

MINISTERIAL  
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General Conference of

## Seventh-day Adventists

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Dear Brother Pierson:

The Annual Council of 1974 is now history. I wish that every member and worker of the church could have been present to share the spiritual impact received by the delegates. The heart-searching emphasis at our recent Annual Councils is one of the most encouraging signs that God still has an interest in His church. All of us, even those with the slightest degree of spiritual inclination, cannot but believe that this is a long-overdue step in the right direction.

When hearts are united and minds are submissive to God's leading there is no reasonable reason in the world why the necessary business of the church should not be done with dispatch. So, Brother Pierson, the Christ-centered trend in these business sessions causes many of us to rejoice. Undoubtedly what we are seeing and experiencing is the direct fruitage of your administration's emphasis on revival and reformation.

We cannot blame the devil for being unhappy over what is taking place. If we were in his shoes we would be unhappy too! But could it be that he will still be able to secure his objectives in our church in other ways? Could it be that his primary method in retarding the church's progress is to cause us to channel our time, energies, and money into that which is good but relatively unimportant?

The much-needed call to revival and reformation should not just touch lives of ministers and laity, but should reach into every area of church policy and practice, including budgets, plans, and actions. Reformation in these areas is just as necessary and important as reformation in our personal lives. Personal salvation on our part does not guarantee an accompanying mental acuteness for administering the affairs of God's church. It is to be hoped that revival and reformation in our lives will lead to revival and reformation in our whole church structure. To

(Continued on page 2)

## An Open Letter

*Continued from cover*

be aware of Satan's deceptions, which often come under an appearance of goodness and right, demands a thorough understanding of the objectives of the Advent Movement on the part of every minister and layman.

### Pressure Tactics

Those acquainted with the internal operations of our church are aware of the constant chorus of cacophonous voices declaring what direction the church should take. The church is in a very similar position to that of most world governments where pressure groups and lobbyists are ever seeking support for their causes. In fact, the same pressure tactics are used in all segments of society, whether it be a child pleading with his parents for a new bicycle or a department or institution pressuring the church for additional men and materials.

The only safe course to follow for the church is to know for certain what God's objectives are for us and decidedly to set up a system of priorities in reaching them. In other words, every decision this church makes on every level should be made in the light of what contributes most to reaching our over-all objectives.

### 275,458,110 Members

Presumably church growth in terms of increased membership is one objective most subscribed to. As to whether it has top priority in areas other than in our thoughts is questionable. Statistics indicate that for the most part our membership growth has been a rather steady and gradual one over the years. The most significant increases are not recent ones. The average membership increase between 1870 and 1880 was a little more than 11 per cent per year. The increase during that decade was the greatest our church ever experienced.

Had we maintained our 11 per cent per year net increase from 1880 until now, our church membership today would be 275,458,110.

It is also interesting to realize that, had we maintained that 11 per cent increase each year since that time, we would have reached

our present membership of 2.4 million by 1928—forty-six years ago!

However, 2.4 million is a far cry from the 3,500 we had in 1863, and for this we praise God. But it also comes far short of the 275,458,110 membership that perhaps could and should have been ours.

Our slow and steady growth has not been spectacular. Or is a 5 per cent annual growth spectacular? Should we not expect some dramatic, or should I say miraculous, influx of members that would indicate a second Pentecost?

### "The Bland Leading the Bland"

If this doesn't happen, does it prove the church is (as one writer called it) a "blank island of serenity"? Or are we, as another has put it, "the bland leading the bland"?

The apostolic church was not plagued with fuzzy concepts as to what their mission was. In short, "one interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 48). What was that *one* interest? Was it salary increases? Additional paid staff? Location of the next General Conference session? Another program to finish the work? A new departmental or institutional film? Surely, these things would be secondary to the early believers. Their primary concern was "to reveal the likeness of Christ's character, and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom" (*ibid.*).

Note that their one interest was a two-sided affair. Thank God our church is attempting to focus on the revelation of Christ's character. But, ~~Brother Pierson~~, are we putting the enlargement of His kingdom on an equal footing? What about the gospel commission? Are we, as leaders, taking it seriously?

When the spotlight of the Spirit of Prophecy is focused on the mission of the church, we discover what the true interpretation of the scope of the gospel is. Ellen White in vision declares that she saw "jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God's Word was obeyed, and as a result there were me-

morials for Him in every city and village. His truth was proclaimed throughout the world."—*Evangelism*, p. 699.

### Flesh & Blood or Brick & Mortar?

Whether or not the words "memorials for Him in every city and village" refer to flesh-and-blood memorials or brick-and-mortar ones, still the disturbing question is How near are we to fulfilling this prophecy? Will we ever fulfill it? At our present rate of growth I doubt that even the most optimistic among us would be so bold as to declare that we are even approaching such fulfillment. *frid*

Do you think God expects us to take the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy literally on these points? Or could it be that this is just an ideal that God knows we could never reach with or without His help? I personally believe that we must categorically reject any interpretation that does not take God's expressed desires for His church literally. The commands of Christ are clear. Our mission is unmistakable. The scope of our soul-saving work is worldwide. Our witness is to reach every nation, tribe, and person. The question is What can we do to reach this divine objective more quickly?

Frankly, Brother Pierson, I don't think any of us relish the thought of granite memorials, with a few facts, figures, and a bit of verse chiseled on them, being erected over our graves. Is this really the personal objective of any one of us? Not that we distrust God's ability to resurrect us—no! Rather, there dwells within our hearts the blessed hope of Christ's return while we are yet alive. His coming certainly is a climax, not to an unfinished task, but to a finished one.

Because of unbelief, the bones of Israel's laity and leaders alike bleached in the desert sun on the wrong side of Jordan. What can we do, or what should we do, to prevent a recurrence of this tragic episode? It will take more than prayer and heart-searching, as important as these are. It will take more than testimony meetings—and thank God for them! It will take bold, dynamic action along with spiritual renewal! It will take broad planning, which will test our

faith to the ultimate and challenge our pocketbooks, energies, and time to the limit. It means that we will no longer "play it safe," but swiftly move ahead in communicating the message of the cross to the world's inhabitants. It means that we will examine carefully, in the light of the gospel commission, everything we are doing.

We will consider our budgets in the light of our objectives. Are we spending our money for the most important projects? It is not a matter of right or wrong spending for the most part; rather, it is a matter of priorities. Are we setting aside funds for those programs and people that will fulfill God's expectations for this movement? What are our priorities?

I was encouraged by several items in the budget such as the \$450,000 set aside as a "new work" reserve, to be used when special unique opportunities present themselves for advancing the gospel anywhere in the world.

Of course, the nearly 2 million dollars of tithe increase reversion to be used specifically for evangelism in the North American unions was another outstanding feature of the budget. The support given PREACH (Project for Reaching Every Active Clergyman at Home) was also much appreciated.

Yet there still remains the uncomfortable feeling that much more could be done by this church in meeting its objectives in a responsible way.

The answer does not lie alone in voting increasingly larger budgets that surpass the preceding years, but in re-evaluating every administrative, institutional, and departmental plan and program this movement is involved in. Furthermore, no program should be judged a success simply because it is going over "big" in terms of numbers. The question should be Is this what God would have us do? Are we fulfilling His objectives for this church?

You will recall the story of the man who came to Jesus asking for His help in settling a dispute between him and his brother over their inheritance. Jesus calmly but firmly said, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" (Luke 12:14).

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# the Ministry

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## IN THIS ISSUE

The open letter on the cover, addressed to our General Conference president, calls attention to the specifics we need to consider in responding to the renewed emphasis on revival and reformation which comes from the 1974 Annual Council. Two articles this month emphasize Christ's sacrifice for us. Woolsey explores the covenant concept in relation to the cross, and Stanley's "If I Be Lifted Up" points us to the power of the cross. "My People Perish," "Baptism—A Legitimate Church Priority," and "When Is a Church Too Large?" all deal with the practical aspects of the church's ministry. Both Magnusson's and Standish's articles deserve careful reading. And in light of the Christmas season you won't want to miss June Strong's "The Gift of Understanding."

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Like Abraham, we have nothing with which to match God's pledge. God makes the offer of salvation. We have only to accept it.

# JESUS OUR COVENANT

RAYMOND H. WOOLSEY

IF THE most honest man in the neighborhood—one never known to break a promise, whom banks trusted without question—were to promise to do a certain thing that was well within his power to do, and were this man voluntarily to sign to that undertaking in the presence of a judge and put up all his possessions as surety, we would certainly understand that he intended to keep his promise. We would also know that he considered the matter extremely important.

That is an illustration, albeit a crude one, of what God has done for us. We commonly think of Jesus as our Saviour, our High Priest, even as our Friend. It would help us to think of Him also in terms of His covenant relationship with us.

One day the Lord told Abram, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. . . . So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5). Although Abram was childless and nearly 100 years old, the Bible says he believed the Lord. But the Lord continued: "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (verse 7). Perhaps this was too much for Abram. To have many children was one thing; to own all the land he was roaming about on was something else. So he did a completely human thing—he asked God for a sign that He was telling the truth.

Who can doubt God's word, which is powerful enough to call worlds into existence? But sin has weakened faith. Too often our hopes in each other are crushed, our confidences broken. But we should remember that God does not do as man does.

God did not upbraid Abram be-

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cause he asked for a sign. The promise being made was indeed a far-reaching one. It was not just a promise of children for Abram. God was not promising Canaan only to Abram's posterity. His promise reached beyond the dominion of sin to an earth full of saints, Abram's "faith children," enjoying a world of righteousness.

### **Promise Undergirds Confidence**

In this twentieth century of jet planes and rocket travel there are those who are tempted to feel God has disengaged Himself from humanity. He hasn't come as He said He would, they say; perhaps He will never come. Let us restudy that promise made to Abram and see how it undergirds our confidence in God today.

Because so much was involved, God wanted to leave no doubt. Instead of giving just a passing sign, therefore, He entered into a solemn covenant, a binding compact, with Abram. The Maker of the universe entered into a one-to-one relationship with a human being.

The term "covenant" was a vital concept to the people of Abram's time and place. It was the legal basis for their society (as it is even today among the Kurds and nomadic Arabs). Warfare was their natural state; roaming bands fell on each other—or ran—at sight. Not to go to war presupposed the existence of a covenant. There were no neutrals.

There were several ways of making a covenant, depending on the purpose and the seriousness of the occasion. One type of covenant involved the gift of salt, a precious commodity to people of the desert. Another type was the sacramental meal. When one partook of food under another's roof, and especially if one took food from the hand of another, he was thenceforth considered a special

friend, practically a member of the family. (This brings to mind the actions of Judas, who accepted a morsel of food from Jesus' hand—just before going out to sell his Master.)

More serious covenants involved blood. In one type, the parties to the covenant slashed their palms and then gripped each other's hand. This may have been the forerunner of the custom of shaking hands. The significance, of course, was that their blood mingled and thus they became "blood brothers." The literal translation of the Hebrew verb for making a covenant was to *cut* a covenant.

In another type of blood covenant, an animal was slain and quartered. The parts of the animal were piled in two heaps, then the covenanters passed between the parts. The idea was that if one did not abide by the terms of the covenant he would be slain and quartered as was the animal. Sometimes a covenant or pledge involved drinking blood, as when relatives of a murder victim pledged their revenge.

### **Special Relationship Involved**

Obviously, so basic a concept as this would play an important role in the Bible account. While the word "covenant" is used 33 times in describing human relations, it is used 250 times of the God-and-man situation, trying to get across the idea of a special relationship. A righteous person, for instance, is literally one who keeps a covenant (see Ps. 89:34), and conversely one of the worst sinners is one who breaks a covenant (see Rom. 1:31; Isa. 24:5).

God's covenant with Abram involved taking a heifer, a goat, a ram, a dove, and a pigeon—not one covenant animal but five—and cutting each into two parts, making two heaps. Abram did as



he was directed, and kept scavengers from desecrating the covenant heaps until sunset. Then Abram fell into a deep sleep. The Lord appeared to him and in the form of fire passed between the heaps of sacrifice. As He did so, the Lord solemnly repeated His promise to Abram.

God's promise alone was sufficient (Heb. 6:13-18), but He took an oath and then confirmed the oath with a covenant. Notice that Abram did not pass between the heaps. God was the one making the pledge. It was His covenant.

In the process of time Isaac was born, the child of the covenant. But when Isaac was a young man God directed Abram, now called Abraham, to offer Isaac in sacrifice. With a heavy heart but resolute faith the aged father prepared to do so. Just before the knife fell on his son angels stayed his hand. Abraham found a ram in a nearby thicket and offered it in Isaac's stead.

Abraham perceived the command to offer his son as a threat to the divine covenant, but God told him He had not forgotten. He reminded him right then and there, "By myself have I sworn." The patriarch did not fail to see the point: when God made a covenant a life was forfeited. The life of the sacrificial animal pledged the life of the covenanter. In pledging man's redemption God was putting His own existence at stake!

### Memory of the Covenant

The pledge made to Abraham was perpetuated to His people. In the tabernacle system the animals used were, at various times, a young cow, a sheep, a goat, a dove, a pigeon—the very items Abram had been directed to use. And they were consumed by divine fire. So the tabernacle was called the tabernacle of witness (Num. 17:7, 8) and the ark was called the ark of the covenant (chap. 10:33). The entire sanctuary system was to keep alive the memory of the covenant God made with Abram that He would establish His people in righteousness.

The Hebrew system of sacrifices ended when Christ was crucified, but the covenant did not end. Was it not called an "everlasting cove-

nant"? In the Revelation John sees in heaven the temple of God, and what is there but the "ark of his covenant" (Rev. 11:19, N.E.B. \*)!

### Christ—Pledge of God's Purpose

The covenant made with Abram and continued with His people, the covenant witnessed in the blood of animals, was but a mere shadow of a much more drastic pledge on God's part. He was, in reality, putting up His own Son as a pledge of His purpose. In Isaiah 42:6, a passage recognized as Messianic, God the Lord says, "I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations" (R.S.V.).

God gave Jesus to the world of human beings, gave Him as a covenant, as a promise of salvation. Willingly and completely God gave His only begotten Son to humanity for all time. The incarnation and death of Jesus was a pledge that God will complete His great plan of redemption. He will finish what He began. God has not disengaged Himself. Jesus will come again, and the saints will be given this earth, made new, for an eternal inheritance.

As with the animals Abram prepared, Jesus our Covenant was slain and divided—not physically, of course, but with two allegiances—to serve both God and man. He is both the Son of God and the Son of man. With His blood He bridges earth and heaven.

Here is an insight into what Jesus meant when He said, the night before His death, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:25, R.S.V.). The wine of the Lord's Supper is more than a simple reminder of His death. It is more than a token of a theological concept. By partaking of it the disciples—and we—are joined to Jesus and to each other in a blood covenant. We drink, not to revenge His death, but in a deep pledge of fellowship.

Notice, however, that the Greeks had two words for covenant—one was used when both sides had responsibilities and another for a one-sided agreement, as in a will. The word Jesus used was that of a one-sided agreement. He was in effect saying, I

am putting up my life as surety—please accept it. Like Abraham, we have nothing with which to match God's pledge. God makes the offer of salvation. We have only to accept it.

Finally, Jesus on Calvary sealed the covenant. By His death on the cross He put the covenant into effect. Before then, salvation was a promise; now it was a fact. The body of Jesus, with the nail prints in His hands, was at once both evidence and basis of the fact.


But wait! The blood on His hands! Here again we find the symbol of covenant. He "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:20), reconciling all things, in earth and in heaven. Through the blood of His hands, as it were, He knitted the life of God and the life of man forever.

### We Are to Be a Covenant

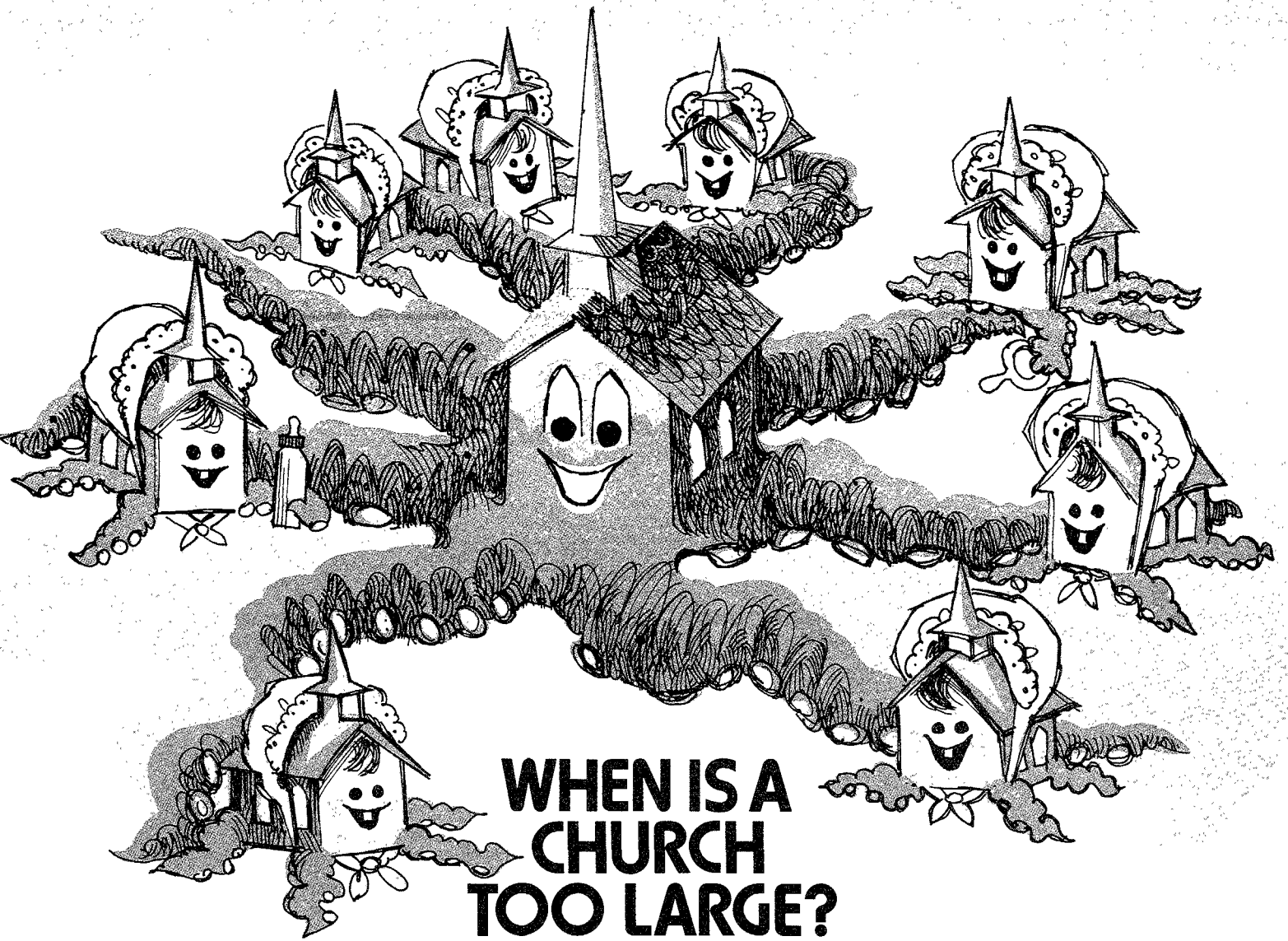
In a sense we, too, are in turn to be a covenant, to the world. That is why Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth" and "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." As we grasp the blood-stained hand of Jesus with one arm, our other is to be stretched out to a suffering world.

