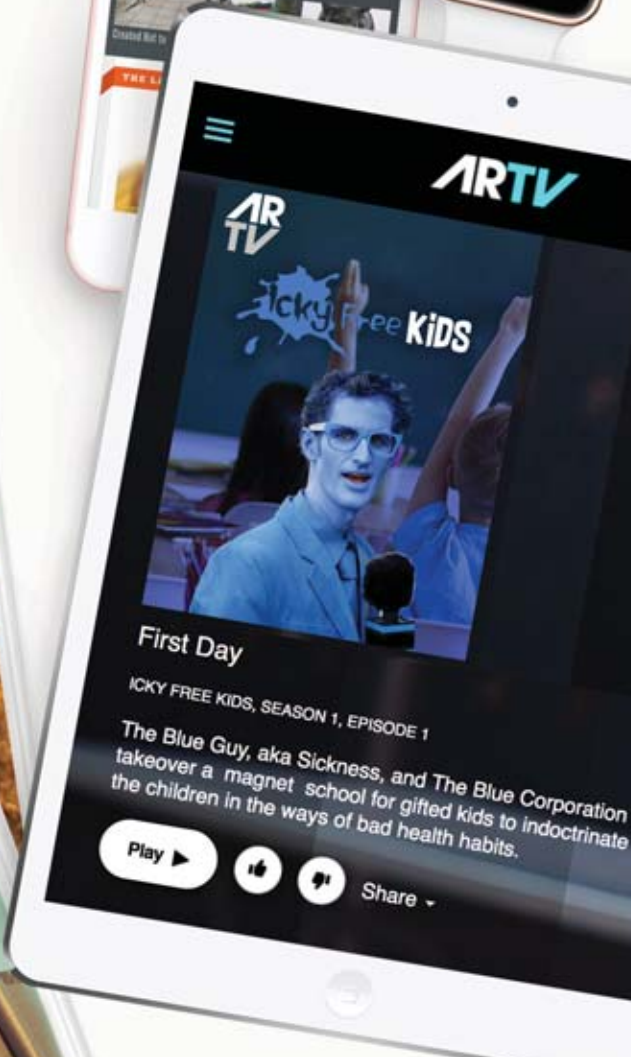
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PETER N. LANDLESS ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

MEAL FREQUENCY

Does the number of daily meals I eat really matter?

Q: They say meals should be eaten five hours apart, but I can't get enough food at each meal (three times daily) to get the calories needed for my health. I used to eat four meals a day, didn't overeat, and did well. Should I return to that? Any long-term health effects? Help!

A: Not everyone is able to fit into guidelines designed for the public in general. Individual variations are real, and circumstances differ even with the same individual during the course of a lifetime. One size rarely fits all; so you can and should consider what will work best for you without causing long-term harm.

Your optimal eating pattern and meal frequency depend on who you are. Do you have any medical conditions? Are you overweight or underweight? Have you had abdominal surgeries? Are you under or over 60? Are you otherwise healthy and following a healthful lifestyle? Consider the following issues as you make your decision:

Weight Management: Reporting on 50,000 participants in the Adventist Health Study-2, researchers observed healthier weight in individuals who ate fewer than three meals per day; regularly had a hearty, healthy breakfast; made breakfast or lunch the largest meal of the day (if they ate more than two meals per day); and had an overnight fast of 18 hours. The two factors associated with higher weight were eating more than three meals—or meals and snacks—per day and making supper the largest meal of the day. Whatever the meal pattern, people tended to increase their weight year by year until they reached 60, then lost weight each year afterward; but both the amount of weight gain and loss were related to eating frequency and pattern. Choice makes a difference over time.

Diabetes: Studies show that fewer meals are associated with better overall blood sugar control, and eating the largest meal early in the day lowers average daily blood sugar levels.

