

# Ministry

June 1990

**Ministry Reports:  
Celebration churches**



Joel D. Springer

## Pastors and teachers: partners in ministry

## Thanks for the encouragement

This morning I read Marie Spangler's article "Beating the Stress of Itinerating" (December 1989) and was encouraged. Her positive note of focusing "on our privileges," making us "easier to live with," is great! Courage . . . we're almost home (Rev. 3:11). —June Peak, Caballo, New Mexico.

## Do we accept all the Mosaic laws?

This comes as an expression of appreciation for the willingness of the *Ministry* editors to be open to a broad range of opinions, a good example being the letter in your December 1989 issue from an African brother on women's ordination. Having worked for some time toward the inclusion of Adventist women in the full range of church activity, I found his referral to Leviticus 12 as the basis for excluding women from ministry, and presumably other areas of leadership as well, quite illuminating. Is this the biblical basis so often mentioned that has closed so many minds to full participation for women? It would seem to be so in at least some parts of the world church.

It was my understanding that while the Ten Commandments, given to Moses, were for all time a basis of God's government, the various rules throughout the book of Leviticus were given especially for the children of Israel and are not binding or appropriate for God's people today. The instructions there (and elsewhere) are definitely not considered a rule of practice regarding other types of "uncleanness" or fair business practice. Nor does the church today require capital punishment for those showing disrespect to their parents. I would really appreciate some definitive attention being given to this subject. —Nancy Marter, Silver Spring, Maryland.

## Bringing back the missing members

Attention to the theme of Miriam Wood's guest editorial "Where Have All the Visiting Pastors Gone?" (March 1990) would change the alarming missing member status of the church. Christ accompanied two discouraged compan-

ions to Emmaus, reminding them of what the prophets and Moses wrote—and their hope was revived. When Peter deserted Him, Jesus spoke personally with him, and brought him back. Paul visited members and churches, and kept up correspondence as a bonus.

Some time ago when a pastor newly come to our church (membership 800+) revealed his plan to visit each member family at least twice a year, many said "Impossible!" But he replied, "That's only three families a day except Sabbaths. Doctors advise a checkup every six months for good health. Should shepherds do less for their members' spiritual life?" And the membership grew. —C. M. Crawford, retired denominational employee, Ukiah, California.

■ Miriam Wood's guest editorial on the need for pastors to visit fails to take into consideration the problems associated with visitation today. With most people at work or taking extra classes to keep up with their jobs, it is not as easy to visit people as it used to be. As a city pastor often working alone, I can testify that many areas of my city are dangerous to visit even during the day.

I try to see my people, but I can see it getting even harder, and sometimes I have to depend on meeting them at church or at the workplace, or by visiting with them by phone. Just this past Sabbath I asked a church mother if I could visit with her and her family, and she said, "I'm sorry, Pastor, but I work so much that I'm hardly at home." I know people who rarely cook a meal to eat with the family because everyone is on such difficult schedules. When you try to match your program to the lives of such people, you can see why so many pastors are frustrated when it comes to visiting.

Add to this the fact that Adventist ministers do not stay very long in a church, and you can see why it is difficult for people and pastors to develop good relationships. If our denomination would encourage long terms for pastors, even considering the possibility that pastors stay a lifetime in one church,

much good would come to the pastor and to the congregation that is served. Our youth, for instance, would get to know the pastor as a friend, and this would help keep our young people in the church. As it is now, even though a pastor may call on a home, he is soon gone from the church, and people hardly remember his name or his face. —Reg Shires, pastor, Alexandria Seventh-day Adventist Church, Alexandria, Virginia.

## Reasons for the dismal showing

"Where Have All the Members Gone?" (February 1990) was quite an eye-opener for me! As a nonpastoral professional, permit me to offer a few reasons for this dismal showing in our churches today:

1. We no longer act like *Adventists*—that is, as if the Lord's coming is imminent—and this is probably because our sermons are becoming more like those of the rest of the evangelical churches.
2. Though time is short, we focus too much of our concern on maintaining memberships rather than getting the message to as many people as possible.
3. We treat world events in a "wait and see" manner, while men such as Wilkerson in his Times Square church preach about and write books about the sword over America and the imminence of the return of Jesus.
4. We are basically blind to the need of people out there who literally are waiting for materials to be placed in their hands to show them the way to decision-making in the final events of earth's history. Most of our publishing work is to benefit church members, while books such as *The Great Controversy* are being allowed to gather dust on the shelves of our warehouses.
5. Finding the lost sheep is one thing; feeding the sheep is another—and until we provide good fodder and not put-me-to-sleep sermons, the sheep will keep moving off to what they think may be greener pastures. —Gordon A. Gilkes, Paradise, California.

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## First Glance

**Are the celebration churches bringing rampant Pentecostalism into the Adventist Church?** Is this new style of worship of divine origin? Read the firsthand report of J. David Newman and Kenneth R. Wade on this provocative subject.

**Next to our health system, our Adventist educational system consumes more church money, time, and energy than any other departmental entity.** No one, not even the pastor, makes a stronger impact on the hearts and minds of our youth than our schoolteachers. Our educational system is the most powerful instrument for molding the thinking of our youth. These are good enough reasons for you to take time to read our core group of articles on Adventist education carefully.

**Victor Griffiths' article talks about** the nearly three quarters of a million students in our schools that make ours one of the world's largest Protestant school systems.

**Concern for the spiritual welfare of the 80,000 Adventist youth** enrolled in secular colleges and universities led Humberto Rasi to share with our pastors practical ways to help nurture the faith life of this army of students, while Agripino Segovia shares practical insights on turning our schools into evangelistic centers.

**George Akers unapologetically tells us in the "ought" mood what the mission of Adventist education is.** Share this with members of your school boards. Then as religious thought leaders, ask yourselves the question Are our schools producing Christians thoroughly grounded in historic Adventism?



# Adventist education encompasses the world

**Victor S. Griffiths**

**Adventist schools overseas—increasing in number, breadth, and depth—are helping to meet the church's need for a well-trained work force.**



*Victor S. Griffiths, Ph.D., is the associate director of the Department of Education at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

**W**ith 5,218 schools, 35,319 teachers, and almost three quarters of a million students in 142 nations, the Seventh-day Adventist school system is probably the largest educational program sponsored by a single Protestant denomination. Currently, some 558,000 students attend its elementary schools, more than 133,000 attend its secondary schools, and its colleges and universities provide tertiary education to some 43,000 students.

In the United States and Canada enrollment in Seventh-day Adventist schools, at 63,108 students, is fourth to that of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod schools (194,404), the National Association of Episcopal Schools (78,438), and the Christian Schools International (67,627). Adventist schools (K-12) in these two countries number 1,100—second only to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's 1,754.

Education has not always played such an important role in our church. As one Adventist author stated recently, education was the last major institutional development within the denomination—it was preceded by the establishment of a strong publishing work that focused on developing and disseminating gospel literature (1849), a centralized ecclesiastical organization (1863), and a vigorous health-care program (1866).<sup>1</sup>

In fact, it was Adventist laity who first provided formal academic nurture for children of the church. The earliest substantiated records tell us that between 1853 and 1872, lay members in Buck's

Bridge, New York; Battle Creek, Michigan; and Amherst, New Hampshire, began sporadic attempts to educate their children. During this period the church contented itself with providing religious instruction through its Sabbath schools and the *Youth's Instructor*, its magazine for youth.

The first denominationally sponsored church school was opened at Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1872. This school, though open to the children of Adventist Church members, had as its primary focus the education of older students who would help to spread the gospel to the world. By this time, at least, the church's leadership had become persuaded that a school should be established under its supervision. The reasoning ran that by establishing such a school, the church would be guaranteeing that its ministerial force would be prepared for their duties by those who had known the faith from its beginning and were considered capable leaders.

In 1874 this school became Battle Creek College. Eight years later, with the opening of an academy at Healdsburg, California, and another at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, the beginnings of a secondary system emerged.

## **Church schools aid missions**

The year 1874 also marked the beginning of the church's first venture into overseas mission work. John Nevins Andrews was sent as a missionary to Europe. Within 25 years the church's missionary enterprise not only encompassed Europe, but had extended to Africa, India, Central and South America, the Far East, Australia, and

the islands of the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The establishment of church schools accompanied this advance in soul winning. In his study of the relationship between school attendance and church membership Warren Minder wrote: "The growth in educational facilities was slow until the 1890s. During that decade five colleges, many academies, and more than 200 elementary schools were established in the United States. This same period, according to Brown (1972) and Cadwallier [sic] (1975), witnessed new Adventist schools in Canada, England, Australia, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, Africa, Argentina, Denmark, and Brazil."<sup>2</sup>

Claremont Union College, founded at Kenilworth, Cape, South Africa, in 1893, was the first Adventist school to be established in Africa. From this educational center, later known as Helderberg College, were to emerge generations of mission workers who would evangelize the other areas of Africa.