He cannot heal who has not suffered much,  
For only Sorrow sorrow understands;  
They will not come for healing at our touch  
Who have not seen the scars upon our  
hands. —Edwin McNeill Potent

As in total submission we take the hand of Christ, we become blood brothers with Him, heirs of the kingdom. We drink of the cup of the covenant, in pledge that His death shall not have been in vain. We accept the provisions of the compact God made with Abram, and with his faith we look for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Jesus is our Covenant, given to the human race. He is the One who *signed* the covenant, ratifying it with His lifestream. He is the *surety* of the covenant, pledging the throne of God to His promise. Jesus is the *mediator* of the covenant, the One who inscribes its principles upon our hearts, our emotions, our will. 

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## WHEN IS A CHURCH TOO LARGE?

### ORLEY M. BERG

*Orley M. Berg is executive editor of The Ministry.*

WHAT is the ideal size of a church? When has it become too big? When should it think in terms of fostering a new congregation in an adjacent territory? These are questions that might bring a variety of responses.

Before addressing ourselves specifically to them we would do well to consider what the church is for. What are its goals? How is its success to be measured?

In the broadest terms the purpose of the church could be laid out in the words of John the Baptist, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

This definition implies both winning people to Christ and aiding in their spiritual maturity. Some would define evangelism as the church's supreme mission. But

evangelism sometimes becomes an end in itself, when really it is only the means to an end. Equally important is what happens to the people after they have been evangelized and accepted the gospel message.

Evangelism without a burden for a further work of spiritual growth will likely be oriented toward success. If success-oriented, the goal is productivity. Then what counts is image. When that happens the soul is reduced to just one more person to be counted. God's plan for the church is much more than this.

It is most fully outlined by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11-15. Verse 11 lists the various gifts of the church—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Verse 12 declares that these gifts are given "for the perfecting of the saints." It is

true that one is perfect through the imputed righteousness of Christ the moment the soul is surrendered to Christ. But God's plan is that the new convert, through the imparted righteousness of Christ, become experientially what he is positionally.

God plans for the members of His church to become full grown, mature, complete. He wants them to function to full capacity. The challenge given the ministry is to bring them up to their full potential. To accomplish this, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are poured out on the church (see Gal. 3:3). The achievement of our potential is the purpose of the trials that are permitted to come our way (see James 1:2, 3). Here is the purpose of suffering (see 1 Peter 5:6). It is even stated that the purpose of the Word is that we may grow thereby (see chap. 2:2).

All that is provided for us through the church, as well as all that is permitted in our experience, is designed to lead us to perfection—maturity.

This was the great passion of the apostle Paul. To the Colossians his preaching and teaching was "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28). In chapter 4:12 he says, "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." To the Corinthians, his final wish was "even your perfection." And he concluded, "Finally, brethren, farewell, Be perfect" (2 Cor. 13:9, 11).

Every one of the early church leaders had this same objective in mind, this same passion. And this is to be the work of church leaders today. We are told, "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69.

It is terrible to think that by our failure to enter into this experience we are delaying the coming of our Lord. In Ephesians 4:12 the apostle Paul uses the key phrase that expresses the whole plan of God for the church. It is "for the perfecting of the saints." It is time that we take this objective seriously, if we are ever "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Having emphasized the purpose of the church, let it now be added that a mature church reproduces itself. Babies don't have babies. Mature people do. Furthermore, shepherds don't have sheep. Sheep do. Isn't that what Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:12? The gifts were given "to equip God's people for work in his service" (N.E.B.).\*

According to this, who is to do the work of the ministry? The saints! Beck's translation reads, "To get His holy people ready to serve as workers." The pastor-shepherd is to bring the saints to maturity and to equip them that they in turn might effectively carry on the work of ministry.

The leaders of the New Testament church saw the gospel

spread and multitudes gathered in as the lay members whom they shepherded and equipped went out with a holy zeal to tell the story of Jesus' love. This clearly is also the pattern for today. When the followers of Christ are mature and properly instructed, ministry is just naturally the burden of every one of them.

We are told, "All must now work for themselves, and when they have Jesus in their hearts they will confess Him to others. No more could a soul who possesses Christ be hindered from confessing Him than could the waters of Niagara be stopped from flowing over the falls." —*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 233.

We often have the whole thing backwards. The minister wears himself out trying to get the laymen motivated to do what he is motivated to do. But if he will give himself wholly to the building up and equipping of the saints, the Holy Spirit will motivate the mature saints to do the work of ministering.

#### **Maturing and Ministry Go Together**

It should be emphasized that the work of maturing and the work of ministering go together. The new Christian must begin to share his faith at once, lest it be lost. But he will need spiritual nurture and practical instruction. Note the following pertinent counsel:

"Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be *taught how* to labor successfully." —*Evangelism*, pp. 353, 354. (Italics supplied.)

"Personal responsibility, personal activity in seeking the salvation of others, must be the education given to all newly come to the faith." —*Ibid.*, p. 354.

"Teach them by giving them something to do, in some line of spiritual work, that their first love will not die but increase in fervor." —*Ibid.*, p. 356.

"Let him seek to keep the church alive by teaching its members how to labor with him for the conversion of sinners. This is good generalship; and the result will be found far better than if he should seek to perform the work alone." —*Ibid.*, p. 357.

This leads us back to our original question. If the work of the pastor is that of building up the spirituality of the church and instructing and organizing them for the work of soul winning, then how large must a church be and when does it become too large? Obviously a church is never too small to enter into this program. But if the plan is followed it will grow. When its growth in numbers begins to inhibit its effectiveness, then it is time for some of the members to form the nucleus of a new congregation.

Whether or not the church is fulfilling its mission according to the New Testament pattern will depend largely upon the nature of the nurturing and training that is given. This Biblical concept is vital to adequate leadership in our churches. A small church of 50 or 100 members, or 250 members, is not, just because of its size, fulfilling its role any better than a church of 1,000 or even 3,000 members. A pastor of a large church with a well-organized program and well-trained staff may be succeeding far better in perfecting the saints and equipping and directing them in the work of the ministry than is the pastor of the smaller church whose main obsession is getting a call to a larger pastorate.

Pastor John McArthur, when called to Grace Community church in Panorama City, California, had many great ideas and almost worked himself to death trying to keep up with them. One day a well-intentioned man said to him, "You know what your problem is, McArthur? Your problem is that you are too immature to do what God has called you to do, and let the rest go." This led him to covenant with God to spend five to six hours every day with the Word of God and forget about much of the trivia. Telling of this experience, he says, "When that began to happen I began to see real miracles taking place."

#### **"I Can't Handle All These People"**

During the week he would pore over the Word of God, then on Sundays he would pour out to the people the message God had laid upon his heart. For the first time he began to see the people grow,

and as they grew they began to reproduce.

It is interesting that those ministers who today tend to downgrade the power or importance of preaching are for the most part those who have long since left off preaching the Word and substituted philosophies of their own, social issues, or intellectual dissertations. It is through the preaching of the Word that the spirituality of the congregation is built up and growth occurs.

Pastor McArthur discovered that Biblical preaching with a passion for the "perfecting of the saints" became a reproductive pattern of teaching. Suddenly various ministries began to develop so rapidly he could hardly keep up with them. The members became burdened to get things done. One saw the need for a tape ministry. Others felt burdened to organize Bible-study groups and prayer groups. The pastor did not have to start any of them. He simply fed them with the Word, and the Holy Spirit did the motivating. When he went to the hospital to visit sick members others of the church

people. I am only interested in what God is doing in the lives of those He has already given me."

"Our task is not to put on a program," he points out. "It is not to entertain. It is not to put on a musical extravaganza. Our task simply stated is to equip the saints for the work of ministering."

We marvel at such a program. Isn't this God's plan for every church? Isn't this the way the work entrusted to the Advent Movement will be finished? It happened at the Panorama City church because the pastor caught a vision of what the church is all about, and determined by the grace of God to follow it.

Now what has this to do with the size of the church? We can see that as the church grows, the dangers inherent in its administration increase. Even under the most gifted, dedicated leadership, with consecrated, properly trained lay workers, the task of properly shepherding, nurturing, and training every member becomes more difficult. The work can so easily degenerate into formal organization without the personal intimacy so essential.

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### ***Instead of worrying about filling empty pews, we should become concerned about filling the occupied ones.***

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were already there. Others were taking tapes around to the shut-ins. Some secured a bus and began bringing people to church. The saints began to do the work of ministering. Within three years the membership grew from 500 to 3,000.

Before this, Pastor McArthur had spent most of his time worrying about the empty pews, and building up the statistics. "Now," he says, "I don't ask God for other persons at least until I have done something for those He has already given me. It scares me when so many people come. I say, 'Lord, it's enough. I can't handle all these people. I don't know what's going on and whether or not they are being properly disciplined.'" He adds, "I am not interested in having so many

In trying to summarize what has been said, let me suggest the following:

1. The ministry needs a clear vision as to what the church is all about, according to the New Testament plan.

2. Every pastor should re-evaluate his program to see how closely it fits the pattern God has given and then do whatever is necessary to bring it into line.

3. When a church reaches the size where individual members could be more effectively nurtured and equipped for service by forming a new congregation in new territory, this step must be taken, no matter how traumatic.


4. An important factor that should help in making this decision, other than that of numbers, would be the nature of the leader-

ship offered the new congregation, whether ordained or lay. Separation from a large church just for the sake of being small may not of itself be an asset. The ideal would be for the mother church to continue a very real personal interest in the new venture until it is well groomed and functioning on its own according to the New Testament plan.

5. When a church reaches an active membership of from 200 to 250, it has reached a growth level where it can function at maximum efficiency and should thereafter think in terms of fostering a daughter congregation. A church of this size is large enough to have every department function effectively. It is small enough to offer the intimate fellowship that every-member participation requires. Also, organizing another congregation will have the advantage of placing an Adventist church in a new geographical area that must be reached with the message.

When this concept grips the hearts of pastors and laymen it should eliminate competition for the greatest statistics. There will be no passion for numbers. Rather, the concern will be for the members—how are they growing? How effective is their witness? As the church grows, this concern for the individual will lead the church to encourage members to move to smaller churches, where they can be more useful, or to form new congregations, that the work may grow more rapidly.

Finally, the result will be that set forth in Ephesians 4:13-15: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. . . . But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

In following this suggested program, the pastor will actually be doing "the work of perfecting the saints," the saints will do the work of ministering, the body will be built up, and all will be brought into the unity for which Christ prayed. 

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## An Open Letter

*Continued from page 3*

A very pertinent comment on this story states, "The Saviour's mission on earth was fast drawing to a close. Only a few months remained for Him to complete what He came to do in establishing the kingdom of His grace. Yet human greed would have turned Him from His work to take up the dispute over a piece of land. But Jesus was not to be diverted from His mission. . . . Christ gave the man plainly to understand that this was not His work. He was striving to save souls. He was not to be turned aside from this to take up the duties of a civil magistrate."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 217.

### Forced Labor?

The principle stated here cannot be misunderstood. The Saviour's business and the church's business should be identical! But—is it? Let me quote the next sentence which is startling in its import. "**How often today labor is forced upon the church that should never be allowed to enter the work of the gospel ministry!**"—*Ibid.* (Emphasis supplied.)

If this last statement was a fact in the day when it was written, I wonder what God would add or subtract if He were to update it.

Brother Pierson, some of us believe that the time has come when every facet of our church program needs to be re-examined in the light of the gospel commission. This goes for *The Ministry* magazine, the Ministerial Association, or any other part of the church program.

Our world is doomed. You have heard, I'm sure, the illustration of the airliner in trouble. Under normal circumstances it would be entirely appropriate to serve meals, hand out newspapers and magazines, pass out gum and candy, and for the pilot to announce the weather and the distance to the destination. But all of these normal activities are abandoned when there is a possibility of a crash. Priorities are immediately established. Everything possible at this point must be done to save the lives of those on board.

Today the church is not existing under normal circumstances. The crash is coming and may be

on us much sooner than we think. Routine business must be laid aside, and emergency measures taken to fulfill the mission of the church. Anything and everything that does not contribute to the fulfilling of our great commission should be eliminated from our agendas, our budgets, our plans. It's time to carefully consider the question, What are our priorities?

This is an earnest appeal that the

bit of leaven we have permitted God to put in the church in these final hours of human history will now be permitted to work until the whole world has a chance to share with us the blessed experience of salvation through Christ alone.

Yours for an expanded revival and reformation,

J. R. Spangler

P.S. In future open letters we would appreciate the opportunity of being more specific.

## Lay Minister Finds His Niche and Solves Methodist Problem

CARRIE LA BRIOLA

*Religious News Service Correspondent*

HARVEYSBURG, Ohio—Once, not so long ago, the church was the center of small town and rural life. Certainly it was the spiritual center, often the social center, and sometimes the political center. Times change. People move. New habits emerge. What happens, then, to a small church with eight or ten faithful attenders on a Sunday morning?

Most such churches fade away. The Harveysburg United Methodist church here was facing that possibility. But it is now the scene of an experiment that, if successful, may bring new hope to hundreds of other small town and rural churches.

The experiment involves the revival of an old category of Methodist leadership: lay preachers. A Wilmington, Ohio, businessman, William Haines, is the newly appointed lay preacher at Harveysburg. He is able to devote more time to pastoral responsibilities than the ordained man the church once shared on a "circuit" basis.

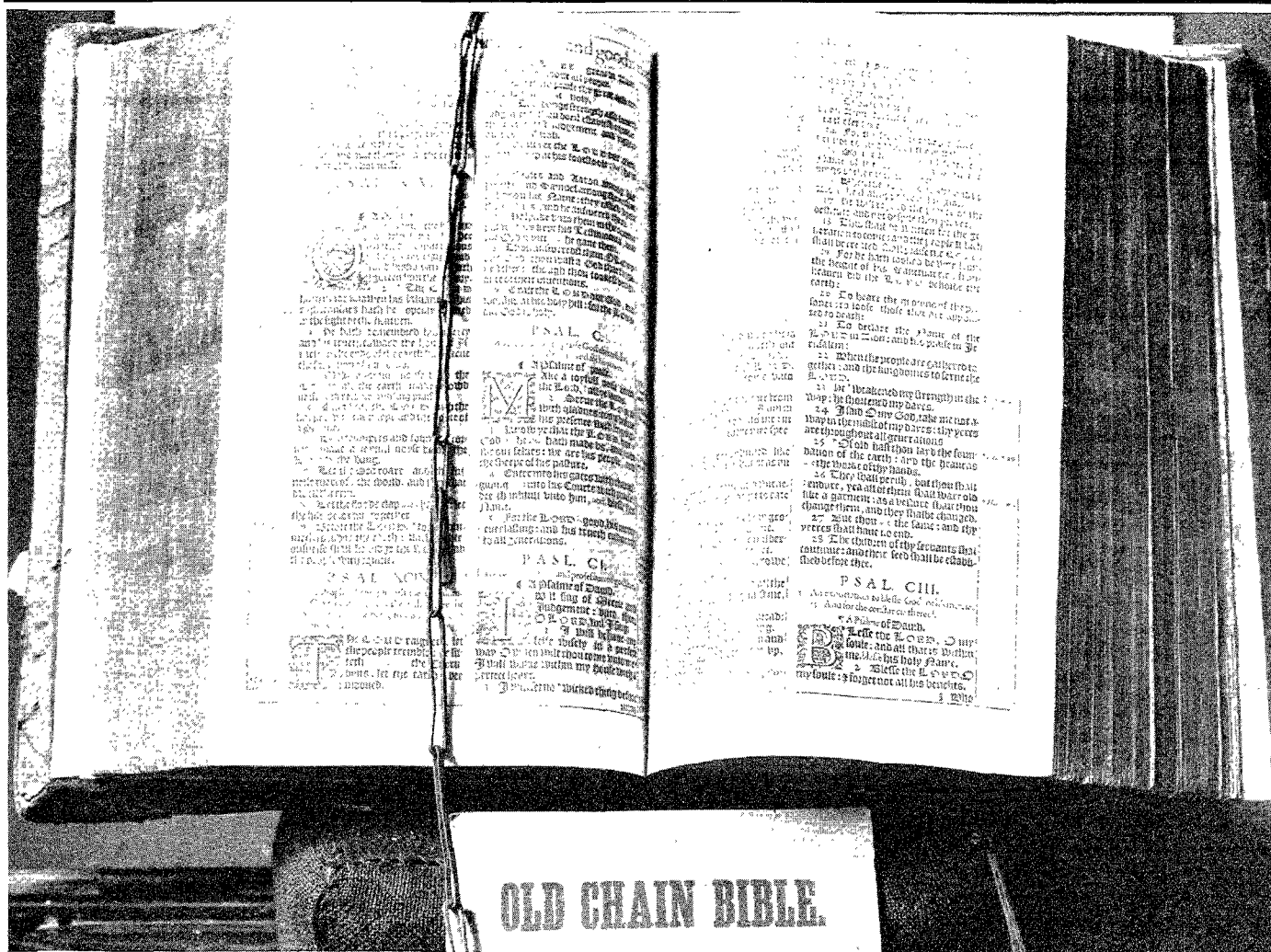
Mr. Haines recently sold a camera shop he had maintained for eighteen years. He took a job with the Clinton County Engineer's Office in order to make himself available for church work. On his first Sunday in Harveysburg, Mr. Haines had thirty people in the congregation, and fifty persons attended a reception to welcome the lay preacher and his wife.