Food	Calories (kcal)	Protein (grams)	Total Carbs (grams) including fiber	Fat (grams)	Fiber (grams)
Nuts (1 cup whole almonds)	~ 820	30	31	71	17
Nuts (100 grams cashew, raw)	~ 550	18	33	44	3
Haas Avocado (medium)	~ 240	3	13	22	10
Olives (100 grams)	~ 81	1	6	7	3
Seeds (1 cup pumpkin)	~ 285	12	34	12	< 1
Brown rice (1 cup, long-grain, cooked)	~ 215	5	45	4	4
Lentils (1 cup, cooked, no oil)	~ 230	18	40	1	16
Coconut cream (1 cup)	~ 790	9	16	83	5
Quinoa (1 cup, cooked, no oil)	~ 220	8	39	4	5

Hunger and Satiety: Improved satiety and reduced hunger accompany less-frequent eating and fewer processed foods. Longer periods of no-calorie ingestion appear to also induce the cellular cleanup process called autophagy, in which your body's cells remove unnecessary or dysfunctional components for recycling, cell replacement, and rejuvenation. So if you can do well with fewer meals per day, you may have better long-term outcomes.

So here's a suggestion: try a hearty, whole-food breakfast that has adequate protein and healthy fats, and is low in water content and high in nutritional value and caloric density (i.e., high calories in a small amount of food), as a great day-starter. This ensures enough calories without having to overeat and still stave off hunger for five to six hours. Healthy calorie-dense foods include nuts, avocado, coconut cream, seeds, dried fruit, and whole grains. Get specific advice from your health-care practitioner, and see if this approach suits you given your specific health situation.

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it to God's glory! 🙏

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



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OUR MYSTERIOUS GOD

We serve a mysterious God. The apostle Paul described God's wisdom as "a mystery that has been hidden" (1 Cor. 2:7). From this and beyond I have drawn three conclusions: (1) God is too wise to be mistaken; (2) His mystery includes His frequent choice of flawed humanity to demonstrate who He really is; and (3) many saints continue to be consistent sinners because preachers have not taught their congregations the mystery and wisdom of God as it is explained in Scripture.

We preach a lot about grace, and so we should. Grace allowed the children of Israel to wear the same clothes and shoes during the 40 years of their wilderness wandering (Deut. 8:4; 29:5).

We preach about God's unconditional love. That's particularly relevant and important given these days of violence, homegrown terrorists, dehumanization of immigrants, rising racism, abusive political rhetoric, and public attitudes that degrade men and women made in the image of God. God's ways are not ours:

We preach about God's second chance, but often forget that His forgiveness extends to at least 70 times seven (Matt. 18:22).

We preach our 28 Fundamental Beliefs, because "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). These truths are like music to our ears, but they lack the melodies, harmonies, and dynamics that define the reality of our God if they're not seen in the light of His character.

We serve a God who is compassionate toward sinners, but who sometimes convicts saints so deeply that it's like a knife plunged into our conscience.

We serve a God who sometimes answers prayers with a resounding "No!"

We serve a God who will never give us more than we can bear, but gave His only Son more than He could bear; so much so that it broke His heart and killed Him just so we might live. We feel, from personal experience, that God sometimes allows us more than we can bear: as when children are murdered and lawmakers do nothing to curb the plague of guns that kill them.

We serve a God who instructed Moses to write that no illegitimate person can enter the assembly of God, even to the tenth generation (Deut. 23:2-5). Yet God sent His Son, born of a woman, without a known earthly father (as are many who love and serve Him today), whom His own people accused of being illegitimate (John 8:41).

We serve a God who promised to lead us into green pastures, but He does not prevent us from walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

We serve a God who told Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah. When Abraham obeyed, at the very last second God sent an angel to stop him. But when God's sinless Son was on a cross at Calvary as an innocent sacrifice for sin, there was no hand to stay His crucifixion, thereby assuring our salvation.

O what a mighty, mysterious God we serve! Angels bow before Him; heaven and earth adore Him. How can we not love and obey Him? ♣

CURE FOR THE COMMON LIFE
HYVETH WILLIAMS



GOD PROMISED TO LEAD US INTO GREEN PASTURES, BUT HE DOES NOT PREVENT US FROM WALKING THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

Hyveth Williams is a professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.