In 1894, after the founding of Claremont, A. T. Robinson, then president of the Cape Conference, met with Sir Cecil Rhodes and asked for a piece of land upon which to establish a mission among the Matabeles of Rhodesia. Rhodes instructed Dr. L. S. Jameson, the administrator in Bulawayo, to permit the Adventist representatives to select whatever land they needed. They selected some 12,000 acres, upon which they built Solusi Mission. This mission, which was the base for the church's first workers among the Matabele people and the locus of its first converts among them, also became the site of the first school among the Matabeles.

In India, where direct evangelism proved unproductive, the opening of elementary schools to educate village children became the means of wooing adults to listen to the gospel. Jessie Louise Lowry, daughter of one of the pioneer missionary families, recalled for me how her father, after unsuccessful efforts to communicate with the adult Hindu population, decided to gather the illiterate village waifs and teach them to read the Bible and its stories. Soon the children were recounting to their parents what they were learning. The parents in turn expressed enough interest that the missionaries were able to begin work among the adults.

Likewise, in the Altiplano of Bolivia and Peru, by teaching the neglected Inca Indians to read, Fernando Stahl both provided a basis for teaching them the

gospel and made them participants in modern civilization. Though at first fiercely opposed by the landed gentry, politicians, and the dominant national church, Stahl persisted. In gratitude, the citizens of Plateria, Puno, Peru, have built a monument to this pioneer educator. It stands in the Plaza de Armas, in front of the municipal building—and in front of an Adventist high school that continues to contribute to the education of the people of that area.

### **The character of Christian education**

While missionaries were finding that education based on the study of the Scriptures could assist in sharing the gospel, the church's premier counselor, Ellen G. White, was warning that a classics-based curriculum that focused on rationality and pride of self-fulfillment was not the kind of curriculum best suited to developing the talents of Christian youth. In 1893 she published the book *Christian Education*, in which she gave a comprehensive apology of the philosophy that should guide the concepts, content, and methods of an educational program that was truly Christian.

She wrote that students should not be led into the cramming of facts and extensive memorization, and that they should be guided to consider the development of the spiritual, social, health, and vocational aspects of their lives as just as important as that of their mental capacities. She counseled teachers to make their students' salvation, their ability to function effectively as spiritual persons, and their development of character foundational to their other learning. Excellence in education demanded more than the mastery of academic subjects; it also included preparation for a life and a vocation marked by loving service for humanity.

The teacher's modeling of spiritual values, the work ethic, and community service were an integral part of the curriculum. The church's educational program and its educators were to exemplify moral, spiritual, and ethical values that would help each student become a candidate for eternal life.

This emphasis did not proscribe rigorous academics. When early in the twentieth century the church's educators experienced major resistance to accreditation, Ellen White urged that the feeder schools to the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) provide the accredited preparation that

## **Excellence demanded more than the mastery of academic subjects.**

would secure government recognition of the degrees the medical school granted.

### **Growth outside the home base**

The educational system that was but a seedling in 1900 has spread its branches far. At the turn of the century it was comprised of 220 elementary schools, 18 secondary schools, and 8 colleges, almost all in the United States and Europe. Today the Adventist educational system has 961 elementary schools, 214 secondary schools, and 11 colleges in Africa; 2,320, 326, and 32, respectively, in the Americas; 334, 63, and 25 in Europe and the Pacific; and 786, 172, and 15 in Asia and the Far East.

Not only has the number of these overseas schools increased, their enrollments have grown also. In 1988, Philippine Union College had 3,959 students; Korean Sahmyook University, 2,006; Mexico's Montemorelos University, 1,311; and Peru's Inca Union University, 1,307.

The courses of study the world's tertiary schools offer have become increasingly diversified and sophisticated as well. No longer are schools in the United States the only Adventist schools to offer degrees in medicine, nursing, and other health-related professions. Mexico's Montemorelos and India's Vellore (a Christian school with which the church has a special relationship) offer degrees in medicine, preparing doctors to serve the church. Korea has a school of pharmacy, Denmark a noted school of physiotherapy, and on all continents Adventist schools offer nurses' training.

While most of the Adventist schools offering graduate education are still to be found in the United States, graduate training in education or theology may be obtained in church-operated schools in the Philippines, India, the Americas, Europe, and Australia. Of the more than 42,000 students in postsecondary institutions, the majority are registered in the following academic clusters: health and health-related areas, 8,020; business and

associated fields, 7,099; education, 5,905; and religion, 5,273. Three other groupings trail at some distance: the applied sciences, 1,861; the natural sciences, 1,295; and the humanities, 1,256.

Changes in the makeup of the church's missionary personnel reflect the growth throughout the world of its educational system. Between 1901 and 1960, the church sent out 5,925 missionaries, most of them from North America, Europe, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. While national workers comprised part of the missionary enterprise during this period, they tended to work in areas near their homelands—for example, Solomon Islanders worked in the South Pacific and New Guinea and those from Latin America and the West Indies served in island and continental nations adjacent to their homelands.

Since the mid-1950s a more universal sharing of human resources has gradually come to characterize the work of the church as its colleges have been upgraded and its national workers have received better training. Graduates from our schools in the Philippines have served in Africa, the United States, and the West Indies. Black Americans have served in Africa, South and Central America, and the West Indies. Latin Americans have served throughout their continent, in Europe, Africa, and the Far East. Missionaries from India have gone to the Far East, Africa, the West Indies, and North America. And increasingly, Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans are becoming a part of the mission work in places such as Brazil, the United States, and Australia.

Today, as in earlier years, the church looks to its schools to provide the core of its work force. To maintain the quality of instruction as well as the values and methods that have set this educational program apart, it uses a system of accreditation that complements and supplements the varied forms of governmental and professional recognition.

As in the past, Seventh-day Adventist educators seek to integrate the spiritual, vocational, and academic aspects of Christian education. They strive to turn out graduates known for their character development, competence, and commitment to service. ■

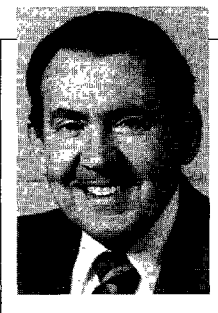
<sup>1</sup> See George R. Knight, "Spiritual Revival and Educational Expansion," *Adventist Review*, Mar. 29, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> Ed.D. dissertation, Western Michigan University, 1985, p. 17.

# The mission of Adventist education

George H. Akers

**How can we keep Adventist education from falling prey to the aimless drift that afflicts so much of America's educational system?**



George H. Akers, Ed.D., is director of the Education Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**T**he problem with most mission statements is that they are written in the "is" mode, the descriptive. But the whole intent of writing a mission statement is to focus on the "ought," which is prescriptive. So the primary question to be addressed is not "What is it that we traditionally do?" but rather "What is it that we *ought* to be doing to accomplish our objectives?"

Like chart and compass, mission statements are indispensable in helping us determine if the winds and tides of time have blown us off course. And more important, to prompt us to action, to make mid-course correctional maneuvers when they are needed.

This article is unapologetically written in the ought mode. Enunciators of mission are vulnerable, easily tagged by the front-line soldiers as romantic visionaries who are out of touch with the realities of the current battle. I hope, though, that this partial recital of bedrock commitments in Adventist education can help us refresh the vision together.

Ideally, a mission statement should be condensed to one or two short declarative sentences, or at most to a brief paragraph. I have had to struggle to achieve the brevity and clarity necessary to capture in so few words the Seventh-day Adventist mission in education. Our philosophy of education is comprehensive and complex and doesn't easily yield to the forces of super-reductionism. I am well aware, too, that oversimplification is dangerous because so many subtle and necessary nuances can fall through the

cracks. But here goes:

*The primary mission of a Christian school is to produce Christians—and in our case Christians who are thoroughly grounded in historic Adventism.*

*Second, it endeavors to provide our children and youth with quality basic education so that they might effectively cope with their world.*

*At the college and university level, it undertakes to prepare professionals for service to the world church.*

Administrators of Christian schools face the great challenge of ensuring that the mission priorities stay in that order. If we fail here, the creeping secularism and humanistic relativism of our times will swamp us. It is not easy to keep a school theocentric these days. It takes real effort by everyone involved with the institution—faculty, staff, board, and parents. Without constant reflection on and evaluation of our mission, Adventist education will fall into that almost incurable malady called institutional drift.