"Everybody is elated," says Mrs. Lucy McCarren, church treasurer. "We found that we could have services every Sunday and visitation. It's like everybody's come alive." Members of the church, especially the elderly, have missed the pastoral visitation, which a minister serving three churches and teaching could not provide.

Mr. Haines feels he was led by God to Harveysburg. While the lay preacher has attended worship all his life, he says he "met the Lord just six years ago." The former camera shop owner is following a course of home study to receive his formal license as a lay preacher.

Dr. Howard Spitnale, superintendent of the Wilmington District of the denomination's Ohio West Conference, believes there are many lay persons and retired ministers who would excel in small town and rural ministries. "We're trying to be creative with a small church," he explains. "We're trying to find avenues to be successful in the small church. We're handicapped by numbers, but at the moment there is a lot of enthusiasm in Harveysburg."

# "MY PEOPLE PERISH"



## LEO RANZOLIN

*Leo Ranzolin is an associate secretary of the General Conference Youth Department.*

"MY PEOPLE perish for want of knowledge." \* This is the Lord's complaint in Hosea 4:6. The people in the days of Hosea were starving for real food, the Word of God, and it was the priests who were to blame for this famine.

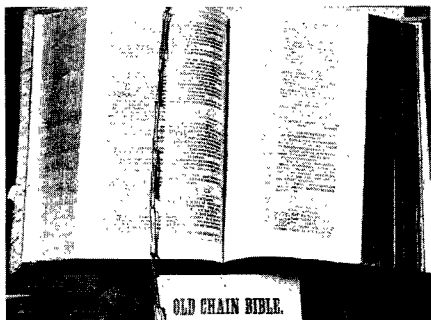
Picture, if you can, a starving, pale, and sick Christian. A Christian who has not been fed the bread of life, someone who has a vitamin B (Bible) deficiency. There he is in the pew—pale, weak, no response, no matter what the minister does. Too often his is a lethargy that results from lack of food.

I have seen many children with oversize tummies and big eyes who are starving for food. They seem to be full, but not of food; it's worms and wind. A Christian who is not properly fed or does not eat from the bread of life becomes a center for other philosophies and is full of pride and conceit, puffed up. Sooner or later he will die.

A Christian who listens to a sermon and does not respond is like a starving child. Ask her to play, to run, to jump; there is no reaction, no desire. There is no energy, no response. She needs to be nurtured first.

She needs to be cured. Then there will be a new zest in life. So it is with the Christian!

Seventh-day Adventists need to be nurtured with the Word of God and it is our responsibility as ministers to preach the Word and feed our congregations with the solid bread of life. If fed properly they will respond to our appeals and gladly accept our challenges. Promotion, goals, enthusiasm will not help a starving Christian. He needs vitamin B (Bible). Have you seen a healthy child at play? There is energy coming out in all directions. He never



seems to get tired. There is an endless flow of energy as if Niagara is moving within him.

Isn't this a picture of what Adventists ought to be? Restless, active, with the same kind of zeal found in the primitive church and in those who carried the torch of the gospel during centuries of persecution. They did not have time to talk about the latest fads and fashions. They had a message: "Jesus is coming again. We saw Him go up. He will come again."

Think for a moment of the experience of the disciples on their way to Emmaus. They were discouraged, depressed, disconsolate. The Saviour had been killed and they did not know that He had been resurrected. What was it that brought light, joy, and vigor to their lives? The presentation of the Word of God. While Christ, whom they did not recognize at first, was explaining the Word, they saw the promises, the prophecies, the plan of salvation. They saw Christ in the Scriptures.

### **Present Christ in Scripture**

This is our responsibility and task to the world and to the church—to present Christ in the Scriptures. Doing so will bring new life to discouraged hearts, to depressed souls; for later on the two disciples, as they shared what the experience had meant to them, said to each other, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

How can we present Christ in the Scriptures, though, if we preach our whole sermon without opening a Bible? How

can the congregation follow the Bible or become acquainted with what it is saying if the minister himself does not quote from it? How can our starving Laodicean people be fed if the minister preaches "my opinion" about guilt, anxiety, and all kinds of puffed-up philosophies, when he ought to be asking, "What is the Word of the Lord to us?"

### **Cause of Mental Weakness**

"My people perish for want of knowledge," says God! Ellen G. White writes: "A failure to study God's word is the great cause of mental weakness and inefficiency. In turning from this word to feed on the writings of un-inspired men, the mind becomes dwarfed and cheapened. It is not brought in contact with deep, broad principles of eternal truth. The understanding adapts itself to the comprehension of the things with which it is familiar, and in this devotion to finite things it is weakened, its power is contracted, and after a time it becomes unable to expand."—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, p. 441.

Paul was aware of this shortage and was constantly warning ministers and disciples of the need to preach the Word. In 2 Timothy 4:2 he says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." Paul was happy that Timothy learned the Word of God from his mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, and was able to share it effectively. But even to Timothy he said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The last part of the verse in Portuguese says, "One who handles well the word of truth."

Timothy could preach the Word because in his youth he had learned the Word. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy

scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (chap. 3:14, 15).

Youth today are especially hungry for the Word of God. They want to see Christ in the doctrines as did those disciples of Emmaus. As ministers of God we *must* feed them. A group of young people in Atlanta, Georgia, has asked their pastor to feed them the Word of God. They meet on Friday nights and together study the doctrines of the church because they feel a strong desire to share the Bible with their neighbors and friends. Another group in Takoma Park, Maryland, has started a series of Bible studies on Friday nights. What else can we do to help the youth and people in our churches?

### **More Power Than Philosophies**

As ministers of God we must preach the Word. We need, more than ever before, to open the Bible before the people and read and study it carefully from the pulpit. The Word of God has more power than all the philosophies in the world. The Bible shouldn't just be used as a means to hide your outlines as you progress with your sermon.

The Bible rebukes the sinner and rebukes sin. Jesus had power in His voice when He said, "It is written," and He quoted from the Bible. I have seen people possessed by the devil, restored by the reading of the Word of God. I remember especially one man who was possessed by the enemy. As the Word of God was being read to him he would ask us to stop, and would say, "What a whip, what a whip!" Another wanted to reach out, pick up the Bible and destroy it. There is power in the Word of God as Christ the Saviour is presented in this wonderful Book.

"Those who minister in the word must have as thorough a knowledge of that word as it is possible for them to obtain," Ellen G. White counsels. "They must be continually searching, praying, and learning, or the

people of God will advance in the knowledge of His word and will, and leave these professed teachers far behind. Who will instruct the people when they are in advance of their teachers? All the efforts of such ministers are fruitless. There is need that the people teach them the word of God more perfectly before they are capable of instructing others."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 499.

At the 1973 Annual Council Pastor Roland Hegstad told of a minister who took time to explain to his congregation the significance of the Biblical reference to the two cities of Dan and Beersheba. At the end of the sermon a lady came to him and thanked him for explaining what this meant. She had always thought that they were man and wife like Sodom and Gomorrah! What a calamity! Yet many times we are brought up short with the evidence that some of our young people and brethren do not know the Word of God. They don't study it as they ought to.

Ellen G. White says to teachers: "The youth are in need of educators who will keep the principles of the word of God ever before them. If teachers will make Bible precepts their textbook, they will have greater influence over the youth. They will be learners, having a living connection with God. They will endeavor to inculcate ideas and principles that will lead to a fuller knowledge of God, an earnest, growing faith in the blood of Christ, and in the power and efficiency of His grace to keep them from falling. They will constantly seek to build up the strongholds of a healthy, well-balanced Christian experience, that their students may be qualified for usefulness."—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, p. 430.

### Challenge to Seminary Teachers

This special challenge comes to the theologians and teachers in our seminaries. Let us study the Word with the future ministers of the church.

"The Bible teacher should

be one who is able to teach the students how to present the truths of the word of God in a clear, winning manner in public, and how to do effective evangelistic work from house to house. It is essential that he be skillful in teaching those who have a desire to work for the Master how to use wisely that which they have learned. He should instruct the students to approach the study of the Bible in the spirit of humility, to search its pages, not for proof to sustain human opinions, but with a sincere desire to know what God has said."—*Ibid.*, p. 431.

Parents also have a responsibility in this matter. They must take time to study for themselves and be able to explain the meaning of the Word and make it plain and clear to their children. "Parents should be studying the Word of God for themselves and for their families. But instead of this,

many children are left to grow up untaught, unmanaged, unrestrained. Parents should now do everything in their power to redeem their neglect and place their children where they will be under the very best influence.

"Then search the Scriptures, parents. Be not only hearers; be doers of the Word. Meet God's standard in the education of your children."—*Child Guidance*, pp. 66, 67.

We all have failed to study and use the Word of God as we should. But it is not too late for a new beginning. Christ is waiting eagerly at the door of our homes and our churches to come in and reveal Himself to us in His written Word. There is no reason why any of His people today should perish "for want of knowledge." ➤

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## Hold Fast to These Three

ERNEST LLOYD

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, *these three*" (1 Cor. 13:13, A.R.V.). "Faith, hope, love"—the indestructibles, the abiding things! The apostle Paul in his beautiful message to the church makes it clear that "these three" will abide. They were placed by God in the very heart of man in the beginning. They have kept man going forward through the centuries in his earthly pilgrimage. They will survive the awful storms of destruction that sweep the globe.

Sometimes the winds of misfortune, sorrow, and trouble spring up and blow our snug little scheme of living all askew. And if we are not watchful and vigilant, our faith may go "out the window." *We must hold fast to faith.*

*We must hold fast to hope.* Hope elevates and strengthens and inspires. Some of the most wonderful and soul-stirring verses

of the Book are those in which hope appears: "The God of hope"; "We are saved by hope"; "Christ in you, the hope of glory"; "begotten us again unto a lively hope"; "that blessed hope." These are expressions that minister to the development of our spiritual strength. Hope reaches into the glorious eternity.

*We must hold fast to love*, for love is the greatest thing in the world. It is God's greatest gift to man, for "God is love." It is because love is the first fact of all facts in the gospel of Christ that the gospel is fitted to be a universal gospel. An idea is not the same thing to every mind, but love is the same thing to every heart. True obedience springs from love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God."

FAITH — HOPE — LOVE — THESE THREE. Hold them fast.

E. E. CLEVELAND

# BAPTISM

## A Legitimate Church Priority

THE HOT sun shone brightly against the sparkling waters of the Caribbean. Ten thousand people lined the seashore singing hymns, awaiting the beginning of the baptism. History was made that day as 644 people were immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Four hundred and eighty of them were brand-new Seventh-day Adventist Christians. The others were backsliders and Christians who sought a renewal of their faith.

Forty preachers stood for over three hours baptizing until this divine work was done. It was an occasion never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. As the slanting rays of the setting sun beamed their final benediction upon that day, heaven rejoiced, hell trembled, and the sons and daughters of God shouted for joy.

Baptism is a major part of the legitimate business of the church. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). By submitting to this God-ordained rite, the participant expresses faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord (Rom. 6:4, 5). It is, therefore, a principal objective of our ministry to lead a man into this act of faith.

The apostles viewed baptism as being so important they felt everyone ought to have this experience. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye

shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Baptism is, therefore, legitimized by the command of our Saviour, and by the common practice of the early apostles. But the problem today is that the church is so far removed from its early origins that some of its members and ministers seem to believe that it can exist without baptism. In fact, some members are uncomfortable when baptism time comes around.

This Laodicean attitude is epitomized by some rather familiar expressions, such as, "We don't want any evangelist coming in here and creating ill will in the community." Or, "These new people are not thoroughly grounded and are therefore not ready for baptism." Or, "Our minister is just rushing people into the water to make a record with the conference."

Parents sometimes show their lack of interest in the baptismal rite when they are approached by their 10- and 11-year-old children who wish to be baptized and tell them, "You are too young." Or, "You are not old enough to know what you are doing." (Where in the Scriptures are we told that it is better to give Christ our lives when we are old than when we are young?)

Some of our dear believers have been in the church so long that they have forgotten how they came in. Yes, that some man of God led them gently into the waters of the baptistry and immersed them in that name that is above all other names. They have become harsh and judgmental and would convert the church of God into a social club, accepting some and refusing others on man-made grounds.

Let all such remember that Christ called it "my church" (Matt. 16:18) and that therefore the temple of God is His, not ours, and we are privileged to be members of His body. Let no man, then, stand between a man and the God he seeks at His altar. But let us stand aside in awe at the miracle of conversion and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the human heart.

### Contribute to Laodicean Attitude

Contributing to this Laodicean attitude on the part of some of the laity is the attitude of some of the ministry. Believe it or not,



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there are some preachers who are not overly enthusiastic about having a baptism and who make little or no effort to achieve it. They have become so busy with the routine of running the organizational structure that this commandment of the Lord has completely eluded them.

You see, they have more important things to do like running committees and participating in board meetings and conducting the business of giant institutions. After all, the finances of an organization have to be monitored, salaries have to be paid, policies have to be set, slogans have to be

dreamed up, and pronouncements have to be made. What does it matter if the baptismal pool is dry?

I think I can answer that question. If the baptismal pool were to remain dry there would be no organization to run, no decisions to be made, no one to man the committees—indeed, no committees, no departments to function, no board members to assemble, no choir to sing. In short, there would be no church. One inevitable conclusion follows: The baptismal waters must be continually troubled, not only to maintain what we have but to be the aggressive force for which the church was intended when implanted in the earth.

Indeed, a part of our comparative paralysis is that we have substituted the secondary for the primary and in too many men's minds the conquest for lost souls personally entered into by the minister is secondary to one's status in the organization. In pursuit of a selfless ministry, the *job* must always supersede the *position*, and only a selfless ministry can receive the full endorsement of the Holy Spirit.

So the command to teach and baptize is the legitimate church priority and all else is tributary to this. We have seen the ultimate end of the authoritarian institutional approach exemplified in the papal church of the Middle Ages. We cannot be satisfied with even a modification of this travesty. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, though organized, must never partake of the pomp and circumstance consequent to the hierarchal form. It must be a seamless-garment, sandal-shod, straight ministry that functions

where men are, leading them where they ought to be, and the constantly troubled baptismal waters must symbolize this spirit.

This must be said again and again in our churches, our conference offices, our schools where seminarians are trained that we may develop sound values and balanced judgments, and, above all, form perfect channels for the working of the Holy Spirit's power.

#### Clergy-Oriented Skepticisms

There are also clergy-oriented cynicisms toward baptism that need to be dealt with. First of all, there is skepticism about an organization that promotes baptism. Serious questions exist as to whether or not it ought to be externally encouraged. It is further pointed out that this tends to encourage preachers to "scramble to meet quotas." The opinion is expressed that the minister should just be left alone to work according to his internal lights and the church should be satisfied with the results. It is further pointed out that no statistics should ever be kept, for these tend either to pride or depression. And, furthermore, if a minister is converted, he will do his work on his own and does not need promotional "prodding."

In all honesty let us state that there is a grain of truth in all of this, but there is also a grain of error. Let us begin with this business of statistics. Acts 2:41 indicates that the early disciples were not afraid of statistics. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." It seems that the Holy Spirit inspired Dr. Luke to include that important statistic. I wonder why?



And in chapter 4:4, "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Now once again we are introduced to a statistic. I wonder why? Then in chapter 5:14 we read these words, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Then chapter 6:7, "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

You will notice the words of the scriptures, "multitudes," "a great company," "about three thousand," "about five thousand," and we could go on. It seems that the

ord of missionaries who have labored arduously under forbidding circumstances over a period of years without realizing one convert, but they were laying the groundwork for the evangelistic explosion now taking place in some of those areas of the earth.

The statistician's pen could not possibly reveal Heaven's evaluation of these efforts, nor could cold figures anticipate the ultimate results of these initially non-statistical efforts. But there are some things that statistics do tell. They tell us whether the work of God is heading in the right direction. They should inspire the individual minister to greater heights in evangelistic endeavor than heretofore. Statistics should en-

In the field of medicine, doctors have stethoscopes, they have thermometers and machines to check the status of one's physical vital life signs. Many lives have been saved because of these monitoring systems. It is important that the body of Christ be monitored as to the status of its vital spiritual life signs.

The New Testament Scriptures clearly indicate that large numbers of accessions to the faith significantly revealed the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. These statistics are encouraging and do not of themselves tend to pride. Some are forever caught up in the *process* with little concern for *results*. The baptismal command clearly indicates that Christ is interested in results, and in the very last book of the Bible, in Revelation 14:1, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

While this statistic may be symbolic of a larger or smaller number of people, it is nevertheless there to denote the enormity of the scope of the ultimate gospel result. Revelation 7:9 adds, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" (verse 13). "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (verse 14).

Inspired by this immeasurable statistical projection, we must labor on as if the winning of a soul is our business, knowing all the while that it is God's, and we must resist the temptation of Laodicean pride in the knowledge of our growth, but in humility confess to God that things would be better if we were better, and in His name pledge ourselves to the task! ➤

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## ***We must labor on as if the winning of a soul is our business, knowing all the while that it is God's.***

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Holy Spirit approves the statistical approach that encourages and that inspires. Statistics of themselves do not inherently tend to pride, and are, therefore, not sinful. Statistics monitor the operation. And while they do not tell all, they are vague indicators of the presence of God at work in His church and, as indicated before, have been with us since apostolic times.

### **Things Statistics Can't Measure**

Of course, there are some things that statistics don't measure. They can never reflect the time, energy, and prayerful concern expended over the conversion of one soul on the part of the pastor or the evangelist. Nor do statistics properly explain other variables such as extremes in climate, or the difficulty of preaching in countries that have restrictive state religious systems. Nor do statistics always tell of the sparsely populated areas that constitute some pastoral districts, so that five baptisms in Alaska may equal in significance 100 baptisms elsewhere. Or two conversions in Jerusalem may equal or excel twenty-five in Washington, D.C.

There is also the historical rec-

courage a field to lift its sights, taking into consideration past accomplishments, and statistics should encourage our hearts that God is at work in our midst.