HARRY ANDERSON ©REVIEW & HERALD

READY FOR JESUS

Insights from a heavenly vision

This excerpt concerns Ellen White's vision at Oswego, New York, in June 1855. We've placed her comments in an interview format.—Editors.

Tell us, Ellen, your first impressions of the vision.

I saw that we should not put off the coming of the Lord. Said the angel: "Prepare, prepare, for what is coming upon the earth. Let your works correspond with your faith."

I saw that the mind must be stayed upon God, and that our influence should tell for God and His truth. We cannot honor the

Lord when we are careless and indifferent. We cannot glorify Him when we are desponding. We must be in earnest to secure our own soul's salvation, and to save others. . . .

Perhaps you could describe some of the things you saw.

I saw the beauty of heaven. I heard the angels sing their rapturous songs, ascribing praise, honor, and glory to Jesus. I could then realize something of the wondrous love of the Son of God. He left all the glory, all the honor which He had in heaven, and was so interested for our salvation that He patiently and meekly bore every indignity and slight which [humanity] could heap upon Him.

He was wounded, smitten, and bruised; He was stretched on Calvary's cross and suffered the most agonizing death to save us from death, that we might be washed in His blood and be raised up to live with Him in the mansions He is preparing for us, to enjoy the light and glory of heaven, to hear the angels sing, and to sing with them.

I saw that all heaven is interested in our salvation; and shall we be indifferent? Shall we be careless, as though it were a small matter whether we are saved or lost? Shall we slight the sacrifice that has been made for us? Some have done this. They have trifled with offered mercy, and the frown of God is upon them.

So what do we risk if we fail to take advantage of God's offer?

God's Spirit will not always be grieved. It will depart if grieved a little longer. After all has been

done that God could do to save [humanity], if they show by their lives that they slight Jesus' offered mercy, death will be their portion, and it will be dearly purchased.

It will be a dreadful death; for they will have to feel the agony that Christ felt upon the cross to purchase for them the redemption which they have refused. And they will then realize what they have lost—eternal life and the immortal inheritance. The great sacrifice that has been made to save souls shows us their worth. . . .

Tell us more about how we should prepare.

I have seen an angel standing with scales in his hands weighing the thoughts and interest of the people of God, especially the young. In one scale were the thoughts and interest tending heavenward; in the other were the thoughts and interest tending to earth. And in this scale were thrown all the reading of storybooks, thoughts of dress and show, vanity, pride, etc. . . .

The scale filled with thoughts of earth, vanity, and pride quickly went down. . . . The one with the thoughts and interest tending to heaven went quickly up as the other went down, and oh, how light it was!

I can relate this as I saw it; but never can I give the solemn and vivid impression stamped upon my mind, as I saw the angel with the scales weighing the thoughts and interest of the people of God. Said the angel: "Can such enter heaven? No, no, never. Tell them the hope they now possess is vain, and unless they speedily repent, and obtain salvation, they must perish."

A form of godliness will not save any. All must have a deep and living experience. This alone will save them in the time of trouble. . . .

The young, as well as those who are older, will be required to give a reason for their hope. But the mind, designed by God for better things, formed to serve Him perfectly, has dwelt upon foolish things, instead of eternal interests. . . . Those who give up the mind to be diverted with foolish stories and idle tales have the imagination fed, but the brilliancy of God's Word is eclipsed to them. The mind is led directly from God. The interest in His precious Word is destroyed.

A book has been given us to guide our feet through the perils of this dark world to heaven.

Those who are willing to make any sacrifice for eternal life will have it.

That's interesting: what's the significance of this book?

It tells us how we can escape the wrath of God, and also tells of the sufferings of Christ for us, the great sacrifice that has been made that we might be saved and enjoy the presence of God forever. . . .

The Word of God tells us how we may become perfect Christians and escape the seven last plagues. But [those whose minds were diverted by foolish stories and idle tales] took no interest to find this out. Other things diverted the mind, idols were cherished by them, and God's Holy Word was neglected and slighted. God has been trifled with by professed Christians, and when His Holy Word shall judge them in the last day, they will be found wanting. That Word which they have neglected for foolish storybooks tries their lives.