### **The true measure of a school**

The real measure of a school is what is happening to students there. That is, what kind of mind-set is the total press of the institution developing in its students? One that is selfish, secular, and materialistic? Or one that is deeply spiritual—centered on God? Are the students coming out of the place committed to selfless service to their fellowman and extending God's kingdom on earth, or are they just looking out for "number one"? One doesn't need a Ph.D. in institutional analysis to find the answer to these questions.

A recent article by R. C. Sproul in *Christianity Today* echoed my concern in its title, "You Can't Always Tell a Christian College by Its Label." Students spend half their time inside classrooms, and what goes on in a Christian school's classrooms has to be qualitatively different from what happens at a good private or public school or the school is not really Christian. But it is not only the in-class perspectives that we must look at. The cocurricular activities are important too: the campus values, student heroes, and a multitude of other influences combine to mold the students' general outlook. In his article Sproul says that the most important question we can ask about the place is whether the students emerge from it with a Christian world view—the ability to see everything from heaven's point of view. Everything else is mere

scaffolding and props. This is why we are told that the work of redemption and education are one. The apostle Paul surely must have had this in mind when he appealed to the church at Rome to permit God to completely transform their whole outlook, so that they could begin to see things as God does (see Rom. 12:1).

This is indeed a tall order, but in the final analysis the overall purpose of our Adventist schools, from kindergarten through graduate school, is to give our young people a distinctly Bible-based, Christ-centered worldview—to teach them to "think Christian," if you please. And that mission certainly includes instilling in them the vision of a finished work of God on earth, and calling to each student to respond personally to the gospel commission.

Our people have their antennas out, and they instinctively recognize whether our schools are fulfilling their mission with respect to making Christians. Consequently they expect that everything in the Adventist school should be focused on that overall objective. They know when a school has drifted off course or has selected another agenda. And it is they in the end who write Ichabod over the doorposts of a spiritually effete school.

Sensing this responsibility keenly, our deeply committed Christian administrators and teachers labor prayerfully to prove worthy of the sacred trust. They certainly deserve our support and words of encouragement. Have you hugged a teacher lately? Or in your personal devotions prayed earnestly for one?

### **A blurred conceptual model**

Too many Christian educators, I fear, believe that a good Christian school is essentially the same as a good secular school except for certain influences in the environment. To them it is the social context, the religious add-ons in structured campus life, such as Bible classes and required religious services, that give the institution its Christian influence. This approach reduces Christian education to mere social engineering and fails to get to the heart of things educationally. Worse yet, it bifurcates a school, partitioning it unnaturally between the secular and sacred. This sends a false message to students, denying the integrated wholeness of all life under God. If schools can be divided and managed that way, so can individual lives, and students

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don't miss that not-so-subtle lesson. Such a ruptured campus scenario produces six-day secular Christians who have developed the fine art of playing church one day a week.

Partitioning religion off into one corner has a negative impact on faculty as well. It gives the impression that some of the faculty may be excused from being true ministers of education. It places responsibility for the spiritual nurture of students on a specialized segment of the staff—the dorm deans, religion professors, and chaplains.

A partitioned campus does not fulfill the real mission of Adventist education. All of our teachers need to be involved in the spiritual guidance and development of their students, utilizing every opportunity, both in and out of the classroom, to nurture the faith life of their young charges. Christian teachers are in the inspiration business as much as or more than the information business. This is essential to the accomplishment of education's sacred mission to turn on lamps for God.

So we are quite fussy about the caliber of people we permit to teach in our schools. They are modeling the gospel at close range before callow, impressionable youth. We are well aware that we are dealing in soul stuff when we select teachers, and that we dare not be casual.

### **Knowing, doing, and being**

Every school, or school system, revolves around one or two, or at most a few, central organizing principles. Discover these tent-pole tenets and you know what makes the whole place tick.

If I were to choose a conceptual model for education in general, it would proba-



## The tent of Adventist education has three poles: being, knowing, and doing.

blly be an ellipse built around two organizing centers: knowing and doing. These two principles seem to hold all conventional schools together and focus them on their mission.

In a typical secular school the Siamese twins of educational purpose, knowing and doing, are very evident. After all, coming to *know* is what schools are all about, isn't it? One goes to school to learn something, to gain useful information for coping with life, and hopefully along the way to gain an appreciation for the world's cultural legacy. The *doing* embraces the acquisition of skills necessary for survival in today's world. This, then, is the straightforward mission of a secular school: to insure that its students acquire both knowledge and skills for coping with life.

Who could argue with these relevant, laudable goals? They are educationally sound, right on target, as far as they go. But are they complete? More and more Americans are answering "No." There is a deepening disillusionment with their public schools. They sense that something vital is missing, that the American dream in education has gone sour. Just learning information and acquiring job skills is not enough; there must be more, much more.

Let us acknowledge quickly that Adventist education certainly embraces the ideals of knowing and doing. But the knowing and doing of Christian education extends upward to a special kind of knowing: that of knowing God personally, coming into a saving relationship with Him, and knowing that He can be trusted to guide and keep us. It also includes knowing about God's reasonable expectations for our participation in the divine-human partnership for salvation, and knowing about the supernatural assistance available to ready us for graduation from earth school to the school of the hereafter.

Christian education has its own brand of doing too: students should learn to do the Master's work and get practice in

helping God to extend His kingdom on earth. They should learn to serve mankind selflessly and to live totally for God's glory. Adventist schools, then, are also assayed in terms of the extent to which their special genre of knowing and doing is accomplished.

### Christian character development

But Christian education has a third ideal: that of being. Although implied in the religious faith/experience cited above, yet it is singled out for special attention in the school program. With this as the final complement, you might say that the tent of Adventist education has three poles: being, knowing, and doing.

What we're talking about here is a primary emphasis on Christian character development in every facet of the program of the Adventist Christian school. We extol it, study it, reward it. It might not be too strong to assert that this is the very cornerstone of Adventist education, captured best in the slogan "Character Determines Destiny."

Mission statements for good secular schools often focus on the marketplace, "the good life," or admission to graduate school. We don't deny these as legitimate goals, but our educational mission is for our students to end up at the New Jerusalem, with admission to the heavenly school, with Christ and the angels as their tutors, to grow and learn forever. That's the cosmic dimension in curriculum planning. And that third dimension, being expressed in Adventist Christian education as conscious, focused attention to the developing spiritual personhood of the student, is what sets our schools apart in the whole field of education. The lack of commitment to this crucial area has left secular education adrift without moral compass.

Because character development is so important, every level of Adventist education is designed to foster it. It is the bottom line in the Adventist educational balance sheet. This emphasis is absolutely central to the accomplishment of the Adventist mission in education.

And this brings us to the mighty triad in Adventist education: the cooperation of home, school, and church in training our children for God.

### The great partnership

Adventist education can never accomplish its mission if the professional educators work in isolation. Home and congregation must be powerfully involved also.

Trying to determine which of those three critical components is the most important is like trying to choose which leg on a three-legged stool is indispensable!

If the family's lifestyle is worldly (particularly with respect to unregulated television viewing), the children and youth who attend church school are thrown into spiritual chaos. They find themselves living in two different worlds, each with its own value system. This produces a state of suspension and internal conflict. Many of them do not survive this battle, becoming mere numbers in the church's youth attrition statistics.

Some Christian schools are so earnest about addressing the dysfunction between the nominally Christian home and its church school that the pastor and church school teacher visit each home together just before the school year starts. They have the parents sign an agreement, in the presence of the prospective student or students, about home-school cooperation. The agreement obligates the family to support the values and lifestyle requirements of the school in regard to dress, music, drugs, television viewing, and other influences. This procedure makes it abundantly clear that it is the whole family that is being registered into the school. The family enters into a contractual recognition that involves all of them in fulfilling the mission of Christian education.

Children and youth need to know that they belong, that their church family prizes and dearly loves them, that they are truly in the house of sympathetic friends, not harsh critics. It encourages them to know that their Christian education is a responsibility with which the whole church identifies. It brings heart to struggling parents, too. And in this Year of the Adventist Teacher, the slogan "Partners in Service" takes on special meaning as pastors and teachers team up together to minister to the lambs of the flock. As home and church and school pull together, the enemy finds little area in which to work, and God fulfills His special promise to us, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children" (Isa. 49:25).