### **Need for Statistics**

Of course, there are those whose sensitivities are offended by statistics. These conscientious, well-meaning brethren would not want the "right hand to know what the left hand is doing." They would simply "do the work" and "leave the results to God." There are, however, certain difficulties with the above suggestion.

There is a gas gauge on an automobile to let you know when you are low on fuel. There is a speedometer there to let you know when you are driving under or exceeding the speed limit. There are monitoring systems throughout man-made machines that serve as indicators as to the relative health of the automobile. There are the oil gauge and the transmission gauge, all of these things serving a useful purpose. This, in my view, is the basis of the need for a statistical reading on the comparative health of the spiritual body of Christ.

# Fishing for Bass

RITCHIE CHRISTIANSON

WHEN YOU go fishing for bass you may catch a bluegill; but when you go fishing for bluegill it isn't very likely that you will come up with a bass. When Jesus compared the work of evangelism with fishing He knew that some men would be easier to catch than others, just as some fish are easier to catch.

It appears that too often we gear our evangelistic and missionary thrust primarily toward reaching "fringe" groups, such as the poor, divorcees, alcoholics, the illiterate, and others who feel a very definite need in their lives, without having to have a desire created. What would happen if we would raise our sights and try to reach the central influence groups—men like ministers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, or other professional men whose influence would reach out in ever-widening circles, even to the fringe groups?

In theory this sounds like a wonderful idea, but it has been well-nigh abandoned by most evangelists and ministers because they soon discover that it is much easier to baptize those in the fringe groups. Doctrines are accepted much more quickly by them, since they usually will accept the authority of the instructor without diligently investigating each teaching thoroughly. Those who comprise the leadership class tend to feel little need, bring up difficult points that are hard for us to deal with, and are often on a higher plane than we are intellectually, socially, or financially.

To demonstrate that this concept of reaching influential group leaders really does work, take the example of Geoff, a Columbia Union College premedical stu-

dent. He began working for a young man who was president-elect of the student association at a college near Geoff's home. After much prayerful effort by Geoff and some of his friends, Chuck accepted Christ and was baptized at a summer camp meeting. Chuck never went back to serve as student association president, but instead attended CUC as a theology major.

Diane, one of Chuck's friends, was a new Christian and didn't know anything at all about Seventh-day Adventists. Prior to Chuck's conversion she tried to lead him to Christ, but without success. After Chuck's conversion she began attending some informal meetings conducted by local Adventist youth, because she wondered what they had that was strong enough to make Chuck want to be a Christian. She found out and was soon rejoicing in the third angel's message also.

Diane arranged for a young area pastor to speak to an interdenominational Christian group at the same college Chuck had previously attended. This group included faculty, as well as students. They liked him so well that they invited him back one day a week,

on a regular basis. Later they insisted on twice a week. The pastor began his relationship with this group by showing extra interest in the students and faculty who appeared to be the strongest thought leaders of the group. He gained their confidence; and they influenced the others to put credence in the truths the pastor was presenting.

A very close bond developed between the pastor and the Christian group at this college. By the end of the spring term about one fourth of the group had become Adventists. Every one of these students either is already in full-time denominational employment or is preparing for it. Each of them is an active soul winner. Each has greatly enlarged his circle of influence within his family and peer group. The circle is expanding to include leaders of other Christian youth groups who are now sharing the Adventist message with more than 200 non-Adventist youth.

If our work is centered on those who are influence leaders, does this mean that our work for the fringe groups will be neglected or ignored? No, what it actually means is that more are reached in those classes in the long run. The leadership group expands, and its influence produces more soul-winning personnel. Thus more avenues of soul winning are opened.

"It requires much wisdom to reach ministers and men of influence. But why should they be neglected as they have been by our people? . . . If we can win to Christ and the truth souls to whom God has entrusted large capabilities, our influence will, through them, be constantly extending, and will become a far-reaching power for good."—*Evangelism*, pp. 562, 563. ➤

*Ritchie Christianson is a literature evangelist in the Greater Pittsburgh area.*

# Preparation for Marriage

N. R. DOWER

PERHAPS the greatest single neglect in the whole human experience is proper preparation for marriage. Yet whether we realize it or not, people are being prepared for marriage. It is my firm conviction that the tragic results evident in so many homes are the product of this preparation.

Next to preparation of children for the kingdom of heaven, preparation of the child for marriage is doubtless a parent's greatest single responsibility. Everything that he says and does actually contributes to this whether for good or for evil. This is a fearful reality, and all parents need to be aware of it.

When does this preparation begin? Some time ago I saw a sermon title that intrigued me, "Life After Birth." Of course, this was speaking of the new birth, and was in contrast to the familiar evangelistic topic, "Life After Death." Of the two I think the first is the more important, for the preparation begins at birth or even before, and continues on "till death do us part."

## What Must the Child Be Taught?

What are the things that must be taught if proper preparation is to be made? The child must be taught:

*Self-control.* This is vital and requires among other things, careful, prayerful but firm discipline. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Heb. 12:6), and parents will too.

*The development of right habits.* These do not come about by

accident. They must be learned and daily practiced.

*The lesson of dependence.* You will notice that I have not said independence, but dependence. Dependence upon parents, others, and God, is something that must be taught. My experience indicates that independence is a much greater barrier to happiness in marriage than dependence. For among other things the capacity to make a person, husband or wife, feel not only wanted but needed is an essential stimulus to personal growth and development in marriage.

We have been told that it was when his first son was born that Enoch began his walk with God. As he observed the utter dependence of the little infant upon his parents and his complete trust in them, he learned the lesson of complete dependence and trust in God. This is the ultimate in the walk with God and of righteousness by faith.

*How to share—in every way.*

*How to work and relate to responsibility.* Children should be taught from the earliest years to accept assignments and carry the responsibility of seeing that a job is well done. The parent has the responsibility of seeing to it that the child does his appointed task.

*How to grow up.* "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child [I played as a child, I acted as a child]: but when I became a man, I put away childish things [including the pouting, childish disposition]" (1 Cor. 13:11).

*How to get along with people.* How to relate to people in all cultures, under varied conditions, is

a vital lesson to be learned by everyone. But it is especially vital in preparation for marriage.

*How to receive as well as how to give.* This is a gracious art and needs to be well developed.

*How to express love.* This must be learned. It does not come merely by doing what comes naturally.

*How to express appreciation.* This is one of the great things that will be evident in the life of the one properly prepared for marriage. It stimulates love.

*How to relate to problems, abuse, criticism, anger, unkindness, prejudice, hate.* This means the temper must always be under control.

*How to relate to temptation.* "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). "But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (1 Tim. 6:11). "Cease to do evil; learn to do well" (Isa. 1:16, 17). "Overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1). "When lust hath conceived [and given time it will], it bringeth forth sin" (James 1:15). In other words, keep the passions and emotions under control.

*How to worship and maintain a truly joyous experience in Christ.* Each person needs to learn to appreciate the joy and happiness of a better world.

These lessons should be, and are being taught day by day, consciously or unconsciously, positively or negatively.

## The School's Responsibility

In limitless ways, the school must sense a responsibility of seconding the work done in the home

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in preparing our young people for marriage. In the important areas of learning good habits, getting along well with others, learning to work and play together, and the many other avenues of self-expression in a group setting, our schools have a priceless privilege.

What better place to teach our youth to study and pray together. Through meaningful classes in areas of physiology and body care, as well as in the development of right attitudes and practices, our schools may make a major contribution to our youth.

Our schools can also be helpful in the vital areas of proper relationships between the sexes. In classes in homemaking and responsibility sharing, in parent-child relationships, in child-to-child matters, and later in youth-to-youth relationships much can be presented to our young people that will make a major contribution to their future security and happiness.

The Christian school, together with the Christian home, can be used of God in giving guidance to our youth that will help them to be able to approach marriage with good reason to expect success and continued happiness.

In our colleges, and perhaps in the later years of academy, courses should be offered that will set forth the basics essential for the establishment of a happy home. If the home fails in this area, and so many do, then the school must not fail. This may be the only hope that some of our youth have of ever receiving proper training for the second most important decision of their lives.

What a great thing it would be

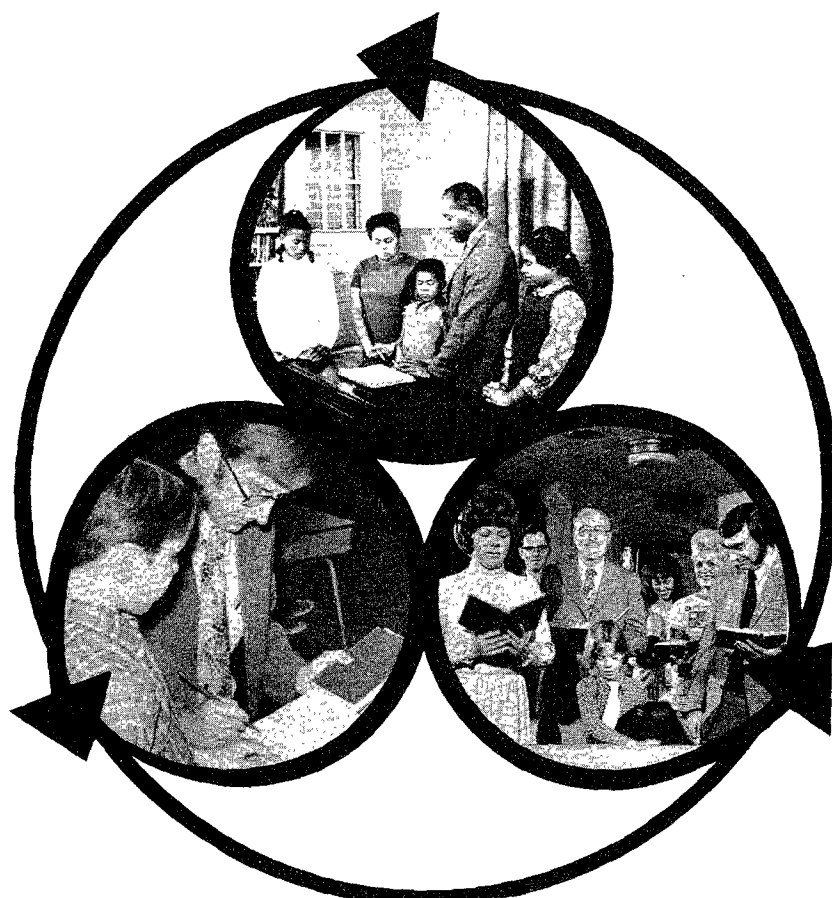
if in the setting of the spiritual exercises and classes this kind of work could be done. This would help to undo the tragic training of the street, and the mass communications media, and set forth in a delicate but appealing way the great love of God for His children, and His desire for them in wholly satisfying home relationships.

#### **The Church's Responsibility**

Some ask, What can the church do in this area? By faithfully instructing, supporting the home

and school, and initiating such programs as home health, home relationships, parent-child workshops, and home care, it can make its great contribution to our youth and to our future homes.

No pastor who has a shepherd's love for his sheep will want to neglect any opportunity to render such service to his people. In informal classes, in formal training programs, in arranging for group activities and group sharing, he may assist our youth in the development of right attitudes and practices.



Three essential elements—the home, the school, and the church.



cess of their marriage and to their ultimate happiness, both in this life and in the life to come.

God's beautiful plan is the development of holy, healthy, happy people. He wants them now and He wants them with Him throughout eternity.

God's original plan has not changed. Marriage is still sacred. Marriage is still for keeps, "till death do us part." Death is the only dissolving factor in God's ideal plan. We must constantly stress the fact that divorce is a very, very poor substitute, even at best, and should be avoided like the plague.

It is vital that thorough and practical preparation should be made before marriage—in the home, in the school, in the church, in individual relationships, both separately and jointly.

The marriage relationship, if entered into in harmony with God's ideal and plan, contributes vitally to the wholeness of the individual. Man is not complete in God's plan without the woman. Neither is the woman complete without the man. It is still "not good for man to be alone."

Marriage pays rich dividends in health, in happiness, and in holiness if both partners seek and endeavor to follow God's purpose and plan. I have been greatly impressed by reading "A Parent's

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***Marriage pays  
rich dividends in health,  
in happiness,  
and in holiness . . .***

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Prayer" by Dr. Garry C. Myers, taken from *Highlights for Children*. Blessed is the child who is prepared for life and marriage by such a parent whose prayer is answered.

"Oh, God, make me a better parent. Help me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to answer all their questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting them, talking back to them and contradicting them. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me. Give me the courage to

confess my sins against my children and to ask of them forgiveness, when I know that I have done them wrong.

"May I not vainly hurt the feelings of my children. Forbid that I should laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame and ridicule as punishment. Let me not tempt a child to lie and steal. So guide me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness.

"Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me. May I cease to nag; and when I am out of sorts, help me, Oh Lord, to hold my tongue.

"Blind me to the little errors of my children and help me to see the good things that they do. Give me a ready word for honest praise.

"Help me to treat my children as those of their own age, but let me not exact of them the judgments and conventions of adults. Allow me not to rob them of the opportunity to wait upon themselves, to think, to choose, and to make decisions.

"Forbid that I should ever punish them for my selfish satisfaction. May I grant them all of their wishes that are reasonable and have the courage always to withhold a privilege which I know will do them harm.

"Make me so fair and just, so considerate and companionable to my children that they will have a genuine esteem for me. Fit me to be loved and imitated by my children.

"With all Thy gifts, Oh God, do give me calm and poise and self control." \*

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\* "A Parent's Prayer," by Dr. Garry C. Myers, editor in chief of *Highlights for Children*. Used by permission.

Many of our youth come from divided homes and do not attend our schools. Their only hope is for the church to step in and fill the need. By pastoral counseling and personal interest, by using his own home as a place where proper ideals and concepts are demonstrated, the pastor can set the stage for limitless assistance to our dear youth.

Through sermons on the home, on child training, on the sacredness of the family ties and the marriage vows, by presenting God's counsels on divorce and remarriage, by sharing the beautiful concepts and inspired counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy, the concerned pastor can help our interested and needy young people.

There is another way in which the church can make a major contribution. It is in the service offered by its pastor in prayerfully counseling those who are having problems in the home. If this is done in the spirit of Christ and by sharing the counsels of Scripture, he may be able to assist troubled partners in marriage in solving their problems and enjoying the true happiness that God intended for the home.

In the home, the school, and the church, our most creative minds should be developing up-to-date, meaningful help both for the homes of the church and of the community. We may be a great source of support for troubled people that will enable the church to meet the staggering problem that exists in our society today.

**Joint Responsibility**

The bride and the groom should seek to learn together that which will contribute most to the suc-

# Control Systems and Evolution

ERIC MAGNUSSON

THE ARGUMENT about the most plausible explanation for the origin of plants and animals on this planet is difficult to win. The idea of Creation can receive only indirect support from scientific evidence, because the creative acts were supernatural events and therefore lie outside the realm of science. And although most scientists would agree about the high improbability that natural processes can account for the intricacies of plant and animal life, it is hard for them to exclude the evolutionary postulate completely.

However, the picture changes when we consider the "control systems" that have been provided at all levels of function in animals and plants. The huge range of automatic devices designed for such tasks as saving fuel, detecting poisons, and avoiding production bottlenecks is most difficult to account for by the theory of natural selection. At the same time these contrivances suggest more strongly than anything else that the characteristics of plants and animals were designed at one time and not added piece by piece. It is in focusing on automatic control devices that the evolutionary mechanism appears most improbable, perhaps actually impossible.

## Control of Enzyme Synthesis

The most remarkable examples—and the most difficult to explain—are the switching mechanisms found within the single cell. Between 1950 and 1960 biochemists came to appreciate the relationship between the enzymes responsible for the chemical activity of cells and the genes responsible for the enzymes. To each enzyme

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there corresponds a specific section of DNA somewhere along the length of one of the chromosomes of the cell. Along the length of this section is written in a chemical code the specification for the construction of the enzyme. What was not initially appreciated was that there also exist many lengths of DNA in the chromosomes that are concerned, not with instructions for building enzymes ("structural genes"), but with controlling the assembly of enzymes so that they are produced only when they can actually benefit the cell.

The first example of a "control gene" to be discovered was found in a species of bacterium that inhabits the human alimentary tract and is known as *Escherichia coli*. *E. coli* is capable of surviving under very stringent conditions, taking advantage of whatever foodstuff happens to be available. To facilitate this survival, it has available a range of enzymes to help it "digest" the kinds of food it happens to come in contact with and, accordingly, it possesses genes enabling it to produce these enzymes.

*E. coli* possesses only one chromosome and has genes for only about 3,000 enzymes, which is why it is so convenient to study. (The fact that the specifications for 3,000 separate proteins, each with an average of 400 amino acids in precise sequence, can be called "convenient" gives a hint of what may be expected in more complex cells!) Quoting the number of 3,000 makes it clear why control of synthesis of the enzymes is necessary. Enzyme synthesis is so efficient that the cell would quickly burst if this process were not checked.

One set of *E. coli* genes con-

tains the code for a set of enzymes required for the breakdown of lactose, often called milk sugar. Although a relatively uncommon nutrient, lactose is sometimes used by the bacteria, and this special set of enzymes is therefore held in readiness. However, the cell never bothers to synthesize these enzymes from the instructions available in the genes until the genes are switched on, and this does not occur unless lactose is actually available to the cell as a foodstuff. (See Fig. 1.)

The switch mechanism works like this.<sup>1</sup> All the genes required for production of the lactose-splitting enzymes are clustered in one part of the bacterial chromosome, and in that same location there are two additional lengths of DNA. One of these contains instructions that enable the cell to construct a substance known as "repressor," which is of such a design as to attach itself specifically to the other length of chromosome located just ahead of the three lactose genes. Whenever "repressor" is in position in that location it prevents the DNA code for the three enzymes from being decoded and the enzymes synthesized.

But if the cells are growing in a medium that contains lactose, the lactose molecules are occasionally transported through the membrane of the cell and metabolized, and one of the products attaches itself to "repressor," which is specially shaped to permit this attachment. When this attachment is made "repressor" is no longer able to attach itself to the DNA, the "roadblock" is removed, and normal transcription and translation of the code and synthesis of the enzymes proceed.<sup>2</sup>

***Because of the large numbers  
of mutations required, it is unthinkable  
that the exact sequence of amino acids in a protein  
being produced by regulatory genes could be accomplished  
as a result of natural selection.***

It is no simple matter to design a protein such as "repressor," capable of being tightly bound to two very different substances, one of which prevents the other one from being bound, but not vice versa. Apparently it is worthwhile for the cell to go to this trouble, in spite of the fact that repressor molecules are large and complicated proteins with no function other than regulation. Many other enzyme systems are regulated in the same way, and chaotic overproduction in the cell is avoided. The device is very efficient. In *E. coli* the lactose-splitting enzymes are 1,000 times scarcer when the genes are repressed than when lactose is present and their synthesis is switched on.