That is the standard; their motives, words, works, and the manner in which they use their time are all compared with the written Word of God; and if they come short then, their cases are decided forever. . . .

What one character trait would you say is indispensable to our salvation?

None will enter heaven without making a sacrifice. A spirit of self-denial and sacrifice should be cherished. . . .

Those who are willing to make any sacrifice for eternal life will have it; and it will be worth suffering for, worth crucifying self for, and sacrificing every idol for. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory swallows up everything and eclipses every earthly pleasure. ♣

This excerpt was taken from *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, pp. 123-126. Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

AUDIO MAN FOR PRESIDENTS AND PREACHER



CARTER REPORT ADVENTIST HEROES

Not everyone can do the audio for presidents of the United States of America. But Robert Ludwig has had that honor. When John Carter received a call from Bob who offered to volunteer his services, he was unaware of Ludwig's sterling credentials. But John was soon to

discover that Bob Ludwig was among the best in the industry. Bob Ludwig did the audio for The Carter Report at the famous Shrine Auditorium, downtown Los Angeles. The year was 1990, and it was the start of a beautiful friendship...

Bob Ludwig is well-known and respected in Hollywood. But his interests extend far beyond Tinseltown. He has a heart for God and evangelism. Bob had faith in God for many years but after the evangelistic campaign at the Shrine Auditorium he asked John Carter to baptize him. This took place in the ocean at Malibu. As Pastor Carter immersed him, a large wave rolled over them. But God had far more exciting things in store.



Bob Ludwig toiled as a volunteer across Russia, Ukraine and beyond.

great was the crowd the Kiev Government declared a state of emergency and closed down the local metro station. Pastor Carter looked out upon a sea of faces as he preached the Word. Not a soul stirred, no one coughed, a silence as sacred as it was profound filled the cavernous place.

Bob was there every night at the controls, year after year, city after city — across Russia, Ukraine and beyond. He came and toiled as a volunteer, refusing to accept his regular payment. The Carter Report that supports the global mission of the Church, is a self-supporting ministry. We pay all the bills. Volunteers like Bob Ludwig, a professional par excellence, make it possible for us to do what Christ has called us to do. We exist for one purpose: **to glorify God as we work to save lost souls for His everlasting Kingdom.** Bob Ludwig, the audio man who was chosen to do sound for presidents of the United States, is a volunteer member of our team and our dear friend. ❖

Twenty-four thousand souls had attended the opening program at the Shrine in multiple sessions to accommodate the crowds. This had taken place in downtown Los Angeles, a city renowned for its traffic and hard to impress attitudes. Greater crowds, however, were to pack auditoriums across Russia, Ukraine, and in other countries as Pastor Carter and his team proclaimed the Everlasting Gospel. Bob Ludwig was there to ensure that the multitudes heard the message loud and clear.

Mr. Ludwig stood outside the Kiev Palace of Sport when and where 100,000 souls were turned away. There just was no more room inside. Every seat was filled and people stood shoulder to shoulder. So

We proudly proclaim that Robert Ludwig is an outstanding Carter Report Adventist Hero.

You may view Pastor John Carter on 3ABN, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, ROKU, SAFE TV, HOPE Ukraine, Cross.TV, Vimeo, YouTube, PLUS 112 NEW TV stations across America at 11:00 a.m. Sundays (check the CW Plus Network). Also tune in on 3ABN Radio. Visit our website: www.cartereport.org

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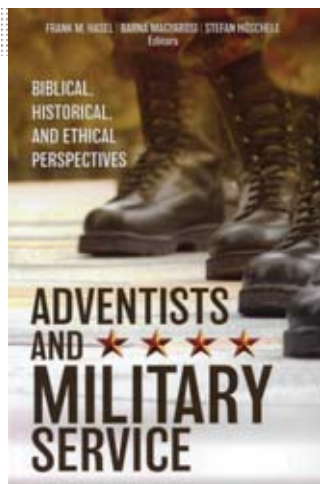
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CLOSER LOOK



ADVENTISTS IN TIMES OF WAR

Frank M. Hasel, Barna Magyarosi, and Stefan Höschele, eds., *Adventists and Military Service: Biblical, Historical, and Ethical Perspectives*, Safeliz, 2019, 225 pages. Softcover, EUR14.99. Reviewed by Denis Kaiser, assistant professor of church history, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

Seventh-day Adventists are generally known for their commitment to peace, reconciliation, and nonviolence. Around the world Adventist conscripts have tried to walk the line between serving their country and honoring God's commandments in the spirit of Christ. They have tried to serve in noncombatant capacities and to rest on the seventh-day Sabbath, even if that meant being court-martialed for their religious convictions.