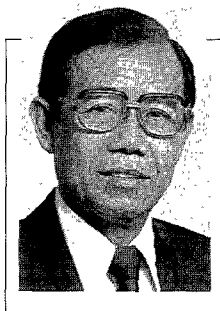
Soon we shall hear the sweet words of commendation from the Saviour, "Well done. The precious jewels, the little ones I entrusted to you, are all in my eternal diadem; mission accomplished!" ■



# Evangelistic dimensions in Adventist education

Agripino C. Segovia

**If evangelism is not an important goal of our educational system, our schools should not be called Christian schools.**



*Agripino C. Segovia, Ph.D., is an associate director of the Education Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

**E**vangelism has always been the compelling motivation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Evangelism is essential for the growth and survival of the church. It is said that if the church ceases to evangelize, it is just a generation away from extinction. "Rescue the perishing" is the watchword of evangelism; it is also the ultimate objective of Adventist education, for education's ministry is designed to "restore in man the image of his Maker."<sup>1</sup>

Adventist education seeks to accomplish what is comprehended in the great gospel commission (Matt. 28:19, 20). It is no coincidence that the goals of Adventist education are inseparably linked with the goals and purposes of the church, because "in the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one."<sup>2</sup>

## **Make the truth attractive**

Human beings are attracted to things that are beautiful and sweet. This is why costly perfumes are bottled in attractive containers. This principle applies to the spiritual experience as well.

Truth is always beautiful because it is God's creation. To accentuate its elegance, the divine truth should be enshrined in an attractive living receptacle, the human vessel. But too often the purity of God's truth is tarnished by people's sinful behavior. People are drawn to Christ, or driven away from Him, by the character representations they see in His professed followers. In the words of Ellen White: "One of the most effective ways

of winning souls to Him is in exemplifying His character in our daily life. Our influence upon others depends not so much on what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ, is a power in the world."<sup>3</sup>

To attract people and win them to Christ, Christians should wear what the prophet Isaiah described as the most appropriate attire, the "garments of salvation" and the "robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10). There is no place where the presence of the divine radiance is more essential than in the school environment. While secular institutions strive primarily for academic excellence, Adventist schools must make moral and spiritual excellence paramount. Ellen White made this observation: "It is the degree of moral power pervading a school that is a test of its prosperity. It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our schools, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness."<sup>4</sup> The moral strength of the institution is not only the test of a genuine Christian school climate, it is a potent evangelistic power.

## **Campus evangelism targets**

Students in Adventist schools represent a wide range of religious beliefs, attitudes, and concerns. This mixture presents an evangelistic challenge that must be met with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Non-Adventist students comprised about one third of the more than 730,000 students who were enrolled in the 5,218

Adventist schools worldwide. These include both non-Christians and Christians with other religious affiliations. The influx of non-Adventist students into Adventist schools is especially prevalent in countries where laws prohibit the consideration of religion as a factor in acceptance of students. The great challenge to the Adventist members of the school family is to exemplify the life of Christ to non-Adventist students, who are measuring their words against their actions. They must know Him, the Author of eternal life.

In the ancient Hebrew culture there were men who were consecrated to God who followed prescribed social ethics and religious rules. They were the Nazarites. Some served for a period of time, and others for as long as they lived. Samson was declared a Nazarite even when he was in the womb of his mother (Judges 13:5).

In the modern Adventist school culture, there are students who may be called "Adventist Nazarites." These are children of Adventist parents who in a sense are "consecrated" to God. They have lived in a spiritual cocoon, as it were, without going through the birth pains of conversion. Yes, they believe in Christ as their personal Saviour, but they have not gone through the refining "afflictions of the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:8). They have not had to experience the difficulty of giving up drinking, smoking, or questionable companions and entertainments. Their sheltered religious experience needs to be strengthened so that they can endure trials and temptations. Like children in the flesh, they need the nourishing milk from the Word of God. To the "babes in Christ" Paul testified, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor. 3:2).

There are also a good number of students who have almost forgotten their first love of their Lord. They are tied to the church by a slender thread. They are in our schools in response to the promptings of their parents, ministers, and Christian friends. Many parents think of Adventist schools as "cities of refuge" for their sons and daughters who are caught in a worldly swirl.

The religious ambivalence and uncertainty observable in many youth studying in Adventist schools present a tremendous challenge to the educators and the educational leaders of the church. How

can these young people be oriented to follow the Lord? How can the truth and the Author of truth be made attractive to them? What evangelistic strategies may be applied to win, to keep, and to build them so that they will be dignified vessels of truth, powerful preachers of the gospel, and "fellow citizens with the saints" (Eph. 2:19)?

### **Evangelistic approaches**

*Classroom Evangelism.* Every teacher should bring the perspective of evangelism to his or her teaching ministry. The classroom offers the best opportunity for the Adventist teacher to impart the knowledge of God to students.

A primary school teacher was giving instructions on diet, citing some biblical principles to support the Adventist view of good nutrition. The presentation was in no way critical of what other people ate or drank, and the pupils were free to ask questions about points not clear to them. A non-Adventist boy went home that afternoon determined to share with his family what he had learned in school about healthful food. He refused to eat some of the food prepared for the evening meal because his teacher had described it as unhealthful. You can imagine the confusion and questions this raised in the family. The incident led the boy's father to ask questions about the Bible, and eventually the family accepted the gospel. The teacher was engaged in gospel teaching, an evangelistic art that wins souls for the kingdom.

*Preaching, Bible study, worship, and music.* We are charged to preach the Word of God. Every Christian has the impulse to share the love of God with others. Sinners must hear God's invitation to come to Him for pardon. The youth in the schools must be introduced to Christ, their best Friend and Saviour. However, Paul cautioned that we have to preach the Word "with all longsuffering" (2 Tim. 4:2).

It can be unpleasant to hear the truth. However, no matter how radical truth appears to the unregenerated soul, it will find acceptance if spoken in love (Eph. 4:15) and demonstrated with love (Jer. 31:3). Ellen White described the power of love as "melting and transforming in its influence," and said that it "will take hold of the lives of the sinful and affect their hearts when every other means has proved unsuccessful."<sup>5</sup> Divine sympathy and gentleness is the trademark of Christ's evangelistic approach. Isaiah de-

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**I was not a problem student, yet in my three years of high school studies I had picked up some values that could have hindered my success.**

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scribes it poetically in these words: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench" (Isa. 42:3).

Worship periods in the school and in the church are excellent times to instruct the students in the principles of good living and in how to establish a solid relationship with Christ.

Music too has a special place with young people. They love to sing. Many students trace their conversion to a song or songs they listened to, or to the influence of a choral group they joined. At Saleve Adventist Institute, Collonges, France, and in the Franco-Belgian Union, several choirs have been organized for evangelistic purposes. Not only have the choirs assisted with evangelistic outreach, but about 30 choir members have begun the road toward baptism as well. This melodious evangelistic approach is practiced by many Adventist institutions around the world.

*Personal relationships.* School administrators and faculty have many opportunities to cultivate personal relationships with students. Bridging the gap between the professionals and the learners is important in the work of winning souls.

It was not until my senior year that I had the opportunity to study at a Christian academy, and I will never forget the Bible teacher who took an interest in me when I was a new student there. I was not a problem student, yet in my three years of high school studies I had picked up some values that, if allowed to flourish, could have hindered my success. This fine Christian teacher showed his fa-

therly concern. Some evenings when he passed by the men's dormitory, he would invite me to study the mysteries of the starry heavens with him. I knew he was not as interested in the stars as he was in me. His star identification was rather poor, but he instilled in me a desire for Christ's goodness to shine in my heart. What a comforting feeling surged through my soul as this man of God prayed earnestly for the Lord's mercy and direction in my life!

I can testify that the personal ministry of that Bible teacher has made a difference in my life, and that his labors have been rewarded. Ellen White wrote a challenge to teachers in all Adventist schools. She said, "From the highest to the lowest grade they should show special care for the salvation of the students and through personal effort seek to lead their feet into straight paths."<sup>6</sup>

Some Adventist schools have instituted a plan to facilitate personal interaction between faculty and students through what they call "socials to save." As the faculty and students socialize, they establish a bond of friendship that makes it easier for them to talk on more serious matters such as their relationship with Christ.

*Christian home weekend adoption.* The best evangelistic approach in winning souls is the one-to-one approach. It can be carried out most effectively in a home environment.

In one boarding school the faculty invite students to stay with them for the weekend. The student becomes an adopted member of the family for the weekend and participates in the home chores and also in the religious activities of the family. Of course, the relationship does not end once the weekend is over. The student becomes attached to the family as his or her surrogate family. Nurturing the student's affinity for the family of God on earth helps awaken a desire to be with the family of God in heaven.

*Pastoral programs.* Korean Sahmyook University (KSU), in Seoul, Korea, has in the past few years been accepting a large number of non-Adventist students because discrimination on the basis of religion is illegal in Korea. To meet this challenge, the institution developed the Departmental Pastor's Program (DPP), and the Undershepherd Pastoral Program (UPP).

In the DPP a theology professor is assigned as a pastor to one or more academic departments. His pastoral respon-

sibilities are in addition to his regular teaching load. The theology professor is assisted by a lay professor within the department in giving counsel, Bible studies, and guidance to the students to help them appreciate spiritual values.