In the case of the enzymes required to synthesize histidine the problem is rather different. Histidine is an amino acid required for the synthesis of enzymes (including the enzymes required for the synthesis of histidine!), and no bacterium can ever be sure that it will not have to manufacture it for itself—hence the existence of a set of nine enzymes that convert a readily available substance to histidine in eleven steps (two of the enzymes are used twice over). On the other hand, it is costly to manufacture such a large packet of complicated proteins if histidine is already available in the diet, so a mechanism exists to switch the whole synthetic process off.

### **What the Regulation of Enzyme Synthesis Implies**

There are three problems for any naturalistic theory of origins that are exposed by enzyme-synthesis control systems. The first problem occurs whenever the word enzyme is used. It occurs because of their ability to perform

one particular task with high efficiency—in biochemical terms, their specificity. A protein produced by regulatory genes can:

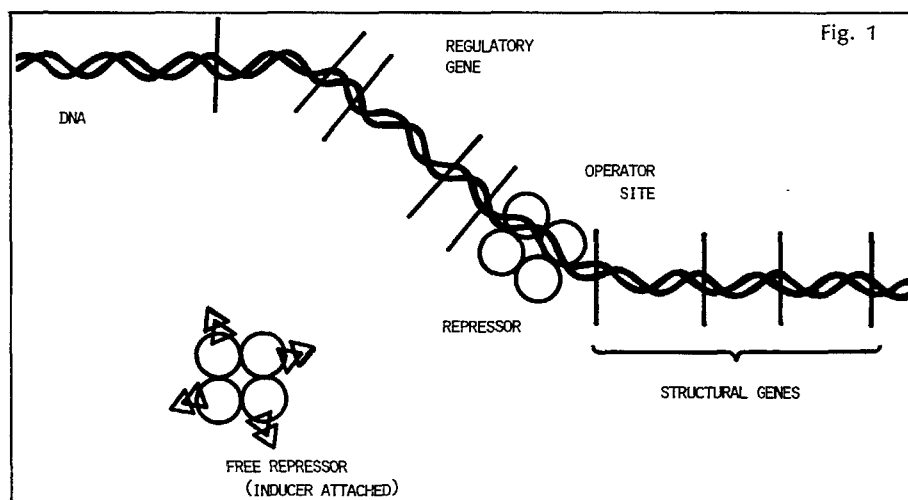
1. assume a stable, folded structure and, in some cases, build itself to correct size by attaching to other identical proteins to form an "oligomer" (literally, a small segment);
2. adhere specifically to the section of chromosome just ahead of the appropriate structural genes it is designed to regulate; and
3. link with an inducer molecule in such a way as to disrupt its attachment to the operator site.

This is evidence of high precision in their design, something difficult to imagine as the result of random mutation in previously existing proteins with completely different functions. In the "lac

operon" (Fig. 1) the repressor protein is able to recognize and bind a specific section of DNA only 0.001 per cent of the total length of the chromosome, do it efficiently, and never choose the wrong site.

Evolution by natural selection implies that each mutation produced an advantage to the species sufficient to ensure that other organisms without it would die out. With such precise design it is clear that large numbers of mutations would be required before the required sequence of amino acids could be achieved. It is unthinkable that each intermediate mutational step could be accompanied by the required advantage to make natural selection possible.

The other problems pinpointed by repressor proteins are in a slightly different category. They concern (1) the positioning of the genes on the chromosome and, (2) the fact that the binding of a "repressor" to the operator site is



A map of the portion of the chromosome of the bacterium *E. coli* known as the "lac operon" responsible for synthesis of three enzymes for splitting the sugar lactose (the "structural genes") and for regulation of that synthesis (the regulatory gene and the operator site). The regulatory gene contains the code for production of "repressor," a large protein shown attached to the operator site, where it prevents the following three structural genes from being transcribed and translated into the three enzymes. Repressor is prevented from hindering this process if inducer (made from lactose) is attached to it.

***The complex interlocking  
of the molecular mechanisms inside cells  
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prevented by the molecule whose presence or absence is the reason for the regulation, such as lactose or histidine.

In the first case, there is the difficulty of accounting for the presence of the structural genes in adjacent positions immediately following the operator site. Since the repression of synthesis depends on stopping the cell's decoding machine as it moves along the chromosome, it is vital that the operator site be located precisely at the head of the structural genes and that they be all located together.

However it is exceedingly difficult to contemplate how they could migrate from some other part of the chromosome (where they were produced randomly), and even harder to see how they could have been randomly produced all in the same place. One possible way to solve the problem has been suggested but rejected because the evidence is against it.<sup>1</sup> With as many as nine genes, as in the histidine case, the probability of such events' occurring by random processes is infinitesimal.

The dual binding ability of a repressor molecule poses what might be called a "logical problem" for evolutionary explanations of origins.

The advantage of developing a repressor (presuming, among other things, that the structural genes are already aligned and ready to be repressed) depends on the repressor's ability to bind both the effector (e.g., lactose) and the operator site. But developing a repressor by natural selection would be a long job. To produce a protein as large, as accurate in its recognition of the correct operator site, and as effective in its binding would require

many hundreds of mutational steps, taking at the very least, thousands of generations.

The advantage of having a repressor to bind to the operator site applies only if the inducer molecule is absent during this time, which it cannot be, because it must be present to confer the other half of the advantage—"switching-on." If only half of the advantage is sought, then a repressor is not needed at all! Either leave the structural genes to be continuously synthesized or delete them altogether. But to develop the advantage or a control system gradually it is necessary for lactose (or histidine, et cetera) to be simultaneously present and absent!

#### **Control of Enzyme Activity**

Many enzyme systems avoid the "too-much-of-a-good-thing" problem by using the "negative feedback" idea utilized in the ball-cock commonly used in water cisterns and reservoirs. As the water rises to the level specified the floating ball gradually closes the cock. Likewise, rising concentrations of enzyme products (such as the amino acid isoleucine, produced by an important chain of enzymes in many organisms) permit them to be caught and bound by one of the enzymes, usually the first in the chain. This enzyme is designed so that any attachment of the end product prevents the normal enzyme function from being carried out, and the production line stops until the excess supply of the product is used up.

More ingenious still are the control systems designed to keep up supplies of a product used by the cell for several distinct purposes. Here there are provided several distinct enzymes (called isoenzymes) capable of produc-

ing the same product, but each designed to be inhibited by a different end product, so that excess of one of them switches off only a part of the production line and does not close it down completely!

Another method of control is the use of some appropriate substance to activate the enzyme when it is needed, otherwise leaving it in "mothballs." One example of this method is the use of glucose phosphate to stimulate the final enzyme involved in the conversion of glucose (blood sugar) to glycogen (the form in which excess carbohydrate is commonly stored in the human body). Even if these systems do not generate the logical paradox in as acute a form as happens with suggestions of an evolutionary origin for repressor proteins, they still confront that hypothesis with the obstacle of explaining how the development of a "switched-off" enzyme could ever be beneficial to the cell.

The list of regulatory devices is long, but all parts of it tell the same story—that living cells were designed and produced as going concerns. Modification and diversification by natural selection has certainly operated in the plant and animal kingdoms ever since their creation, but the conclusion that there was originally a Creation is hard to escape. The complex interlocking of the molecular mechanisms inside cells and the calm strategy with which they are regulated are among the clearest evidences of divine design to be found anywhere in nature. ➤

<sup>1</sup> B. Muller-Hill, *Angewandte Chemie* (International Edition, 1971), vol. 10, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> See R. H. Utt, ed., *Creation: Nature's Designs and Designer* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1971).

# C. R. STANLEY **"IF I BE LIFTED UP"**

"THE MYSTERY of the cross explains all other mysteries."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 652. Locked up in this statement is a profound truth, which, when fully grasped and acted upon, can greatly improve our private and public ministry. There is a mysterious power emanating from the cross that draws men heavenward.

All of us, I'm sure, at some time in our ministry, have been concerned about the limited results in soul winning when compared with the effort expended. How often we have felt inadequate for the encounter with hardened sinners. Looking back on my own ministry,

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I am sure much more could have been accomplished if I had more fully comprehended that in uplifting the crucified Saviour a mysterious power touches the sinner's heart such as nothing else does. As I face 1975 I am led to conclude that my success in soul winning will be commensurate with my ability to present "the sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin . . . the great truth around which all other truths cluster."—*Evangelism*, p. 190.

The Bible is not given primarily as a book of theology. It is a biography. Speaking of the Scriptures, Jesus said: "They are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). In Luke 24:44 we read: "And he said unto them, These are

the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." Christ the Creator is found in the first verse of the Old Testament and again in the first verse of the New Testament. He is the subject matter of the books of Moses, the psalms, the prophets, and the final benediction of Revelation. However, the Bible does not primarily reveal details of a life, but of a death.

The suffering and death of Jesus Christ is the supreme event of the Bible. The apostle Peter declares, "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth







of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled" (Acts 3:18). The death of Jesus Christ was the subject matter of the prophets from the very beginning. Paul likewise says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3, 4). Rightly understood, the Holy Scriptures come into sharp focus upon the cross. In the words of Dr. T. A. Pierson, "Every sacrifice presented, from the hour of Abel's altar fire down to the last passover of the Passion Week, pointed as with flaming finger to Calvary's

cross. Yea, all the centuries moved as in solemn procession to lay their tributes upon Golgotha."—*Many Infallible Truths*, p. 39.

As the cross is the heart of the Bible, then it would be right to conclude that every doctrine of the Bible gathers its luster from Calvary. The servant of the Lord beautifully expresses this truth in these words: "In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary." — *Evangelism*, p. 190. Every doctrine is best illuminated by the cross.

Cross-centered preaching is foolishness in the eyes of the

world, but those who proclaim it see it by faith as an unexplainable, mysterious drawing power. No other subject that a minister proclaims is more arresting and moving. Notice how Jesus on the road to Emmaus gave meaning to the death that had caused His disciples to be downcast. From the Scriptures, as recorded in Luke 24:26 and 27, He portrayed the prophecies of the Messiah's death. Associated with these words was a mysterious power that touched the dejected disciples. Their own report of how they felt, when the crucified Christ was presented, follows: "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

Here is a graphic illustration of the truth that when the death of Christ is unfolded the hearts of men are mysteriously touched and moved.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached to the multitude about Christ crucified and raised. In Acts 2:37 he reiterates the truth of the cross, and that mysterious power always associated with the uplifted cross "pricked" the hearts of those hardened sinners, and they exclaimed, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here is the first example in the Christian church of the unexplainable power that is always associated with the uplifting of the cross of Christ. Here the words of Jesus were dramatically illustrated. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

Likewise, when the death of Christ was unfolded to the Ethiopian (Acts 8:32, 33) his darkened heart was illuminated and he requested baptism. Could it be that we have lost some decisions for baptism because our faith has been more in the argument of scriptural evidence than in the moving power of the cross to bring about decision?

It is only at the cross that man beholds the sinfulness of sin. When the sinner sees that God

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***There is an unexplainable power that touches the hearts of men as they behold the Lamb of God lifted up upon Calvary's cross.***

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"spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32) he is then better able to understand the nature of disobedience. From *Steps to Christ*, page 31, we read: "The exceeding sinfulness of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross." Sin will never be regarded in its enormity until man stands at Calvary and gazes in awe at the amazing sacrifice required to atone for disobedience. When he stands to view that sacrifice, then an unex-

plainable, mysterious power that God has promised to give begins to touch his heart.

In our ministry we are to appeal to men to stop transgressing God's holy commandments. Now, while strong arguments have to be brought forth to convince the intellect, we must not fail to present the consequences of transgression as viewed at the cross. "As Christ draws them to look upon His cross, to behold Him whom their sins have pierced, the commandment comes home to the conscience."—*Ibid.*, p. 27.

When we consider the apostasies from our church, would it not be right to conclude that sometimes men have decided in favor of truth because of its overwhelming evidence without being converted to Christ? Why is this so? In examining my own ministry, I would agree that the following words put the finger on the heart of the problem:

"Some ministers err in making their sermons wholly argumentative. There are those who listen to the theory of the truth, and are impressed with the evidences brought out; then, if Christ is presented as the Saviour of the world, the seed sown may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God.

"But often the cross of Calvary is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and a golden opportunity, lost, is lost forever. If in connection with the theory of the truth, Christ and His redeeming love had been proclaimed, these might have been won to His side."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 158.

When the cross is omitted from our sermons or Bible studies, they are like Cain's offering. By them men may be intellectually convinced and decided for the Sabbath or other related truths; but if they are not directed to the foot of the cross and their hearts are not pricked we shall have nominal Christians, who, like Saul before the Damascus road, make a great show of religious zeal.

Paul's decision "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2) should be ours in the light of the following instruction: "Of all professing


Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world."—*Evangelism*, p. 188.

The jeering of the rabble ceased at the cross when Christ died, and an awesome fear gripped the hearts of the multitude. Even the supervising Roman centurion, who had witnessed many such scenes, tremblingly declared: "Truly this was the Son of God." There is an unexplainable power that touches the hearts of men as they behold the Lamb of God lifted up upon Calvary's cross. Observe for yourself in your preaching or in your Bible studies how the sneering, disbelieving countenance is changed when you speak of Christ and Him crucified.

When all other evidence failed to bring conviction into the heart of Thomas it was the testimony of the cross that led him to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." Commenting on this, the servant of the Lord says:

"In His treatment of Thomas, Jesus gave a lesson for His followers. His example shows how we should treat those whose faith is weak, and who make their doubts prominent. Jesus did not overwhelm Thomas with reproach, nor did He enter into controversy with him. He revealed Himself to the doubting one. Thomas had been most unreasonable in dictating the conditions of his faith, but Jesus, by His generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers.

"Unbelief is seldom overcome by controversy. It is rather put upon self-defense, and finds new support and excuse. But let Jesus, in His love and mercy, be revealed as the crucified Saviour, and from many once unwilling lips will be heard the acknowledgment of Thomas, 'My Lord and my God.' "—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 808.

Let us unashamedly, confidently, and believingly lift up the cross before the people, for therein is an unexplainable power that touches the hearts of men more than anything else we may proclaim. It is so because the Lord has pronounced it to be so. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). 

# sin, stress, and sanity

COLIN D. STANDISH

WHATEVER became of sin? Since 1973 when Karl Menninger's book raised this question, there has been a noticeable shift in emphasis of the role played by both clergymen and the church in the treatment of the mentally ill and the maintenance of mental health.

That Menninger should have spoken with such forthrightness and moved so specifically into the area of morality and the role of the clergy in his book *Whatever Became of Sin?* in itself demands attention. This is especially true of the very direct role he sees for the clergy in the prevention and treatment of the mentally ill, and in helping those who are facing the problems of strain, stress, and tension in this hectic world of today.

In the epilog, Menninger points out that popular learning is against notions of guilt and morality and that "... certainly no one talks about sin."<sup>1</sup> Yet, he sees in sin and the morality gap some of the greatest problems facing the human race, especially in the field of mental health. Menninger issues a strong clarion call for the clergy to reassume spiritual leadership, which is so essential to the mental health of the community at large. "Some clergymen prefer pastoral counseling of individuals to the pulpit function," he asserts, "but the latter is a greater opportunity to both heal and prevent."<sup>2</sup>

Since this call comes to us from one of the best-known psychiatrists of the present era, it must not be taken lightly. He points out that "clergymen have a golden

opportunity to prevent some of the accumulated misapprehensions, guilt, aggressive actions, and other roots of later mental suffering and mental disease."<sup>3</sup> In discussing the way in which clergymen can best achieve this, he says "Preach! Tell it like it is. Say it from the pulpit. Cry it from the housetops. What shall we cry? Cry comfort, cry repentance, cry hope."<sup>4</sup>

Could it be that many of the mental problems we face today result from the abdication of their role by those who are chosen of God to seek the spiritual regeneration of mankind? When so many of the clergy have begun to see their role in the light of counseling and caring for the social needs of the community, it may be that a challenge like Menninger's is necessary to reorientate the Christian ministry to its most important role, that of caring for the spiritual needs of the flock in a manner that in turn will have vital implications for the mental and emotional health of the community.

One of the most important areas of concentration on the part of psychologists in recent times has been in the area of guilt. For many years psychologists have inclined strongly away from the classical Christian view that guilt results from the breaking of God's moral law, which in turn results in separation from communication with God.

There have been many attempts to either ignore guilt, to rationalize it, or to encourage a view of guilt-inducing behavior that leads to a reduction, if not elimination, of guilt in the wrong way. It is

therefore refreshing to read the kind of appeal that Menninger has made in which he rediscovers the rightful role of the church in the handling of guilt.

The Bible makes it clear that guilt has its source in the breaking of God's commandments. In fact, right in the third commandment we are told that the Lord will not hold us guiltless if we take His name in vain (Ex. 20:7). Leviticus 6:4 and James 2:10 also confirm that sin and the breaking of God's law result in guilt on the part of the lawbreaker.

## Ignoring Will Not Eradicate

No amount of effort to ignore or to rationalize can in any way eradicate the experience of guilt. Many who have sought to do just this, have failed. Obviously, the Christian has access to the only valid way to eliminate guilt—by the submission of his life to the love of Jesus. 1 John 1:9 provides the real answer to the eradication of guilt and sin from the life.

This is reaffirmed in the Old Testament where we have such assurances as the promise that "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12). Coming to Jesus leads to a new relationship in which guilt no longer has dominion in the life. Paul, too, confirms that victory in Christ results in the elimination of guilt. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1).

It seems clear that the minister has a vital—indeed, an indispensable—role in leading his congre-

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health evangelism

gation to recognize that the only way in which guilt can be eradicated is through a right relationship with Jesus.

### **Guilt Has Vital Role**

Too often guilt has been viewed as counter-productive to sound human development. But there is a vital role for guilt in the experience of every human being. Guilt is the internalized reaction that results from doing that which separates from God. This kind of guilt should lead to God, the Source of true forgiveness, and the consequent elimination of such guilt feelings. Here alone is the real answer to the massive psychological problems faced by those whose lives are guilt ridden.