Changes in the political landscape, financial circumstances, and ethical perceptions during the past 40 years have nevertheless influenced how Adventists perceive service in the military, particularly in times of war.

The book *Adventists and Military Service: Biblical, Historical, and Ethical Perspectives*, coedited by three Adventist scholars,

RECLAIMING HISTORY FOR THE BETTER

1919: *The Untold Story of Adventism's Struggle With Fundamentalism*, Michael Campbell, Pacific Press, 2019. Softcover, US\$14.99 (Kindle edition, \$7.99). Reviewed by Stephen Chavez, *Adventist Review*.

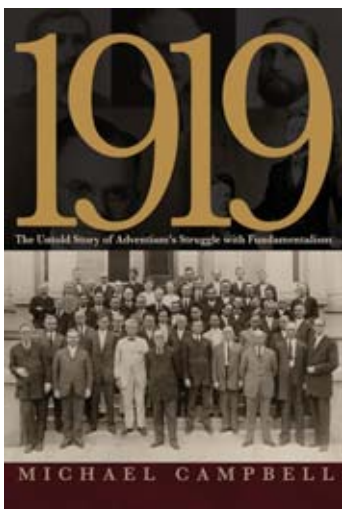
Even if Adventist church history is not on your list of favorite things, you owe it to yourself (and to your fellow church members) to pick up this small but powerful volume and find out what happened in the church 100 years ago, and why echoes from that event still reverberate today.

A little historical context: Ellen White died in 1915. Almost exactly four years after her death a group of Adventist scholars, administrators, and pastors met to discuss (among other things) the role that Ellen White's writings should have going forward. As described in this marvelously well-told narrative, the meetings were often contentious and divisive, with different factions digging in their heels and accusing others of... well, you'll have to read the book.

addresses the issues of war and peace, violence and nonviolence from multiple perspectives. Most of the book's chapters grew out of an initiative of the Biblical Research Committee of the Inter-European Division. As the Adventist Church has become quieter on this subject, the book's relevance seems greater than ever—in particular, for church members who face ethical difficulties and challenges in relation to joining the military whether voluntarily or involuntarily.

The book is divided into nine chapters, written by Adventist scholars from three continents. The chapters focus on violence and war in the Old and New Testaments; ethnicity, the church, and violent conflicts; military service and the just war idea

Reviews and commentaries about books, films, or other items do not constitute endorsement by the editorial staff of Adventist Review Ministries.



The Bible conference attracted so many vocal critics (some who weren't even there) that the notes and transcripts taken at the meeting were collected and figuratively buried in the archives of the General Conference. They were rediscovered (providentially) more than 50 years later.

Michael Campbell, an associate professor of religion at Southwestern Adventist University, and one of the denomination's premier historians, unpacks the significance of the event by describing the issues involved, the principals who argued on each side of the issues, and how the issues

were resolved (or not). This book is based on his doctoral dissertation, but his prose is delightfully accessible; easy to read and understand.

were resolved (or not). This book is based on his doctoral dissertation, but his prose is delightfully accessible; easy to read and understand.

In a sentence, those present at the conference worked to define the legacy of Ellen White's writings, their relationship to the sacred canon of Scripture, and the manner in which Adventists in the twentieth century should interpret her writings, and by extension the Bible.

If this sounds theoretical, one only has to read or listen to sermons preached in churches or posted online to realize that as a church we still grapple with these issues. While we say we believe in "thought inspiration," a significant number among us believe in "verbal inspiration." If you don't know the difference, you *have* to read this book.