Theology students participate in the UPP. These students make friends with non-Adventists, and then invite them to attend friendship classes where Bible studies are conducted. Through these soul-winning programs KSU enjoys a good annual harvest of souls.

Some institutions adopt the "buddy" approach. Mature Adventist students, regardless of their academic training, befriend non-Christian or non-Adventist students, helping them in their search for religious understanding and in establishing a relationship with Christ.

### Training disciples for service

An educated ministry is an honor to God. Because of the diverse groups that a modern witness for the gospel has to face, formal ministerial training is necessary. There is a clear message to the church: "Wise plans should be laid to strengthen the work done in our training centers. Study should be given to the best methods for fitting consecrated young men and women to bear responsibility and to win souls for Christ."<sup>7</sup> Further, Ellen White counseled that "their education is of primary importance in our colleges [academies], and in no case should it be ignored or regarded as a secondary matter."<sup>8</sup>

Our schools have the capacity to prepare workers to meet the challenge of our times. The aim of our educational work should be, as Charles Oliver said: "Every pupil a Christian; every Christian a worker; every worker trained."

While ministerial training is important as a preparation for witnessing, we must not forget the importance of the power of the Holy Spirit. God can use any person—regardless of educational attainment—who is totally consecrated to serve the Lord.

### Adventist schools as evangelistic centers

Adventist schools are evangelistic centers where the administrators, faculty, and students, whatever their academic discipline, can function as evangelists. These institutions are fountains of spiritual inspiration that awaken in the youth a strong desire for a relationship with Christ.

At Mountain View College (MVC) and Indonesia Union College (IUC), several Muslim students have become Christians. One young Muslim who studied at IUC later became the president of the Indonesia Union Mission, and many of the young men who finished their studies at MVC are now holding important positions in denominational work. One educator made the importance of evangelism succinctly clear: "Education cannot be Christian unless it is evangelistic. It is winning, keeping, building up in the faith all who are committed to our responsibility. To fail here is to fail in our primary reason for existence and service. School evangelism is evangelism that comes through teaching. It includes the living of the Christian life. Evangelism is a great purpose in Christian education."<sup>9</sup>

Adventist institutions should not occupy all their time and resources ministering to their own flock. They have a responsibility to share the good news beyond their own campuses. Every Sabbath morning at Mountain View College in the Philippines a fleet of jeeps and World War II-vintage trucks roll out of the campus and onto the highways and byways, taking students and teachers to communities surrounding the college. Other students take the winding mountain trails on foot to worship with groups that meet in places inaccessible to motor vehicles. Today, scores of churches dot the hills and valleys around MVC as a result of the evangelistic endeavors of the students and faculty. This experience is not unique to MVC. But it illustrates what Adventist educators and their students are doing to spread the message of salvation in many parts of the world. ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1952), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> —, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), pp. 141, 142.

<sup>4</sup> —, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 6, p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 135.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 152.

<sup>7</sup> —, *Counsels to Parents and Teachers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1943), p. 524.

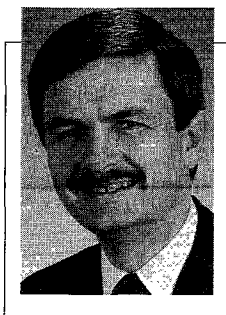
<sup>8</sup> —, *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 135.

<sup>9</sup> H. W. Byrne, *Christian Education for the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1973), p. 24.

# Pastors and teachers: partners in ministry

**Kenneth R. Wade**

**All over the world, wherever pastors and teachers work together, students are being led to Christ.**



*Kenneth R. Wade is an associate editor of Ministry.*

**M**y first district after seminary included a quaint country church, complete with cemetery and attached one-room school. The teacher returned from vacation a few days after I arrived, and I stopped by for a visit.

Wanting to be supportive, I suggested that I would be willing to stop by the school once a week to have worship for the 10 students.

The teacher's response to my suggestion changed my ministry permanently, and for the better. At the annual teachers' convention, someone had suggested that if the pastor would stop by the school and spend a recess with the kids, that would help him or her to develop a closer relationship with them than could be developed in a worship setting.

Taking that suggestion to heart, I found a way to make playing games part of my work at least once a week. And in doing so, I found a way to the hearts of children who otherwise might have known me only by name and title.

For a while it was Tuesdays, then it was Fridays, but I almost never missed spending an hour or so playing and then worshipping with the students at the schools in the districts I pastored. The teachers told me that often they heard comments from students who had missed school on Thursday, but made sure their folks knew they felt well enough for school on Friday because they didn't want to miss this special day.

And it wasn't only the children I got acquainted with. Several of the teachers I worked with enjoyed playing too.

Though we were on opposite teams, we developed a bond that we would never have had without that time together.

When it came time for the worship talk, often I could relate the week's thought to some experience I had shared together with the students. Baptismal classes were also a natural outgrowth of the relationship developed. And students who felt comfortable with me at recess time also felt comfortable coming with me to give Bible studies.

## **Finding ways to work together**

My experience is just one example of ways that pastors and teachers can work together. Before drafting this article, I wrote to the education department directors and the ministerial secretaries of each division of the General Conference, asking these individuals to tell me which pastors and teachers in their regions were finding creative ways of working together. Then I wrote to the people these division leaders recommended.

The letters I received back from pastors and teachers, and even a few pastor/teachers, are fascinating.

I was especially thrilled by letters from those working in areas where the population, and often the students in the schools, are not Christians.

Lalchansanga Colney told me of his service as both principal of the Adventist Training School in Thadlaskein, Meghalaya, India, and as the pastor of the local church. Prior to taking up responsibilities at the school, Pastor Colney had been an evangelist. And he didn't lose any of his evangelistic zeal when he became a principal.

First of all, he took time to meet with

the teachers and to help them see the importance, in this school where only half the scholars are Seventh-day Adventists and some are Muslims or Hindus, of leading students to Christ. In staff meetings teachers and pastor united in prayer for students who might be ready to make a decision for Christ. In three years this program led to 150 baptisms!

From Ethiopia came word from another principal/pastor, Negero Djaleta of the Akaki Adventist School. Pastor Djaleta points out how important it is, when a pastor wants to implement a plan for working with the school, that all the people involved in carrying out the plan be fully committed to its objectives.

Pastor Djaleta found implementing his plans difficult until he used what he calls the "spiritual commitment approach" to get each teacher committed to working out the objectives of Adventist education in the school. He got the faculty to agree to meet for an hour of Bible study and prayer two days per week. In addition, they set aside one day a month for fasting and prayer, and divided themselves into groups for visiting and praying with various families on the campus. Baptisms at this school have increased from 9 in 1985 to 85 in 1988! And academically, the school rates in the nation's highest bracket.

### **Cooperation yields evangelistic explosion**

In many areas of the world pastors are teaming up with faculty and students to reach out to the communities around the schools.

The Theology Department of the Colombia-Venezuela Adventist University in Medellin, Colombia, is carrying out one of the most creative applications of this methodology. Itamar Sabino De-Paiva told me of the experimental conference that has been established in conjunction with the theology department. In this conference, which functions in area churches, the undergraduate theology students serve as ministers and administrators. Freshman students participate in the children's departments. Sophomores serve as associate ministers, and juniors as full-fledged ministers. Seniors are all evangelists, and the most successful are also appointed to administrative positions in the experimental conference office. All of the work done by the students is coordinated with the pastors in the districts where they serve.

In 1988 an evangelistic series that the

student evangelists held resulted in 350 baptisms. And another 170 souls were baptized as a direct result of the work of the experimental conference.

Other educational institutions have also become involved in helping pastors. In the Philippines, faculty and students aid pastors in planning and holding evangelistic meetings. In Tanzania, the staff of the Ikizu Secondary School supplied funds and food so that seven teachers could move to another village to spend their 1988 midyear holiday in evangelistic outreach. These teachers, working in cooperation with their pastor, preached, gave health talks, visited homes, and taught Bible lessons for three weeks. Even though the village is in an area where it is difficult to win souls, 16 were baptized and 46 others enrolled in a baptismal class. Students from this same school are holding branch Sabbath schools. A youth evangelistic campaign held in connection with one branch Sabbath school led to 24 baptisms.

The Sabbath afternoon lay activities program at the Raymond Memorial High School in India has involved even the school's non-Christian students in distributing literature in the neighborhood. Sometimes hundreds of students have to be sent back to their hostels because there is not enough literature to distribute.

At Caribbean Union College in Trinidad, the assistance is bidirectional. Students help pastors with crusades, and pastors come to the college to teach classes and hold seminars. From across the Atlantic, Gerald Hummel, a teacher at Friedensau Theological Seminary in East Germany, reports that every year the pastor of a church works with the third-year theology students as they prepare for and hold an evangelistic series.