Clergymen, above all others, have the opportunity to provide a basis for their congregations to discriminate between guilt, which is the direct result of sin against the law of God, and those guilt-inducing behavior patterns that are home or societal based.

Inherent within the message of Christ is the basis of true mental health. Paul says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). It is certain that the religion of Christ is the firm foundation for emotional adjustment; for only as man comes into a meaningful relationship with God can he hope

God" (Rom. 3:23); that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10); that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6); and that without Christ we "can do nothing" (John 15:5), yet the whole purpose of Christianity is to develop the self-worth of mankind.

When man was created he was created in the image of God, but when sin entered the world, the image of God was well-nigh obliterated.<sup>5</sup> The main purpose of the ministry of Christ and of the Holy Spirit is the restoration of God's image in man.<sup>6</sup> As we come to Christ there is developed a new concept of self-worth. As the penitent believer recognizes that all heaven was poured out in the sacrifice of Christ that he might have eternal life, he begins, at least in part, to recognize the great worth that God has placed upon him. The fact that we are called to be sons and daughters of God (2 Cor. 6:18) and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17) leaves no place for low self-esteem in the thinking of the Christian.

A feeling of worthiness should not be confused with pride. For pride has its roots in human self-exaltation and achievements based upon the individual's own performance. The true worth of the Christian is a recognition, not of what the individual is, but of what Christ has done for him. Thus

his life, and that which can be further accomplished with God's help and direction.

### **Christ Brings Peace**

The mature Christian has a peace that can be achieved only by a relationship with Christ. The Lord promised that He will "bless his people with peace" (Ps. 29:11).

This relationship comes to those who have surrendered and submitted their lives and their wills to the Lord. It comes as man realizes the freedom that is gained through obeying the law of God. "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165). This is the peace that all human beings seek for today.

It seems at this critical time in history, when there is a breakdown of both moral and emotional structure within the community, that the clergy is called upon to reassert its role in spiritual leadership. The pulpit must be used to provide the masses with a clear understanding of true spiritual, mental, and emotional strength, which comes only through the power of Jesus.

There has been a strong tendency for the preacher to move into the field of pastoral counseling. Basic to most techniques of counseling is an avoidance of any response that might impute wrong or moral judgment upon the individual being counseled. This has frequently been translated even into the pulpit presentation of the preacher. No longer are right and wrong clearly defined, and congregations are left to uncertainty and sin. While it is not the preacher's role to define sin merely as he sees it, it is his God-ordained responsibility to present the word of truth so clearly that none will be in doubt as to God's purpose and will. True repentance is effected only when wrong is recognized. It is the minister's role to set before the people "life and good, and death and evil" (Deut. 30:15). **A**

## ***It is the preacher's God-ordained responsibility to present the word of truth so clearly that none will be in doubt as to God's purpose and will.***

to develop his emotional and mental powers according to the divine purpose.

### **Guilt and Self-image**

The problem of guilt is closely allied to problems with self-image. Many feel a lack of self-worth, a lack of identity and a lack of awareness of their specific role in life and, therefore, tend to suffer considerably from emotional conflict. Christ again has the answers to low self-esteem and low self-worth. While it is true that the Bible stresses that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of

Christ is the center, and not self. It is essential that the emphasis of the clergy be upon the great worth that God has placed upon every soul.

The fact is that in every human being Jesus sees infinite possibilities.<sup>7</sup> This recognition will not bring complacency, but a challenge as men and women seek to reflect, in its totality, the beauty of the image of Jesus. Such an individual can no longer be persecuted with feelings of self-denial and self-uselessness; for his is a clear vision of the magnitude of that which Christ has wrought in

<sup>1</sup> Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1973), p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Education*, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.



# "By Their Fruits..."

JERE WALLACK

THE needs were clearly evident. All around. Everywhere.

Needs, yes. And opportunities. But how could they be met? The budget was stretched to the limit.

How could a church—struggling to launch an educational program and build a school, also planning a new church structure—how could it finance an effective program to meet the community's ever-present needs and thus share the Good News?

By their fruits—that's how.

Members of the Dalton, Georgia, Adventist church saw the limitless potential of services urgently needed by their community and resolved to fill that lack. They would have to secure a resource for income to finance their endeavors.

They would sell fruit.

The H. & S. Citrus, Inc., an Adventist firm in Fort Pierce, Florida, was contacted. Arrangements were made for the

church to sell Indian River fruit to finance their community projects.

That was seven or eight years ago, and the program has grown almost beyond imagination. In 1973 seven semitruckloads of fresh fruit were sold by church members, netting a profit of more than \$7,500.

As a result of this newly acquired income, the Community Services center is a full-time operation.

The facility is open five full days each week. On Tuesdays and Thursdays clothing and food are distributed. On the other days wearing apparel, household items, and furniture are sorted and prepared for distribution.

The center has a director, an assistant director, and a general supervisor who is the center's only paid worker. Approximately thirty other church members—men and women—volunteer scores of hours of labor each week.

Officially opened in May, 1972, the center has received high

acclaim in this city of more than 40,000 residents. A feature article in the daily newspaper described the center as "one of the best-organized places in Dalton."

In the first seventeen months of operation the center helped more than 600 families with gifts of 25,000 articles of clothing.

During the past school year, the Community Services center sponsored a drug-education seminar in area schools, which reached 15,000 to 20,000 students from first grade through high school.

Covering two area counties, as well as the Dalton city schools, with films, lectures, and question-and-answer periods, the seminar has also been in demand at service clubs, teachers' conventions, and PTA organizations.

With money from the fruit sales, hundreds of dollars' worth of films and related drug-education materials have been purchased for use in the program.

Another Community Services project sponsored by members of the Dalton church was a four-day vegetarian-cookery seminar held last October. Two sessions were required to handle the 120 registrants, eighty-five of whom were nonmembers. Several men were among those attending.

The local paper and radio stations carried several extensive stories, and all local media carried free advertisements for the seminar. Television in Chattanooga, thirty-one miles north, also gave the seminar wide coverage. One television channel carried a fifteen-minute special report on the program.

As a result of this seminar, many who attended requested Bible studies.

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

An active Community Services center, an extensive drug-education program, and a timely nutrition seminar—all carried on by a church whose budget was already fully committed.

But the members of the Adventist church in Dalton and the great work of God they represent are certainly being known by their fruits—their good deeds to meet the city's needs—financed by funds from fruit sales.

*Jere Wallack is the communication secretary of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.*

# SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH

## HELP FOR ARTHRITIS



Arthritis is a general term for inflammation of joints. The cause is known for some types of arthritis such as those produced by bacterial infection or uric acid. Two common forms of arthritis for which the exact cause is unknown are rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. Physical therapy employs physical agents such as water, electricity, massage, and exercise for their effects on the body. When skillfully used, these may relieve pain and enhance healing. Some form of physical therapy can be used in all types of arthritis during some phase of the disease. However, the type, frequency, and duration will depend on the type of arthritis and the stage of the disease. Rest should also be properly balanced with exercise. At times, rest may even require splinting of the part. For best results, physical therapy and rest should be prescribed by a physician and carried out by someone trained in their skillful administration. (*Life and Health*, May, 1974, p. 5.)

## HAPPINESS IS A BEAUTIFUL SMILE



Deficiencies in certain nutrients can cause the tooth enamel and the dentin (the underlying part of the tooth, which is softer than enamel and decays more rapidly) to form defectively.

If you maintain a diet adequate in essential nutrients, you do a great deal to prevent tooth decay and diseases of the teeth and gums. (*Journal of School Health* 43:114, 115, February, 1973.)

## ALCOHOL MOST PREVALENT HIGH SCHOOL DRUG



A study of drug use among 7,414 students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades showed alcohol the most common drug among the high school crowd. Although some in seventh grade had already started on drugs, most students began in the tenth and eleventh grades. And more boys than girls were users.

The students said they used drugs out of curiosity, for pleasure, because friends used drugs, to rebel, or because of psychological need. Almost half the students questioned said they believed marijuana causes loss of ambition and creates a desire for heavier drugs. The young majority also felt that LSD is very dangerous and causes birth defects. They considered amphetamines and heroin dangerous drugs. More than half the students were not in favor of the legalization of marijuana.

Many of these high school students believed in the need for drug centers and educational programs about drug abuse. (*Pediatrics* 50: 739-745, November, 1972.)

## LITHIUM HAZARDOUS TO UNBORN



A recent report suggests that psychiatric use of lithium during pregnancy may be hazardous to the fetus. Scientists at the University of Illinois, Chicago campus, have shown that lithium—a depressant often used to manage manic-depressive schizophrenia when other drugs fail—has been associated with the delivery of cyanotic babies. (*Today's Health*, vol. 51, No. 10, p. 10.)

## PROPER USE OF THE RDA



The 1974 book of *Recommended Dietary Allowances*, including the table, "Explanations of the Basis of Each Allowance," and a discussion of how the RDA should and should not be used, has been published. It is available at \$2.50 from the National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20418.

RDA . . . should be used only as directed. Unfortunately, they are often misused and misquoted.

Among errors made in citing them are: (1) that everyone needs to consume the recommended amounts of nutrients; (2) that diets lower in nutrients than the RDA are "deficient"; (3) that all who adhere to RDA amounts will be well nourished; (4) that the RDA are the same as "requirements"; (5) that nutrients not listed in the RDA are not important; (6) that an imitation food that contains the RDA nutrients of a natural food is equivalent to the natural food; (7) that if a person consumes only the RDA amounts he will not become obese; (8) that the RDA amounts are those to be found in a "balanced" diet; (9) that habitual intake of nutrients of a population should be changed to get closer to the RDA. All of these ideas are incorrect, as stated by the book's authors.

The book is an excellent summary of present knowledge of nutrients and how they work, and should be on the bookshelf of anyone working in the nutrition field. (*"Nutrition Notes,"* July, 1974, p. 4.)

## HAZARDS OF THE NEEDLE



"Physicians can add intervertebral disk space infections to the rapidly growing list of hazards faced by heroin users. As with so many of the other problems—such as hepatitis, bacterial endocarditis, septic arthritis—the infection results from use of contaminated needles." (*Medical News, Journal of the Medical Association*, vol. 225, No. 10, September 3, 1973, p. 1167.)



## HEALTH DEMONSTRATION

# WATER

ELSA LONERGAN

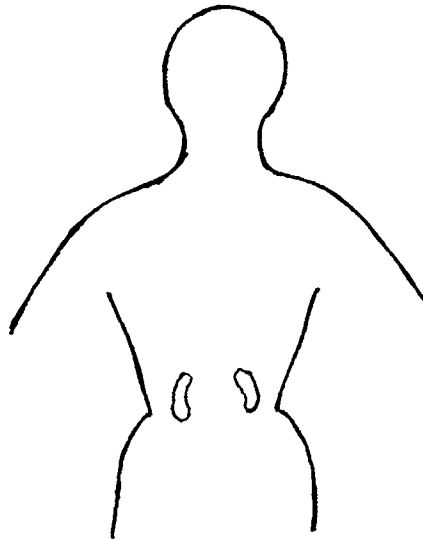
### Materials Needed:

1. Large double-bed sheet 91" x 108."
  2. Eight clear glasses of water.
  3. Plastic "drop" cloth to catch any water.
  4. Blackboard and chalk.
- (Hold a glass of water while talking.)

WATER is extremely important to health. One does not have to travel very far to realize the great advantage that comes in combating disease because of the growth of public health practices of pure water supply and of sewage disposal systems. Several diseases have practically been eliminated since pure water supplies have been regulated by laws.

Regularly bathing the body temple is part of preventive medicine. The external use of hot and cold water on the body often relieves pain, and prevents infection and skin diseases. The external use of water is one of God's most important remedies.

The internal use of water is essential to life. It is now known that under ordinary circumstances we cannot rely on thirst as an adequate indicator that we are drinking enough water to supply our needs. Hikers will be interested to know that research confirms that it is all right, in fact essential, to drink a lot of water on hikes in order to get the best performance from the wonderful human machine God created. Exhaustion occurs more quickly when we are dehydrated.



There are many facts that could be discussed about the distribution of water in the body, but tonight we are going to demonstrate only one. (Draw diagram of kidney on board or have a model prepared.)

The body's blood-purification system includes the kidneys, which filter the blood under pressure, something like when you make cottage cheese by putting the boiled-milk curd and whey into a cloth and squeezing it to remove the thinner liquid. Two of the body's high-speed cleansing organs are the kidneys. Each one has more than a million (write in figures on blackboard) tiny filters called glomeruli. The heart forcefully pumps the blood through the system and to the kidneys; in this way, the blood stream is cleansed under pressure. The kidneys weigh about five ounces each, and, together, they are as big as the heart.

Remember, each day we lose

about three glasses of water in perspiration. Four hundred gallons of fluid recycle through the kidneys per day to purify the blood, and only 0.1 per cent of this is passed out. Water is drawn out of the blood to make digestive juices. Our average intake of water in food is about one glass with every 600 calories. The total length of the tiny tubes through which the clean fluid is reabsorbed is about forty-five miles. These tubes have a surface area that is about sixty square feet. So the absorptive area of the kidneys is about the size of a double-bed sheet. (Unfold and have someone help you hold up the sheet.)

We have eight glasses of water here. First, we are going to try to wash this sheet, which represents the absorptive area of the kidneys, in one glass of water. (You may bunch up the sheet and pour the water over slowly, then hold the sheet up again.)

Well, we didn't drink enough today. Let's try another glass. (Pour another glass.) Now we are getting it a little wet, but we can't do a very good job of washing with this amount of water. (Keep pouring as long as you wish. It is recommended that this demonstration be rehearsed before the public meeting. Be sure to spread a plastic "drop" cloth, which you can buy at a paint store, on the floor before pouring.)

Remember Ellen White says, "In health and in sickness, pure water is one of Heaven's choicest blessings. . . . Drunk freely, it helps to supply the necessities of the system, and assists nature to resist disease."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 419. ✎

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# What's Big About "BIG WEEK"?

## A Conference President Accepts Literature Evangelist's Challenge

WILLIAM C. HATCH

BIG WEEK last year gave me an opportunity to walk in the moccasins of a literature evangelist. Arthur Page, publishing secretary of the Colorado Conference, challenged me to train with him as a literature evangelist. I admit that I was at first reluctant to accept this challenge.

Literature evangelists and their leaders are persistent and very persuasive. I finally agreed to set aside a week to learn the joys and also the trials of a literature evangelist. During college days I served as a summer literature evangelist, but that was before the days of time orders and sales that totaled more than \$200 in one home!

I learned many things during this week of canvassing. I learned how to gain entrance to a home, how to arrange the people in the room so the prospects will have the best possible view of my prospectus, how to make the presentation, how to close an order, the importance of having several "reserve" selling points, and many other important sales techniques.

But most important, I learned anew how important it is to trust God for guidance and help every moment of the day. I honestly feel that I will never be the same again after this inspiring

week of literature evangelism.

I set a number of guidelines for myself before we started Big Week:

We would not use any "lead cards" in our work, but would leave these for the use of full-time literature evangelists.

We would not disrupt any assigned territory.

The president would have to do his part and actually canvass.

We would try to place at least one large doctrinal book with each sale of *The Bible Story*.

We would pray in as many homes as possible and enroll as many as possible in the Bible correspondence course.

We would concentrate more on being a blessing to the people we would meet than worrying about the dollar value of the literature we might sell. We reasoned that we were not engaged in this work for dollars only and that we might bring great blessings into a home where we were not able to sell literature. We were prepared to give free literature to anybody interested enough to read it.

After I agreed to go out and canvass during Big Week I wrote the dates in my appointment book and resolved that I would not permit any routine "crisis" situations, so common to my work, to make me change my plans. In the common terminology of today, I re-

solved not to chicken out on my cold-turkey canvassing! A number of "crisis" situations did appear on the horizon, any one of which might have convinced even a worrier like Elder Page that I had good reason to change my plans. However, with the Lord's help and the excellent assistance of Harry Haas, Colorado Conference secretary-treasurer, and the office staff, I was able to break away from regular duties and go forth to the great adventure of Big Week.

### The Blizzard Beginning

We started out on our Big Week in the midst of a Sunday afternoon blizzard. Colorado weather is hardly ever like this, and here again was a temptation to change my plans. I learned long ago that some of God's greatest blessings come to us when we go forth to serve Him facing difficulties, so we started out from Denver with poor visibility and a prayer in our hearts. Our territory was about 100 miles east of Denver in the wheat-and-cattle prairies of eastern Colorado.

Since we had no "lead" cards, we went forth "cold turkey." We stopped first at a mobile home that was occupied by a wheat rancher. As I looked at the humble surroundings I thought, It is a waste of time to canvass here. Did I have a lot to learn! One of the first rules of canvassing is "Don't pass by a prospect just because his home looks unpromising."

We left that mobile home with a check for \$167.67 and a sale of the ten-volume set of *The Bible Story*, plus *The Desire of Ages* and *The Triumph of God's Love* in the largest, most beautiful edition. (*Triumph* is the name given to this beautiful, large edition of *The Great Controversy*.) We also received referrals to homes where the people might be interested in our books.

### Monday and Sales

It seemed that everywhere we canvassed we were blessed with a sale. (I was to learn later in the week that this is not always the case.) We awoke early. After individual Bible study and prayer we met together and prayed that heavenly angels would go before

*William C. Hatch is president of the Colorado Conference.*

us to prepare the way. We also asked God to help us carry the atmosphere of heaven into each home we would visit.

We attempted to locate the home of one of the families we had learned about in the home where we made the sale on Sunday night. The names on the mailboxes were confusing to us, so we stopped at a ranch house where we saw a man in the yard, and Elder Page got out of the car to ask directions. When he returned I was convinced that we had just witnessed a miracle. The man he asked to give us directions was the man we were trying to locate—he was visiting at his parents' home. This man agreed to get his wife and drive back to his home while we followed. We presented the canvass, and God gave us a sale for a set of *The Bible Story*, plus *The Desire of Ages*, *Triumph*, and *Bible Readings*. Oh, yes, we also had a check for \$188.30.