When papers related to the 1919 Bible Conference were rediscovered in the mid-1970s, Adventists were forced once again to reevaluate their attitude toward inspiration and their interpretation of Scripture. And now, 100 years after that conference, we're still a people prone to draw lines in the theological sand to demarcate those who have believed differently from the rest of us.

If *1919* tells us anything, it's that people of good will can take different positions and still be loyal to Christ, who alone is worthy of our love and worship. What we can't afford to do is hide our disagreements and hope that somebody else will solve them. ♣

throughout Christian history; the gradual loss of clarity about military service among Seventh-day Adventists; cases of nonconformity and conscientious objection among Adventists during World Wars I and II; ethical challenges for Christians in military service; psychological effects of war and pastoral care; and considerations concerning Adventists and military service.

The chapters are supplemented by three appendices, a selected bibliography, and an annotated list of books dealing with peace, war, military service, and nonviolence.

The examples of various Adventist believers who were committed to nonviolent service, even to the point of imprisonment and martyrdom, are an inspiring, living testimony to the love of Jesus for all people.

I appreciated reading Jesus' principles of peace

(Matt. 5-7) and the rich history of Adventist nonviolent service; but found particularly intriguing the discussions about Israel's wars against foreign nations, the conversion of heathen soldiers to Christianity in the New Testament, and the ethical issues of violence and nonviolence.

God's character of love is manifested in unlikely places. Thus the total annihilation of the Canaanites did not eclipse the possibility of mercy toward individuals who "turned to Israel's God for mercy." Similarly, Israel's aggressive wars against other enemies during the conquest usually permitted the possibility of an escape, a peace offer, or a vassal treaty.

This book is a must-read for all who want to both serve their country and answer God's call to preach "the eternal gospel... to every nation, tribe, language, and people" (Rev. 14:6). ♣

HOPE RENEWED

Ever since sin marred God's perfect creation, humanity has hoped for a return to an existence free from the ravages of sin: pain, sickness, disappointment, fractured relationships, and death. From Genesis to Revelation the message of the Bible is one of hope. As you dwell on these few sentences, may your hope be renewed as you are reminded of a Redeemer who promised to return.—Editors.

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

—ISAIAH 40:31.

"Without Christ there is no hope."

—CHARLES SPURGEON.

"Where there is no hope in the future, there is no power in the present."

—JOHN MAXWELL.

"Our world today so desperately hungers for hope, yet uncounted people have almost given up. There is despair and hopelessness on every hand. Let us be faithful in proclaiming the hope that is in Jesus."

—BILLY GRAHAM.

"Remember whose you are and whom you serve. Provoke yourself by recollection, and your affection for God will increase tenfold; your imagination will not be starved any longer, but will be quick and enthusiastic, and your hope will be inexpressibly bright"

—OSWALD CHAMBERS.

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

—APOSTLE PAUL (ROM. 5:1, 2).

"The preciousness of Christ is the evidence of your faith. And the anticipation of His coming is the evidence of His preciousness. And therefore you can test the reality of your faith by whether you are eagerly waiting for Christ's coming."

—JOHN PIPER.

"You can look forward with hope, because one day there will be no more separation, no more scars, and no more suffering in my Father's house. It's the home of your dreams!"

—ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ.





“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

—**APOSTLE PAUL (TITUS 2:11-13).**

“We wait in hope for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
In him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his holy name.
May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,
even as we put our hope in you.”

—**PSALM 33:20-22.**

“Hope is called the anchor of the soul (Heb. 6:19), because it gives stability to the Christian life. But hope is not simply a ‘wish’ (I wish that such-and-such would take place); rather, it is that which latches on to the certainty of the promises of the future that God has made.”

—**R. C. SPROUL.**

“Christians are all members of one family, all children of the same heavenly Father, with the same blessed hope of immortality. Very close and tender should be the tie that binds them together.”

—**ELLEN G. WHITE (THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, P. 550).**

“The best we can hope for in this life is a knothole peek at the shining realities ahead. Yet a glimpse is enough. It’s enough to convince our hearts that whatever sufferings and sorrows currently assail us aren’t worthy of comparison to that which waits over the horizon.”