### **Cooperation is the key**

In each instance the success stories reported to me have been founded on cooperation and communication. Many of those who wrote to me stressed the importance of actively planning ways to improve communication. The Spanish Union recently organized a joint convention in which all its teachers and ministers met together as partners in ministry. In the Bahamas each pastor in the conference is invited to the academy to conduct faculty worship and to address the student body at least once a year. Faculty and pastors also meet for a workers' meeting and at a banquet each year.

Pastor K. Chelladurai of India serves

as principal of a large secondary school that has some non-Christian faculty members. He calls on each faculty member at home on his or her birthday and anniversary. The relationships established through this and other efforts are strong enough that Muslim and Hindu staff attend faculty worship and often present prayer requests.

Working together to reach a common goal helps maintain good communication. Pastor Jerry Joubert, who now teaches in the Department of Religion at Helderberg College in South Africa, related to me a fascinating story of the surprising results this kind of cooperation can yield. Before entering his present position, Pastor Joubert had served as pastor on the campus of Sedaven High School. While there, he got one of the faculty members involved in teaching a baptismal class. This teacher, D. F. Allen, was at first reluctant to take on this responsibility. But as he saw his students baptized, he came to enjoy teaching the baptismal class. Soon he was invited to join the education department at Helderberg College, and then was called to be the youth pastor at the campus church. From there he accepted a call to pastor the church at Sedaven, where he had first begun teaching the baptismal class years before.

In the letter in which Pastor Joubert told this story he stressed the importance of the pastor's taking time to get involved in the campus program, even serving on committees and presenting monthly reports to the faculty on the spiritual conditions on the campus.

I heard from Pastor Allen as well. He stressed the importance of the pastor's helping teachers to see their teaching as a ministry and to use their didactic abilities in soul winning. Significantly he also emphasized the importance of a regularly scheduled baptismal class, especially for students around 12 years of age.

Of course I was able to sample only a microcosm of the types of joint ministries that are being carried on throughout the world. Yet what I read was an encouragement to me. Too often we hear only about the negative stories—the situations in which a teacher and pastor are at loggerheads seemingly bent on making life difficult for one another.

In a very real sense both pastors and church school teachers are ministers of the gospel. Recognizing this fact can be a significant step toward fostering greater cooperation. ■

# Ministering to Adventist students in public universities

Humberto M. Rasi

**If there is a university near you, chances are good that Adventist students are attending. How can you meet their needs?**



*Humberto M. Rasi, Ph.D., is an associate director of the Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

**E**ighty thousand Adventist young men and women are studying in colleges and universities around the world. Approximately half attend Adventist schools, while the other half take their courses in non-Adventist institutions. Most of these latter students enroll in public universities because Adventist schools do not offer the programs in which they are interested or simply because there are no post-secondary Adventist institutions in their homeland.

These young people in public universities represent a highly talented and motivated sector of our membership. They are at a critical stage in their lives, making far-reaching decisions. Within a few years they will be influential lay leaders in local congregations and members of executive committees and will be setting the future course for our church. Their professional skills will make them desirable as staff in our schools, health-care institutions, and administrative centers. In fact, our mission would be in jeopardy without their dedicated talents.

At this time, however, they face serious challenges: the naturalistic assumptions underlying the majority of courses, the influence of nonbelieving professors, the loose lifestyle espoused by many on campus, political pressures, and academic activities or examinations on the Sabbath. Some of our youth enter this arena without adequate preparation, and some find these challenges too strong for their faith.

In some places forward-looking leaders

have recognized these students' special needs and have taken steps to supply them by appointing chaplains, providing scholarships, supporting the establishment of student associations, sponsoring residences, organizing seminars, and actively seeking students' involvement in church life.

Three General Conference departments—Church Ministries, Chaplaincy Ministries, and Education—have recently joined forces to provide continued support on a worldwide basis to those seeking to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, and social needs of our college and university students. Working through the AMiCUS Committee (Adventist Ministry to College and University Students), they have begun implementing a program designed to:

1. Encourage the world divisions and unions to establish at the regional level counterparts to the AMiCUS Committee—with representatives from local church ministries/youth, education, ministerial, and student leadership.
2. Assist divisions and unions in organizing seminars and spiritual retreats for these students, selecting relevant topics, and inviting specialized speakers.
3. Cooperate with the divisions and unions in providing workshops for Adventist campus chaplains, youth leaders, and ministers pastoring in university centers.
4. Develop materials to support the nurture and outreach activities of university students and young professionals.

As part of this program, AMiCUS has begun publishing *College and University Dialogue* in four parallel editions (English, French, Portuguese, and

Spanish). This 36-page network publication has been mailed free to thousands of students in all divisions. It contains stimulating articles on the role of the Christian faith in the contemporary world, reports on activities of university students, interviews with successful Adventist professionals, and practical outreach ideas.

### What you can do

If you are an Adventist pastor, a leader, or an administrator with a burden for this growing sector of our membership, what can you do?

*Compile a list or update your files.* List the college and university students in your area. List also the Adventist teachers. Make this file available to the youth or education leader in your conference, union, or division, and seek their advice on materials and activities geared to this group. Make sure that these students are aware of the programs available in SDA colleges and universities. Encourage those qualified to transfer their enrollment.

*Help them to get organized.* If you locate a sufficient number of university students, invite them for a meeting. Listen to their concerns, and discuss the possibility of establishing a local or regional association of Adventist university students for mutual encouragement and outreach. If there are Adventist teachers as well, let them serve as counselors. Consider a program of suitable activities to fulfill their needs and to help them feel that they really belong in the church. Seek the assistance of teachers from Adventist colleges and universities.

*Nurture their faith life.* Ensure that the university students are welcome in your congregation. Some may now be on the periphery of church life and will need a special invitation. Others may be new in the area and seeking a church family to belong to. Organize a Sabbath school discussion class for young adults and provide a dynamic, friendly teacher. As you prepare to preach, keep them in mind. Add to your church library basic books and audiovisual programs dealing with subjects of interest to the students. Use their talents to fill positions of responsibility in the congregation. Do not be shocked by some of the questions they raise. They may be seeking answers to some of the difficult questions they are asked on the campus. Plan an occasional meal for them and invite their friends. Suggest suitable outreach and service programs in which they can take

the initiative. Remember that they have direct access to future leaders of society.

*Keep in touch with them.* If a young member of your congregation has moved away to study at a public university, locate a nearby church and write to the pastor asking him to visit that student. It is usually much easier to retain these students as active members than to convert non-Adventist professionals. Help your university students keep in touch with the church by mailing them Adventist publications such as the *Collegiate Quarterly*, the *Adventist Review*, and their union paper. Send the name and address of Adventist students and teachers on non-Adventist campuses to Humberto M. Rasi or to Israel Leito (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A.) and through our regional representatives we will see that they receive a free copy of *Dialogue*. If you yourself wish to obtain a sample issue, follow the same procedure.

*Provide a sustained ministry.* Many university students are so absorbed in their intensive programs that they may

not be able to devote much time to other worthwhile activities. But they need to know that the church appreciates and supports them. Plan for the long haul. Seek the assistance of university teachers and other professionals in your congregation who have gone through the university experience. If there are concentrations of university students in your area, ask your church or conference board to consider appointing a chaplain or a pastor to minister especially to them.

Readers interested in learning more about this specialized ministry are invited to contact the regional representatives of AMiCUS or myself or Israel Leito at the General Conference.

Jesus, who taught us to love God with all our beings (including our minds), wants to empower His campus followers so that His light may also shine brightly in the secular classrooms, laboratories, and students' residences. Above all, He longs to see all the honest in heart—even on university campuses—transformed by the power of His love and redeemed for eternity. ■

## Bold Leadership for Today

### Church Leadership: A Call to Virtue

by Calvin B. Rock, Ph.D.

To be a successful pastor, you need to sharpen administrative skills such as planning, performance, and evaluation. Right? Wrong. **Church Leadership: A Call to Virtue** takes leadership to a new level—one that emphasizes integrity, loyalty, and self-control.