I will remember for a long time the blessed times of prayer in the homes we visited this day, the joy in the people's faces as we talked to them about a better home in a better land, and the possibility of entire families accepting our message as a result of the books we were placing in so many homes. Even our dry lunch eaten in our car by the side of a snow-packed road tasted delicious.

We obtained a referral to a neighbor who operated the road maintainer. We thought he would probably be out plowing the snowy roads, but we found him at home. (As we were leaving he told us he felt it was almost a miracle that we were able to catch him at home in the middle of the day.) Not only did we make a fine sale but were also given the name of another prospect.

### Tuesday's Challenge

But this was not to continue! On Tuesday I learned that it is possible to have a very successful day canvassing without a sale in every home. We worked just as hard on Tuesday, and had even more blessed experiences, and our sales only came to \$115.63 for the day. Our first canvass this day was at 8:45 A.M. and we worked until 10:00 P.M. One of our sales was

for the set of health books. People seem to have a real interest in the subject of health.

### The Blessings of Wednesday

This day had even fewer sales than the previous day, but even greater blessings. We ate our breakfast in a small restaurant, and as we were paying for our meal the woman at the cash register said, "Are you men insurance salesmen?" This opened the way for a canvass right there at the cash register with other customers and waitresses listening. We secured a cash sale for *Desire* and *Bible Readings* and had prayer with that woman right there in the public restaurant.

A woman who had recently lost her husband felt she could not buy, because her financial affairs were so confused. But she did appreciate our visit and our prayer, and enrolled in the Bible course.

One of the greatest joys of this week came to me as we visited a couple who were first contacted by a literature evangelist, had been attending our church for almost two years, and had requested to be baptized in a little over a week. Elder Page conducted this baptism. The Colorado Conference annually reports large numbers of baptisms from literature evangelists' contacts.

At 6:00 P.M. we called on a man who was on his way to a birthday party. We asked him whether we

could see him before he went to work in the morning, and he agreed to see us at 6:30 A.M. the next day.

### Thursday and a Chase

Our final full day of Big Week. I'll never forget closing the order that put us over the \$1,000 mark for the week. It was surely providential that we called at this home just when we did. In this work it is possible to see God's hand guiding His workers over and over again. I tried to close the order without success. Then I prayed again. (I'm sure Elder Page was praying also.) Then I mentioned some other points about our books, and the man told his wife to write the check.

At the end of this day we arrived at a home just as the family was driving away. Elder Page said, "Chase him down!" I said, "You must be kidding!" "No, I'm not, go get him!" We took out after the other car and finally caught up with them as they stopped at a store. We persuaded the man to return to his home with his family in order that we might explain our work. That "chase" resulted in a sale.

The report I turned in at the end of Big Week showed that I had worked 47 hours, delivered \$1,165.55 worth of literature, received \$705.02 cash, given away 27 pieces of free literature, enrolled 13 people in the Bible correspondence course, prayed in 23 homes, and given one Bible study.

How many baptisms will result from my Big Week? Eternity will reveal the answer to that question. But here are two statements for all of us to think about:

"In a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power and who lightens the earth with his glory." —*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 140.

"More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications." —*Evangelism*, p. 693.

I know I will never be the same again after this week of literature evangelism. I plan to have other Big Weeks in the future. ➤



# MIDNIGHT AND MORNING

Dare to Study Daniel—12

DESMOND FORD

THE FIRST verses of the section that begins with Daniel 11:36 refer to the system of antichrist in the last days. This church-state union soon to take place will duplicate the error of religious leaders and statesmen in the Middle Ages. It will endeavor to compel men to worship contrary to the dictates of conscience. Nonconformists will be boycotted and finally sentenced to death. (See Rev. 13:13-18.)

But opposition will arise from a power that, like Egypt of old, denies the existence and relevance of God. It would seem that a political system espousing atheism will oppose the ultimate fruitage of modern ecumenism but finally it too shall be submerged by the overwhelming tide of strength belonging to the last Colossus. Revelation 17:12-17 declares that all the powers of earth will give their strength to the "beast" for a short period but then, disillusioned, they will turn and rend the system they had temporarily supported. Thus it seems that the brain-washing techniques encouraged in our day by the mass media and many aspects of modern education will result in the mass hypnotism of millions. These will bow to a gigantic combine advocating might as right and simultaneously advocating a system of worship contrary to Scripture. But the worms will turn—when it is too late.

## **The King of the North**

The use of the expression "the king of the north" is intended to remind us of the opening passage of the book where Babylon from

the north flooded down upon Israel to destroy its sanctuary and people. Revelation, chapters 11-18, tells us that there will be a Babylon in the last days, a revival of apostate religion in alliance with the state. This is the modern king of the north. "Tens of thousands shall fall" before it. Some, however, who were once enemies of the people of God, such as the Edomites and Moabites, will be converted to the truth of God and thus escape the invading giant.

The reference to thousands falling follows the words "He shall come into the glorious land" (Dan. 11:41, R.S.V.). The glorious land is an allusion to Palestine, where the sanctuary was situated, but its application in this New Testament era must be to the professing church of God, which

***The brain-washing techniques encouraged by the mass media and many aspects of modern education will result in the mass hypnotism of millions.***

claims to be His sanctuary. Multitudes of nominal Christians will apostatize in the last crisis, while simultaneously other multitudes will flee out of Babylon and be saved. So great is the power of antichrist that according to Revelation 13:8 all the world will worship him except those whose names are in the book of life. When Daniel 11:43, R.S.V., says that "the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train," it is saying the same thing, for in the days when Daniel was written

these peoples were thought of as residing at the ends of the earth.

## **Antichrist Provoked**

Next we have reference to a message that disturbs the antichrist and provokes him to attack the messengers and exterminate them. "East" and "north" are sometimes used in Scripture to refer to heaven. (See Eze. 43:1-3; Ps. 48:2.) Satan's control of Babylon to the north of Israel was an attempt to counterfeit the heavenly kingdom. Revelation 18:1-4 clarifies the significance of Daniel 11:44. The tidings spoken of are identical with "the loud cry" given by faithful Christians of the last days calling people to separate from spiritual Babylon and to join with those who constitute "the holy city." (See Rev. 11:2; 14:20.)

The reference to attempted extermination and destruction of many parallels Revelation 13:13-18. The Hebrew terms employed point to religious anathemas culminating in death. The following verse amplifies the thought. The glorious holy mountain, once descriptive of Jerusalem in Palestine, now applies to the faithful church of God. (See Rev. 11:2.) Thus, what we have here is a picture of antichrist surrounding the church to destroy it, just as wicked men in Daniel, chapters 3 and 6, are spoken of as surrounding the faithful Hebrews to destroy them. It will be proclaimed by civil powers that whoever shall not worship the beast (antichrist) and receive his mark should be killed. No wonder Scripture calls this period "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."

God does not leave us to wonder as to the outcome. His faith-

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fulness never fails. He promises His people, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

### **The Deliverance**

Now we see the tremendous significance and great comfort in the use of the word *deliver* in the verse following the eleventh chapter of Daniel. The blood of the martyrs has ever been the seed of the church in probationary time, but the death of God's people after probation has closed would be fruitless. Their deliverance has been pictured by the author of *The Great Controversy*.

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant, and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.

"By the people of God, a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up,' and lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of

God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father and the holy angels: 'I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.' . . . Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying; 'They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of my patience; they shall walk among the angels'; and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith utter a shout of victory."—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 635, 636.

In Daniel 12:11, 12 we have the final reference to the abomination of desolation. It is predicted that again in the last crisis the power will take away "the daily sacrifice."

Revelation 13:13-18 expands this prophecy showing the ultimate application of the warning concerning "the abomination of desolation." Christ in the Olivet sermon applied Daniel's reference initially to the idolatrous and devastating armies of Rome as they marched against Jerusalem, but second, to the last onslaught on

His people at the end of time. Immediately after referring to this power Christ quoted Daniel 12:1 regarding the great tribulation that is to be launched on the world by the abominable power of anti-christ.

### Judgment and Resurrection

It is of considerable importance to recognize that chapter 12 of Daniel is an expansion of Daniel 8:14. The entire chapter points to the ultimate vindication of God, His truth, and His people. The judgment is referred to at several points as the rewards of both the righteous and the wicked are mentioned. In Daniel 11:45, "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him," we have the promise that the living wicked in the last hour will be destroyed by the advent of Christ, while the following verse promises the deliverance of the living righteous, "every one that shall be found written in the book." Thus before this time an investigation of the heavenly records has been made to see who are worthy of eternal life through faith in Christ.

Daniel 12:3 speaks of the glory inherited by the saved. They are to "shine as the brightness of the

firmament . . . as the stars for ever and ever."

The last verse of the book also refers to the judgment. Many Bibles put Psalm 1:5 alongside this passage as commentary. Let us compare them:

"But go your way till the end; and you shall rest, and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days" (R.S.V.).

"Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment . . ." (R.S.V.).

The Hebrew expression translated in Daniel 12:13 as "allotted place" is a term that has reference to inheritance and destiny. It is also a term used in connection with the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16:8 when lots were cast on the two goats, one for Azazel (Satan) and one for the Lord. These two goats betokened not only the opposing leaders in the great controversy between good and evil but also their respective followings.

In the judgment all men will be divided and then enter upon their eternal "lot" or destiny. The verse says this is to take place not at the "end of days" but "at the end of the days," a reference to the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14. When Israel of old was about to enter the promised land of Canaan the lot was cast to determine the possession of each tribe. Thus each person stood in his respective "lot" long before he entered upon the actual possession of the land.

So now we stand upon the borders of the heavenly Canaan, and decisions concerning the destiny of all who have ever lived are being made. These decisions are not arbitrary. God will choose all who have chosen Him. He does not ask primarily for an ethically blameless life. He asks rather that we will accept what He has done for us in Christ. He calls upon us to look to Calvary and see its revelation of our depravity and of His love. If we look long enough, self will be submerged in Christ and heaven will begin for us here below. The lightning of divine wrath has already struck at the place of Golgotha. Those who hide there will be untouched when all the earth is consumed by the fires of His sighted love.

✠  
*Concluded*

## AAM Study Guide

### Daniel—12

*Readers who are members of the Academy of Adventist Ministers or who may wish to join this organization and receive academy credit should respond to the following questions on 8 1/2-by-11-inch paper and mail this response to the AAM, Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. Your responses will be carefully evaluated and returned. Those who submit responses to all twelve study guides on Daniel will be credited with one year's study requirements for AAM membership (fifty clock hours).*

1. Explain Daniel 12:8, 9, and 13 in the light of Daniel's inability to understand all that was being unfolded to him in the prophecies, beginning with Daniel 7:15, 16, and 28 and including such references as Daniel 8:17; 9:2, 3; and chapters 10 and 11.
2. How do you interpret Daniel 11:40-45?
3. Prepare a brief Spirit of Prophecy study that clarifies the "time of trouble" mentioned in Daniel 12:1.
4. Review the assignments and study program you have followed in becoming better acquainted with the book of Daniel this year and evaluate your progress and the benefit of this study in a brief paragraph.



## CHARISMATIC COUNTDOWN Supplies and Prices

		PRICES
<b>Textbook:</b>	R. R. Hegstad, <i>Ratfling the Gates</i> (Paperback edition)	\$3.50
<b>Study Guide:</b>	<i>Charismatic Countdown, a Guidebook to the Study of Last-Day Charismatic Phenomena</i> (Textbook and Study Guide: Bulk prices available through ABC for 50 copies or more.)	\$1.50
<b>Slide and Tape Programs:</b>		\$47.50
<b>Slides:</b>	Seven Steps to the Holy Spirit (For use with Countdown 2—20 slides.)	(Price includes cassette and 120 slides.)
	Spiritism and the Occult (For use with Countdown 3—40 slides.)	Not sold individually.)
	Psychic Surgery (For use with Countdown 7—20 slides.)	
	Final Events—Part I (For use with Countdown 9—20 slides.)	
	Final Events—Part II (For use with Countdown 10—20 slides.)	
<b>Tape:</b>	Cassette with interviews, dramatization, et cetera. To be used with the rest of the Countdown presentations.	
<b>NOTE:</b> Order the above supplies from your local Adventist Book Center. Published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association.		
<b>Leader's Manual:</b>	Includes additional material for use in presenting Countdown.	\$1.50
<b>NOTE:</b> Order from the General Conference Ministerial Association, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012		
<b>Film:</b>	Eleven minutes of 16 mm. color news film from NBC's Today Show documenting the charismatic movement. (For use with Countdown 4.) Not for sale. Rent from General Conference Ministerial Association.	

### Helps for Archeological Approach

Book 1, **Wonders of Egypt**, which contains the first three of the illustrated lectures in the Wonders of the Ancient World archeological approach to evangelism developed by Orley M. Berg, was announced in the January, 1974,

issue of *Ministry* (p. 46). Book 2, entitled **Wonders of Archeology**, includes lectures four through six of this series. It is now available from the General Conference Ministerial Association, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

This second volume of 72 pages en-

larges upon the material presented in the lecture series. The chapter "Digging Up History in Bible Lands" is a survey of the history of archeological discovery highlighting finds that have helped to illuminate the Biblical record and verify its divine origin. "Daniel in the Critic's Den" discusses archeological discoveries that bear upon the book of Daniel, demonstrating its early authorship and historical accuracy; also how its prophecies combine with archeology to confirm its divine inspiration.

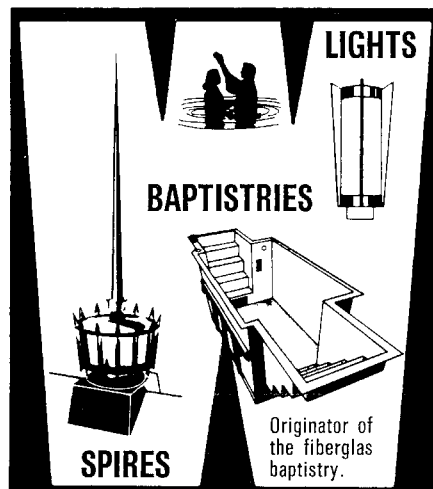
"Pilgrimage to Sinai" not only takes the reader across the barren wilderness from Egypt to Mount Sinai and on a hike to its summit, but discusses the significance of what occurred there in the giving of the law and in the erection of the tabernacle, with emphasis on Christ and the gospel as the great theme of the Old Testament.

Those desiring copies should order directly from the Ministerial Association. Book 1, entitled **Wonders of Egypt**, sells for 60 cents and the second volume just released is 90 cents including postage (except for overseas shipment).

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## The Gift of Understanding

June Strong

AT THE last holiday season I was asked to speak to a Methodist women's group on "My Most Memorable Christmas." That took some thought.

All those evergreens decorated, thousands of cards signed and addressed, gifts wrapped, gifts unwrapped, holidays with starry-eyed children, holidays with blasé teen-agers—but a sameness about them all. How to pick one more gilded than the rest. Back, back through the years—less glitter—fewer gifts—same high suspense.

But wait, there was one. A strange Christmas in which I caught the essence of the Christ-day.

I was 16, a frivolous 16, when any girl wants Sabbath dresses, perfume, and the latest fashion in sweaters and skirts. I was *any girl*, but life, never quite on the level with me from the start, had tilted completely off balance. My

paternal grandmother, who had reared me from babyhood, had died a few weeks before, while I was home from academy for the Thanksgiving holiday. I wanted no part of Christmas. There had always been four of us—Gramp, Grandma, George the hired man, and myself. Gramp was taciturn, jovial with the outer world, but stern, almost bitter at home. A man too involved in his struggle with poverty to put much stock in frosted cookies and candles at the window.

George, our hired hand of many years, was a hunchback, a gnarled, bent man whose world was laced together with little more than the Saturday-night trips into town for a fresh supply of tobacco.

I didn't add much to the quartet myself. If Gramp was bitter, so was I, though for different reasons. I was selfish and somewhat spoiled, whether more so than other teen-agers I cannot tell.

It was Grandma who put life together for us all. She laughed away our gloom, cooked us marvelous things to eat, and loved every new day. It was awkward to

be grumpy around her, so often the rest of us found ourselves basking in the joy that twinkled about her like a Fourth-of-July sparkler. But now she was gone. There were no cookies in the oven, no menu on the pantry shelf, no reason for hauling the tarnished old ornaments down from the attic.

Yet when I had arrived home from academy, there filling the living room with its pungence stood a tall, fresh-from-the-woods tree. Gramp, who had had to be wheeled into this tree-cutting task in past years, had this time made his journey into the forest, voluntarily carrying his loneliness along with his ax.

The kitchen was bleak, cluttered evidence of two men's unfamiliar struggle with housewifery. I wanted to run. This room was no kin to the cozy, welcoming kitchen of my childhood, nor the plump, creative woman who had reigned there. Yet I sensed that this moment demanded some new maturity on my part, just as it had on my grandfather's when he trudged to the woods for the tree.

So I built a fire in the wood-stove, put potatoes on to boil, and headed for the attic and the box of decorations. I would play the game too, if that's how he wanted it, but not happily.

When they came home from the lumbering that night, I saw the lines sorrow had etched in my grandfather's face and the emptiness in George's eyes. And then the flicker of pleasure at lamp-light, stove-warmth, and smells of cooking.

We hardly knew how to relate. Grandma had tied us all together with her easy conversation, her eagerness, her optimism. But she was gone, and we must create relationships out of our own scanty resources. Somehow we did, in a tottering sort of way, and I knew the house was better for my being there. A new sensation!

Even so, I dreaded Christmas Day. It had always been festive in a sparse way. I thought they dreaded it too, so I suggested we open our gifts on Christmas Eve instead. We gathered, the three of us, feeling sad and a bit foolish about the tree. It glittered in the firelight just as in my growing

*June Strong is a writer, homemaker, and mother of six children living in Batavia, New York, and the author of Journal of a Happy Woman.*

years, but the magic was gone. Always there had been generous heaps of gifts beneath, but this night there were only four packages. Two of them contained warm, practical plaid wool shirts, my gifts to the men.

The other two were mysterious indeed. One was large, bulky, and clumsily wrapped in brown paper and twine, the other tiny and appropriately encased in holiday trappings.

"What in the world?" I said, looking at the donors and seeing in their eyes, for just a moment, the mischief of boyhood. Neither were in the habit of gift-giving, Grandma having taken care of that department. A whole new adventure for them both—giving.

First, I unwrapped the big package from Gramp, and onto my lap tumbled a soft, rose-colored chenille robe, just the right size and perfect for dorm life. My delight must have been obvious.