—**JONI EARECKSON TADA.**

“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the blessed hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a blessed hope, enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.”

—**A. W. TOZER.**

“Our righteousness is in Him, and our hope depends, not upon the exercise of grace in us, but upon the fullness of grace and love in Him, and upon His obedience unto death.”

—**JOHN NEWTON.**

“Because of the Lord’s great love
we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him.’”

—**LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24.**

“The Lord desires us to appreciate the great plan of redemption, to realize our high privilege as the children of God, and to walk before Him in obedience, with grateful thanksgiving. He desires us to serve Him in newness of life, with gladness every day. He longs to see gratitude welling up in our hearts because our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life, because we may cast all our care upon Him who cares for us. He bids us rejoice because we are the heritage of the Lord, because the righteousness of Christ is the white robe of His saints, because we have the blessed hope of the soon coming of our Savior.”

—**ELLEN G. WHITE (CHRIST’S OBJECT LESSONS, P. 299).**

LIGHT A CANDLE

*"Light a candle, light the dark,
Light the world, light a heart or two
Light a candle for me,
I'll light a candle for you."¹*

Stark images stream across my mental screen: children—of various ages, heights, genders, all with similar expressions of grief, despair, and loss—packed in holding cells. Some obviously sick and crying for their parents; some silent; others with vacant looks on their faces. I stare at the pictures—unable to look away; wishing I could turn my head.

Shame and consternation envelop me.

How can this be? I weep. Surely this is not actually happening! This must be a mistake; these must be pictures from somewhere else, not from where I am. How awful!

News reports continue, so it must be true; and my heart breaks. I feel the pain of these children, while simultaneously imagining the horror and despair of parents who have had their little ones taken, in some instances wrenched, from their arms. A vision synonymous with historical reports and pictures of slavery is conjured up in the mind. Somehow, we've been transported back to those dark times, as if in some nightmarish time warp.

Then, when you thought it couldn't get worse, reports of various deaths come in. Maybe I should never have become a grandma! We grandmas are notoriously sappy creatures. But if I had never become a grandma, then maybe my heart wouldn't feel so shredded by these scenes of maltreated innocents. Was it simple neglect? Was it the frustration of not enough staff, not enough budget? Is there someone to blame?

Cruelty to animals can bring heavy fines and news headlines. Is there no law against cruelty to children? Why did some of them die? Something's not right. Is somebody going to fix it for the children? Do they matter the way regular kids in regular backyards do? How important are they: more, less, the same as regular kids?

We may not all have given birth to children of our own. We may not all have contributed to the procreation of the species. We don't all have to be grandmas and grandpas. But we are *all* someone's child—just like those kids.

Can we be both lawful and care for the kids? care about the children? Can we show support for them, for those who care for them, for folks in charge and for rules and order by donating money, clothes, or comfort kits to community service centers and churches that have contact with the kids? Can we shine some light into the children's eyes, hearts, and lives?

The holidays are coming, you know. How can we enjoy them—eating well, sleeping comfortably, celebrating family reunions—without thinking about and caring for kids who have fallen on hard times?

And about that light: perhaps we could each kindle a candle in our homes and hearts, for the children. As the song says, *"Light a candle . . . for the children who need more than presents can bring. . . ."*

*Light a candle for the homeless and the hungry. . . . Light a candle for the broken and forgotten.*²✎

¹ Lyrics by Joel Edward Lindsey and Michael Wayne Haun, www.last.fm/music/Avalon/_/Light+A+Candle/+lyrics.

² *Ibid.*

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste, a mother and grandmother, is editorial assessment coordinator for Adventist Review Ministries.

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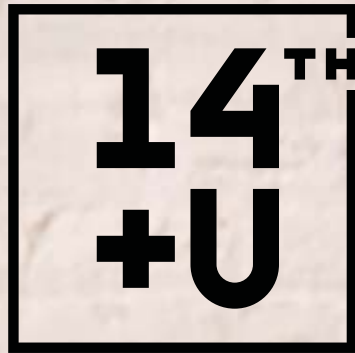


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