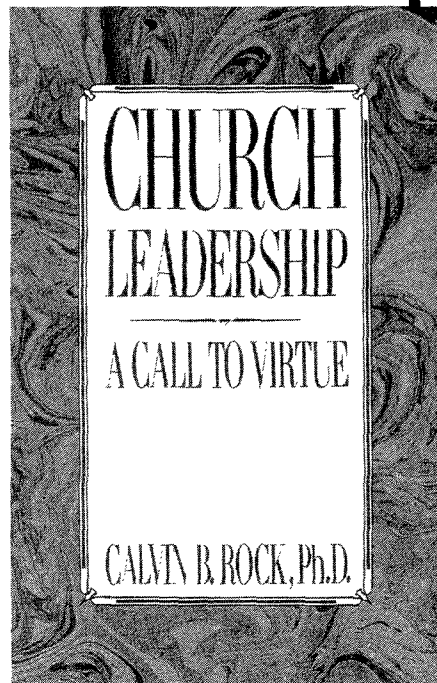
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# The role of leadership in revival

Neal C. Wilson

**The fate of the church rests squarely upon the shoulders of its leaders. Where are you leading your church?**



Neal C. Wilson is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**I**srael was in trouble. The combined armies of three nations had invaded the land, and Jehoshaphat knew that his army was no match for them. As the leader of God's people, he did exactly what God wanted him to do: "And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court. . . . And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. . . . And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord" (2 Chron. 20: 5-18).

Jehoshaphat is a role model for the leaders of God's people today. Whether the church is facing a crisis or seeking the power of God through revival and reformation so as to carry the gospel to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," the role and responsibility of its leaders are paramount. The fortunes of the church often swing in the direction in which they move. Since the leaders, to a very large degree, determine the destiny of a group, it is imperative that we lead our people into the presence of God through repentance and the confession of sin, just as Jehoshaphat did.

## **The fate of ancient Israel**

A careful reading of the Gospels reveals the attitude of the religious leaders toward Jesus. Commenting on the intrigue that characterized the closing days of His life, the Gospels make it clear that

the religious leaders were the ones responsible for Jesus' death. On the other hand, "the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37), and a careful reading of Acts indicates the joy with which thousands upon thousands of common people accepted Jesus. Yet we say "The Jews rejected Jesus." But who actually rejected Him, and what was the result?

As Pilate presented Jesus to the mob during His trial, "they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15).

Commenting upon this verse, Ellen White emphasizes the role of the leaders and what happened to the people because of the decision of their representatives: "Thus by choosing a heathen ruler, the Jewish nation had withdrawn from the theocracy. They had rejected God as their king. Henceforth they had no deliverer. They had no king but Caesar. To this the priests and teachers had led the people. For this, with the fearful results that followed, they were responsible. A nation's sin and a nation's ruin were due to the religious leaders" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 737, 738).

At that time the Jewish people were God's corporate people. The leaders were responsible to God as the representatives of this group. They made the decision to reject Jesus and His claims, and God accepted the decision of the leaders as the decision of the body they represented. God could no longer call the Jews His chosen people, because they had cast Him aside in favor of a heathen ruler. Of course, individual Jews may still become members of the people of God by accept-

ing Jesus as their personal Saviour. But the work that God had given the Jewish nation to do in the earth was given to another group—the Christian church.

At the close of His parable of the vineyard Jesus gave a sad commentary on this historic experience: "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" He asked. The religious leaders who listened to the parable replied: "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons" (Matt. 21:40, 41).

The church today is no different from God's ancient people. Paul tells us that the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12); we are a corporate unit. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (verse 26). As we think upon the history of Israel and try to grasp what happened to God's ancient people, it should be cause for serious heart searching. The fate of these people rested upon the shoulders of their leaders. "A nation's sin and a nation's ruin were due to the religious leaders."

### **The fate of modern Israel**

Just as surely as the fate of ancient Israel rested in the hands of their religious leaders, so the fate of God's people today rests heavily in the hands of church leaders. They will largely determine the future of this church, and be accountable for it. After all, who else could be held responsible?

What will that future be?

Malachi chastised the priests—the spiritual leaders of his day—for failing to lead the people aright: "For men hang upon the words of the priest and seek knowledge and instruction from him, because he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But you have turned away from that course; you have made many stumble with your instruction" (Mal. 2:7, 8, NEB). What the religious leadership is, the people will usually become. If the leadership is carnally minded, the people will have little interest in spiritual things. However, if the leaders are dedicated to doing God's will, to glorifying Him before the world, the people will reflect their dedication and the quality of their leadership.

God has given the Seventh-day Adventist Church the responsibility of proclaiming the last warning message to a

dying world. The condition of the world and the urgency of the message call for every ounce of energy we possess. It demands that our priorities be built upon a living relationship with our God. He must be able to communicate the last warning through us, unhindered by an agenda that focuses attention upon human interests that war against the completion of the task that God has given us.

Through the writings of His prophet Ellen White, God has given clear and pointed instruction to the leadership of His remnant church. A summary of the major points of this instruction can be found in a series of 19 articles on the life of Nehemiah that Ellen White wrote for *The Southern Watchman*.\*

I wish to share three statements from this series that emphasize the important part played by leadership in bringing the people into harmony with God's will. The first speaks of the importance of the influence of the priests of Israel, and the position they were in to use this influence for the good of God's cause or to its detriment. "Among the first to catch Nehemiah's spirit of zeal and earnestness were the priests of Israel. From the position of influence which they occupied, these men could do much to hinder or advance the work. Their ready cooperation at the very outset contributed not a little to its success. Thus should it be in every holy enterprise. Those who occupy positions of influence and responsibility in the church should be foremost in the work of God. If they move reluctantly, others will not move at all. But 'their zeal will provoke very many.' When their light burns brightly, a thousand torches will be kindled at the flame" (*The Southern Watchman*, Apr. 5, 1904).

If the work of God is languishing in your institution or in your field or in your conference or in your church, you should first examine yourself to see if the cause lies there. It is God's desire for His work to prosper, for it is through the work that He has given to us that precious souls for whom He died will be snatched from the grip of the enemy. He will give success where the leadership is dedicated to Him. Where other matters absorb the attention and energy of the leaders, there will be little or no movement on their part to advance the work of God. Let the leaders be on fire with a genuine, holy zeal, and the majority of our people will catch the spirit of enthusiasm and their torches will be lit.

Notice the instruction given in the

second statement: "His [Nehemiah's] energy and determination inspired the people of Jerusalem; and strength and courage took the place of feebleness and discouragement. His holy purpose, his high hope, his cheerful consecration to the work, were contagious. The people caught the enthusiasm of their leader, and in his sphere each man became a Nehemiah, and helped to make stronger the hand and heart of his neighbor. Here is a lesson for ministers of the present day. If they are listless, inactive, destitute of godly zeal, what can be expected of the people to whom they minister?" (*ibid.*, June 28, 1904).

The message is clear. If we want to see a revival in the church, it must begin with us. If we want to see the people of God filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit, the fire must start first in our hearts.

Now the third statement: "The spirit manifested by the leader will be, to a great extent, reflected by the people. If the leaders professing to believe the solemn, important truths that are to test the world at this time manifest no ardent zeal to prepare a people to stand in the day of God, we must expect the church to be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving" (*ibid.*, Mar. 29, 1904).

If we look out upon God's people, and if we deplore their spiritual condition, lack of zeal, carelessness, and love of pleasure, could it be that they are reflecting what they see in leadership?

### **Let the revival begin here**

The 1990 General Conference session is upon us. Delegates, participants, and leaders from around the world will assemble in Indianapolis. What an opportunity for us to press together and to commit ourselves to seek a revival within our own lives and within the church! God's presence and the outpouring of His Spirit will accompany such a commitment. It is interesting that over the years God has informed us through His prophet that He was prepared to do great things for His church at General Conference sessions. This was true in 1888, 1893, and 1901. Regrettably, the leadership never seemed to be in a position to allow God to fulfill His wishes.

The truth of this is forced upon our minds in that haunting chapter we have considered before: "What Might Have Been." Ellen White describes a vision she received sometime in 1902 in which she was taken back to the General Conference

session in 1901. At the beginning of 1903 she wrote to the Battle Creek church about the vision and what God had wanted to do at the 1901 session.

The opening paragraph wrings the heart of anyone who wants this nightmare of sin to end and who wants to go home to be with Jesus: "One day at noon I was writing of the work that might have been done at the last General Conference if the men in positions of trust had followed the will and way of God. Those who have had great light have not walked in the light. The meeting was closed, and the break was not made. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done, and the Holy Spirit was not imparted" (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 104).

The passage goes on to describe what God wanted to do at that session in a scene that makes a profound impression upon all who read it. The Holy Spirit was doing a deep work, and all were bowed in prayer. Then someone arose from prayer and began to confess his sins and to ask forgiveness from his fellow workers. The spirit of confession and repentance spread throughout the whole tabernacle. "No one seemed to be too proud to make

heartfelt confession, and those who led in this work were the ones who had influence, but had not before had courage to confess their sins" (*ibid.*, p. 105). The hearts of all were filled with a holy joy.