"Picked it out myself," he said, smiling shyly.

I tried to imagine him in the women's section of the local department store, fumbling among the puzzling array of robes with those rough, work-worn hands. Suddenly, I wanted to tell Grandma what a neat guy he really was, but I suppose she had known it all the time.

I turned then to the small package and found beneath its lid a tiny carved silver pin the shape of a flower with a minute pink stone winking in the center as if to say, "You never really knew these men, did you?"

I looked at that warped little man, seeing him through new eyes. He had chosen this dainty thing, understanding what Christ-

mas was supposed to be at 16, and I said to him honestly, "No one has ever given me anything lovelier."

I put on the robe, pinned the flower on the collar, and made popcorn. We sat around the potbellied stove and talked. They told me about their boyhoods (they *really* had been little boys once), and I told them some of the silly things we'd done in the dorm at academy. We began to speak my grandmother's name occasionally, carefully, to see whether we could bear the hurt.

What does this all have to do with Christmas in 1974? I'm not quite sure, but I've been thinking about it. It's the woman in the home, usually, who sets the holiday pace. Some of us make it an extravaganza of baking, others go in for elaborate decorations. Some women entertain lavishly, and others buy out the toy department for their offspring. And then there are women who dislike the whole business, dismissing the holiday season with only a few checks as duty gifts. Somewhere in between these extremes must lie the answer.

Perhaps, in family giving, one gift per person would be better than six or eight. That would take courage, wouldn't it? It would then become a very important gift, not necessarily expensive, but well-chosen. One would look very closely at the recipient, saying, What is he really like. What will he cherish? Maybe a busy husband could give his wife or his child a gift of his time. Perhaps we could begin to ignore the mountains of dispensables glutting the counters of department stores at holiday time. Might our searching

begin in January to find the perfect gift for each loved person, thus eliminating the last-minute hubbub?

I'm all for a festive atmosphere. Children love traditions, and they build a cozy cycle into childhood, but I've never felt decorating should involve a great deal of spending. Last year we hung a large wreath of evergreens decorated with small yarn dolls over the fireplace. It was unusual, collected many compliments, and cost us nothing, for the yarn dolls were made from knitting leftovers.

The prettiest tree I've ever seen was hung with white lights and lots of frosted Christmas cookies in three designs (too much variety in shape, size, and color lessens the effect). This tree, in the home of a very artistic friend, held every child open-mouthed with awe. A real live cookie tree! The hostess never failed to complete the experience by telling her little guests, "Do pick one to take home." (She had a reserve supply in the kitchen.) For many women the fun part of Christmas is tapping their creative resources.

It's always too easy to huddle into our comfortable family togetherness at this season. We need somehow to move out of the routine celebration as Gramp, George, and I were forced out of it that Christmas thirty years ago. Perhaps we might each choose someone outside the family circle—a sick, lonely, or neglected person, or just an elderly friend—and do something out of the ordinary for them. Like driving them around town to see the Christmas decorations, inviting them for Christmas Eve dinner and carols, or even taking them to visit an old friend or relative whom they haven't seen in a long time. Somehow we must get beneath the tinsel if we are to honor Christ in an honest way.

A Seventh-day Adventist Christmas should be different from Christmas in homes that do not share our hope. Not more austere, but happier, more giving, more related to the needs of mankind, I wonder whether they really are that way, or are we just humming "Jingle Bells" and wondering how we'll face the January bills—like everyone else?

Dear Shepherdesses,

This is a busy time of year for us all, with Ingathering, the holidays—with children home from school and many times relatives or friends coming. Some of us may be traveling and happily singing, "We'll be home for Christmas."

As the wondrous spell of the Christmas season comes to each of us, may you have the gladness of Christmas—which is hope, the spirit of Christmas—which is peace, the heart of Christmas—which is love. God bless you all.

With love,  
Kay

## Schools of Brutality

This note is to express appreciation for the stand taken on sports in harmony with inspired counsel. It is not too soon; hopefully for many it will not be too late.

About the time the July issue was being mailed out, our local sports announcer summarized studies done by an anthropologist who believes that sports, "far from providing an outlet for society's aggressions, seem to go hand in hand with warlike ambitions. Locate a warlike society, and it is likely to emphasize warlike sports," he stated. Further, "In peaceful societies there were no warlike sports."

The researcher selected a random sample of twenty societies, ten that he considered warlike and ten peaceful, although he had difficulty finding that many of the latter. "His findings challenge the notion that sports might provide an alternative to war. What emerges instead . . . is that . . . aggression is a part of the game." One athlete remarked that while the "players are accused of being animals, there are actually more animals in the stands. Some people are really out for blood when they come to a game; they do not attend a game to purge their combative feelings as much as to reinforce them."

And what, specifically, were the games referred to? Hockey and football.

Perhaps the presence among us of competitive sports is keeping us from fulfilling Christ's desire for us in this end time. "Schools of brutality" do not prepare us for the real warfare before us.

Kristin Evans  
British Columbia, Canada

Just to let you know I appreciate very much your editorial in the July *Ministry*, also the articles by Ron Graybill and Wadie Farag.

Harold Damon  
Moab, Utah

## Dispatch Rather Than Spirituality?

Re: "Enhancing the Communion Service." While some fine ideas were expressed in the article, there seems to be an overly zealous concern for saving time. Since the communion service only occurs four times annually, an extra half hour on these occasions would certainly not lead to anyone's physical or spiritual detriment.

Let us not forget that it was necessary for the early church to tarry ten days in the upper room to receive

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God forbid that the restless and the clock watchers be permitted to become the arbiters of the length of our church services rather than the movings of God's Spirit.

R. E. Brown  
Omaha, Nebraska

## Charismatic Movement

It pains me when I hear some of our men talking about the charismatic movement in such a tone of voice that it leads one to think they are feeling bad because they might be missing out on something. Some are emphasizing that "tongues" will be manifest among God's people. I fear this emphasis will lead some, in their anxiety not to miss out on something, to accept the false "gift."

I was disappointed that you spoke of Sister White's experience as being a "charismatic" experience. This, of course, is right as far as the dictionary is concerned but not according to modern usage. Just turn the page in the *Ministry* and you will see what I mean. Sister White's experience should never be compared to the "charismatic" experience taking place in the Catholic Church.

Donald Mackintosh  
College Place, Washington

## Unknown Tongue?

The Beaven article (Oct., 1974) has some good points in it. But in his admiration for the methods of the second-century apologists, there seems to be a willingness to ignore the tragic results of their use of Greek philosophy.

I believe a clearer dichotomy should be made between *warning* the whole world and *converting* the whole world. One almost gets the impression here that our methodology is the sole culprit in the world's failure to flock to the message en masse. Was Christ at fault for Jerusalem's failure to listen? The majority will always be deaf to the language of heaven.

Sister White pleads for greater progress, but she also warns against "progressing . . . in the back track." It seems to me there should be very clear and prayerful study before we recommend the "common ground" on which to meet the world. The faith delivered to us as the basis for our existence and our commission is worthy of the best safeguards; it deserves a clearer distinction between "common ground" and compromise.

Also the language that the present society *does* speak is undefined. Just how much of their vocabulary and

thought patterns dare we adopt for use without disqualifying ourselves as Christ's representatives?

And that perennial question presents itself again: Must the gospel of Christ be repeatedly, forever, *adjusted* to the minds of a society vocally dedicated to disobedience? Or is there some place where a stand must be made, where the church's "communicating" becomes an invitation to let God change the listener?

I believe there are adequate ways within the realm of Christian refinement and obedience to tell the sinner that God loves him; better ways than becoming, to any degree, a cheap imitation of what he already is. Is the world's philosophy and alienation from God the only base on which a true structure of salvation can be built?

One further vacuum in the article. The Holy Spirit's *major* role in conversion is not considered. Methodology—even if correct—can never supplant Him!

Robert Cunningham  
Takoma Park, Maryland

## Who Is Heeding?

Your issue of *Ministry* for August is praiseworthy from beginning to end, and how glad I am the reader audience is not limited to ministers. Especially notable was the article, "Feed Us With the Bread of Heaven." Amen, and again, Amen.

But who is reading? And who is heeding? We are languishing for such bread. Sabbath after Sabbath we "turn, unfilled again." Was it not Elder Pierson who recently wrote in the *Review*, "When did you last hear a sermon on the coming of Christ?" When indeed! Or any other kind of preaching that would prepare us for the coming of our dear Lord.

The article "Speech Abuse" might very well have been incorporated into the article mentioned above as this type of language seems to go hand in hand with vapid sermons. Recently, we heard from the pulpit words to the effect that Isaac could have said to his father, "You're off your rocker—I don't intend to stay up on this mountain."

The page "Voices Crying in a Polyester Wilderness" was top drawer and should be blown up to life size and posted in a prominent place in every SDA church. (But who would dare?) Why, may I respectfully ask, did you reproduce the excerpt from *Testimonies* in such fine print—the most important and arresting quotation on the page?

Name Withheld

*We're seriously considering this suggestion about the poster (with enlarged quotation from the Testimonies). We'd appreciate knowing whether or not some of our pastors would think this useful.*  
Editors

# recommended reading

***Diseases of Food Animals, The,* Owen S. Parrett, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1973, 30 pages, \$.50.**

***Meat on the Menu—Who Needs It?* Raymond H. Woolsey, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1974, 80 pages, \$.50.**

These two small but important booklets have recently come from the presses of the Review and Herald. Both deal in the area of health. One is an updated edition of Dr. Parrett's book and the other is written by Ray Woolsey, an associate book editor at the Review and Herald.

Both of these books bring us up-to-date information on the blessings and benefits of vegetarianism and the dangers of meat eating. A friend of mine who read Dr. Parrett's book said: "I had to make a decision. I must either quit eating meat or read no more of Dr. Parrett's book. So I closed it and put it down."

With all the rich blessings of our total health message before us, including vegetarianism, how can we continue to ignore the light God has given us on this subject? We appeal to all of our ministers to read these two booklets and recommend them to our people. Then let us follow the clear counsels in the writings of the servant of the Lord. Let us pray to God for grace to bring our lives into full harmony with the light given to us.

N. R. Dower

***The Fat Is In Your Head,* Charlie Shedd, Word Press, Waco, Texas, 1972, 122 pages, \$3.95.**

The author is a Presbyterian minister who has taken off eighty-five pounds, and kept them off using the psycho-spiritual techniques he outlines in this fascinating volume.

Dr. Shedd has developed forty meditations—one a day for forty days, but you probably won't take forty days to complete it. Such gems are included as "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips" (Ps. 141:3), and "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings" (Prov. 5:21) including the path to the refrigerator, the bakery, and the malt shop.

The author overreaches himself in speculating that overweight may have been Paul's "thorn in the flesh." He also paraphrases Omar Khayyam, "A piece of lettuce, exercise, and thou."

Titus A. Frazee

## Commentaries on the Gospels

*Walter F. Specht, chairman, Department of New Testament, Andrews University, reviews new publications in the field of New Testament studies.*

***Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament,* F. F. Bruce, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1974, 216 pages, \$3.45.**

This is an authoritative account of all that is known of Jesus and Christian origins from non-Biblical sources. It is written by an outstanding British evangelical scholar, who is Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester.

Bruce analyzes and evaluates the statements regarding Christ and Christianity found in pagan writers, such as Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger and Trajan. He discusses what the Jewish historian Josephus has to say about John the Baptist and James the Just, and the disputed passage about Jesus in the eighteenth book of the *Jewish Antiquities*.

A chapter is devoted to the references to John the Baptist, Jesus, and other New Testament persons and incidents in the Slavonic version of the *History of the Jewish War*. He not only examines passages in Rabbinic writings but sets forth the Messianic expectation as reflected in the Qumran literature found in the Dead Sea caves.

More than eighty pages are devoted to supposed sayings of Jesus found in variant readings in our Gospel manuscripts, apocryphal Gospels, Greek papyri, and the Coptic texts from Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt. He also brings together the sayings found in the Qumran scrolls that give a picture of Jesus and Mary derived from our canonical New Testament as well as apocryphal Gospels.

The final chapter gives an insight into what can be learned about early Christian origins from the discoveries of archeology, particularly from papyrus documents, inscriptions, and coins. Professor Bruce has brought together into one volume a mass of interesting information.

***Commentary on the Gospel of Mark,* William L. Lane, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1974, 652 pages, \$12.95.**

This work is volume two of the New International Commentary on the New Testament, produced by evangelical scholars. Lane is professor of New Tes-

tament and Judaic Studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His ten years of work on this volume have resulted in a major commentary—one of the best available on the Gospel of Mark today. The author shows a mastery of all of the chief reports of recent research bearing on the Gospel.

The commentary is designed to serve the interest of both the pastor and the scholar. To facilitate its use by those unfamiliar with the original text of Mark, the introduction and exposition proper are written exclusively in English. Behind the exposition, however, there lies a thorough investigation of the manuscript tradition and its interpretation. The more technical aspects which concern the scholar, including grammatical, textual, and historical problems, are dealt with in footnotes, special notes, or the appendices.

As a basis for the exposition, use is made of the American Standard Version of 1901, which was noted for its verbal accuracy. The textual and grammatical notes serve to bring this version into line with manuscript discoveries and research since it was produced.

The introduction, consisting of thirty-eight pages including a selected bibliography, endeavors to reconstruct the particular life situation that produced what is generally regarded as the earliest of the Gospels. Lane speaks of Mark as a "witness document." "It is intended to be neither a formal historical treatise nor a biography of Jesus, but proclamation" (p. 1).

For the minister who desires an up-to-date commentary that uses the results of the current research, and yet one that is written from a conservative point of view, we recommend this volume on Mark.

***Mark, A Portrait of the Servant,* D. Edmond Hiebert, Moody Press, Chicago, 1974, 437 pages, \$7.95.**

A commentary by the professor of Greek and New Testament at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California. Although we would not place this work in the same category with Lane's, it is a solid interpretation of the text of Mark.

The English text quoted is the American Standard Version of 1901. The author, however, interprets the text in the light of his understanding of the original Greek and of the historical setting of the Gospel. This is done in a nontechnical manner. There is very little use made of Greek words on technical matters.

The introduction is very brief. The notes are printed at the end of the volume, followed by a helpful bibliography. It is a worthwhile commentary by a prolific Mennonite scholar.



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# news briefs

## Vatican Hopes 1975 Holy Year Will Advance Christian Unity

VATICAN CITY—The Vatican has expressed hope that the Roman Catholic Church's 1975 Holy Year will result in a "new advance" toward Christian unity. This unity, according to a Vatican Radio editorial, involves "a double commitment for all who believe in Christ."

The first of these commitments, the broadcast explained, is to "reunification according to the will of Christ himself, that is, reunification in a single body, a single church, of all who believe in Him. In this respect, Christ's own prayer—that all may be one—will be realized. And the second commitment is to a spirit of unity internal to the Church itself."

Observing that the early Christian community "used to expect this internal unity as a consequence of Baptism," the editorial pointed out that Holy Year pilgrims who will visit Rome in 1975 will be able to read an inscription in the baptistry of the Basilica of St. John Lateran which says: "There is no separation between those who are reborn in Baptism, because it makes them one . . . in the same Spirit and in the one faith."

## Alcohol Problems Cost the U.S. \$25 Billion a Year, Study Reveals

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A comprehensive new report on alcohol and health reveals that alcoholism and related problems are costing the U.S. more than \$25 billion a year. The 219-page report, prepared by a 38-member task force, also states that 36 per cent of high school students report getting drunk at least four times a year, and one in seven male high school seniors report getting drunk once a week.

"We have previously underestimated the economic costs of alcohol-related problems to our nation's economy," said Dr. Morris E. Chafetz, director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. He was chairman of the task force preparing the report. The institute, in a study made three years ago, estimated the total cost of alcoholism in the U.S. to be \$15 billion.

The new report, made public at a news briefing here July 10, said that most of the economic cost of alcohol abuse results from lost work, medical expenses, and motor vehicle accidents. The cost of alcohol abuse in 1971—the last year for which figures are available—was estimated to be \$25.3 billion.

Dr. Chafetz said that several recent studies showed that occasional drinking by teen-agers was becoming nearly universal and that this trend had increased sharply in the past few years. He said alcohol control laws and regulations are grossly ineffective in dealing with alcohol problems, and often contribute to the problems.

The new report also cited evidence that heavy drinking increased the risk of cancer of the mouth and throat and that the combination of heavy smoking significantly heightened that risk—to 15 times that among persons who neither drink nor smoke.

## Archeologists' Find Dates Back to the Days of Jesus

TIBERIAS, Israel—A large city gate flanked by two round towers, which dates back to the days of Jesus Christ, has been uncovered near here by a team of archeologists.

Experts said the finding lent support to accounts that Tiberias, in the first century of the Christian Era, was the largest and most important city in the region.

The town was founded by Herod Antipas (A.D. 18-20) on the southwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, and named after Tiberius Caesar.

## A "Full-Blown New Testament Church" Seen Emerging From Charismatic Renewal

MINNEAPOLIS—"A full-blown New Testament church" will emerge from the charismatic renewal that is bringing together all kinds of Christians in an unprecedented way, some 10,000 persons were told here at the opening of the Third International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit.

Addressing a throng that filled the Minneapolis Auditorium where the five-day conference was being held (Aug. 6-10), Dr. Robert Mumford, a Pentecostal leader and

teacher of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, declared that "God is restoring to us a whole Bible, a whole gospel, a whole man, and that includes healing, deliverance, and release." What is happening, he said, is that charismatic renewal is suddenly being discussed in every seminary, every denomination, and "in every place." "Many of us believe we are coming to the end of the age when Jesus will come again," he added.

Dr. Mumford said, "The charismatic movement is growing so rapidly that bigger buildings will be needed for future conferences on the Holy Spirit."

## Waldensians, Italian Methodists Are Agreed on Unification

TORRE PELLICE, Italy—The Waldensian Church, which has about 40,000 Italian members, and the slightly smaller Evangelical Methodist Church of Italy here agreed to unite.

A "Plan for Full Union" was overwhelmingly adopted at a joint session of the Waldensian Synod and the Methodist Conference.

The Waldensian Church, which is Presbyterian in theology, is observing its 800th anniversary this year. It began in the twelfth century as a movement within the Roman Catholic Church, and became Protestant in the sixteenth century.

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