The passage concludes with a summary of what might have been: " 'All this the Lord was waiting to do for His people. All heaven was waiting to be gracious.' I thought of where we might have been had thorough work been done at the last General Conference, and an agony of disappointment came over me as I realized that what I had witnessed was not a reality" (*ibid.*, pp. 105, 106).

My fellow believers and leaders, the destiny of the church rests with us! What are we going to do in Indianapolis? We have enough evidence to convince us that God is waiting upon us so He can finish the work. He has arranged the affairs of nations so that the church has greater freedom to proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. He has stirred our people to begin praying for the latter rain. He has given us all of the instruction that we need to place ourselves in a proper relationship with Him so He can give us this power. He has clearly outlined the responsibilities of leaders.

I have committed myself to do all that God asks of me as a leader in His remnant church. I call upon each of you to join me in confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer. I hope that history will record that the General Conference session of 1990 was committed to seeking the latter rain, to revival and reformation, and to repentance and humiliation. We cannot let this session go down in church history as a time when all heaven was waiting to pour out the power of God's Spirit upon us, and we failed God by not preparing to receive it, by allowing items of lesser importance to crowd out the one thing that must have priority, by pressing our own agendas so that God's agenda is excluded.

I urge you to join me. We must not let this opportunity pass us by. ■

\*This series first appeared in *The Southern Watchman* in the issues that ran from March 1 to July 12, 1904. The Ellen G. White Estate has reproduced these articles, complete with a study guide, in a convenient booklet entitled *Lessons From the Life of Nehemiah*. They would make an excellent series of studies for a study/prayer group or for a weekly prayer meeting series. If you are interested, contact the White Estate at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904.

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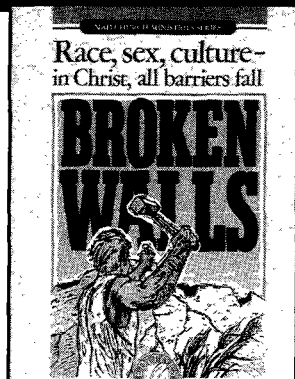


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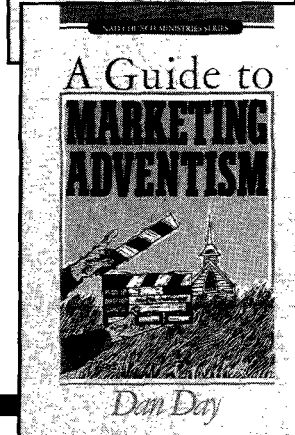


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# The minister as a parent

Garth D. Thompson

**Here's how you can handle those liabilities your occupation as a preacher poses to your children.**



*At the time he delivered the address on which this article is based, Garth D. Thompson chaired the Department of Christian Ministry at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Tragically, he has since died of cancer.*

**U**pon first glance Genesis 5's account of Enoch as a parent is at the very least remarkable. It seems to me that on second glance it becomes

most awesome!

"And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah. . . . So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:21-24, NASB).

Enoch, of course, is the very first recorded analogue of the Adventist preacher/parent. You remember the words that we read in Jude: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14, 15).

Genesis says of Enoch that after the birth of his first son this preacher walked with God for three hundred years, and then "he was not, for God took him." It is a record that is unparalleled by that of any other man of God.

Could it be that Enoch's parenting of a child had anything to do with his walking with God? Is it suggested here that the birth of his child may in some way have influenced the beginning of that walk? I

submit that we would be justified in answering yes to those questions. Certainly Ellen White would affirm our yes. In the book *Patriarchs and Prophets* she wrote: "But after the birth of his first son, Enoch reached a higher experience; he was drawn into a closer relationship with God. He realized more fully his own obligations and responsibility as a son of God. And as he saw the child's love for its father, its simple trust in his protection; as he felt the deep, yearning tenderness of his own heart for that firstborn son, he learned a precious lesson of the wonderful love of God to men in the gift of His Son, and the confidence which the children of God may repose in their heavenly Father. The infinite, unfathomable love of God through Christ became the subject of his meditations day and night; and with all the fervor of his soul he sought to reveal that love to the people among whom he dwelt."<sup>1</sup>

Being a pastor/parent clearly had immense impact on Enoch's own life. May we believe, do you suppose, that being a parent had an impact on his *ministry* as well? And in turn, did his being a minister of God's truth have an impact on his *parenting*?

The Scripture record is far too brief to support any answers to these questions. But we know very well that *our* parenting is affected greatly by our being pastors.

As I contemplated the topic of the minister as a parent, it dawned on me that in order for you or me to be a minis-

*This article is the fifth in a 10-article series that considers the most vital relationships and responsibilities for which Seventh-day Adventist ministers are accountable. Most of the articles in the series were first delivered as chapel addresses at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.*

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**With that he began to cry more openly, and in a few moments I was weeping as I have not wept from childhood, nor have I since.**

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ter/parent, there has to be a PK—a preacher's kid. You have determined—most of you without any consultation with your children—that they should grow up as preacher's kids. You owe it to them, then, to do everything that you can to minimize the liabilities that your decision may lay upon them. And while you're at it, it only makes sense to maximize the assets!

Wanting to look at this subject from the perspective of a preacher's kid, in preparing this sermon I talked with some preachers' kids. For that matter, I myself am a PK, and my wife and I have reared four PKs of our own. Review with me, then, some of the effects that our being ministers has on our parenting.

### **The peripatetic pastor**

Not the least of the disadvantages confronting the children of a minister is the mobility demanded, especially in the case of the young pastor. People ask me where I am from, and I am at a loss to answer. I was born in Chicago, and my family lived in several places in Illinois during my early childhood. When I was 10 years old we went to Jamaica, where my parents served as missionaries. I returned to the States to attend Emmanuel Missionary College when I was 17—by that time my parents had moved to Cuba.

When I completed college, I went to Indiana as a young minister. After eight years and several moves in Indiana, I took the family I had by then established to Indonesia. Eight years later we moved to Singapore, and after another eight years we came back to the States and spent three years in Florida, where I did my doctoral study. From there we went to

Lincoln, Nebraska, where I spent a year at the academy. Then it was on to Pacific Union College for eight years.

Where am I from? Who knows! My story is just another instance of the mobility imposed on the minister's family.

The uprooting, the wrenching apart of attachments, can be a devastating experience to a child. Of course, children from other than ministerial families have to endure that too. But since it is a built-in occupational hazard in your case, you need to plan on dealing with it.

Another problem laid upon PKs is proverbial. It is that of unrealistic behavioral expectations. One of the PKs I talked with in preparing my remarks—one who is now himself the minister/father of a 3-year-old—told me of the rebellion with which he struggled as a child because of church members who scolded him with "How can you be so naughty? Your daddy is the pastor." And he spoke of his bitterness as a teenager when his mother forbade him to do this or that "for the sake of Daddy's work and reputation."

### **More hazards**

And then there is the problem of time. When the father or mother is a minister, there seems to be precious little time for the family. Now, that isn't as unusual as we sometimes make it out to be. Ministers aren't the only ones whose careers take them away from the family. There are doctors and factory workers and teachers and traveling sales personnel and business executives and government officials and others ad infinitum who work 10, 12, or more hours a day. The particular vulnerability of ministers lies in their children's growing awareness that their parents are working for the salvation of other people and the children of those people. The minister's own children are often left to wonder if they and their salvation matter at all.

Another particular hazard is the child's growing awareness that the minister mother or father doesn't always live up to the ideals she or he preaches. The failure to live up to the ideals might not be so damaging if it weren't for the fact that the parent is the person proclaiming those ideals.

A similar hazard is the product of the pastor's close involvement with both church members and conference leaders. The pastor is in a position to know and be exasperated by the failings of members and the decisions of the conference offi-

cials. Because home is a refuge, it becomes very easy to let down there and discuss people's failings, leaving the child to struggle with his feelings about what appears to him to be "the hypocrisy of the brethren." My own parents were scrupulously careful not to do this. But other PKs with whom I have spoken indicate that they grew up bearing heavy and difficult burdens arising from criticisms they heard at home.

I made the mistake of distressing my son by relating to him as a pastor to a parishioner, or—during my early training in counseling—as a counselor to a counselee. My good wife confronted me in exasperation one day: "The children and I are tired to death of your talking to us as if we were counselees in your office. When you come home, just be a father and a husband."

Well, these are some of the distresses that ministers may inflict upon their children. We can only guess how Enoch might have handled them. I would like to propose some ways for handling one or two specific matters, and then offer some suggestions for minimizing the hazards generally.

### **Openly empathize with your child**

First of all, I maintain that it remains possible to turn all of these potential hazards into real advantages. It may take an Enoch-like walk with God to do that—but who is more occupationally predisposed to such a walk than the minister?

When my work in Singapore came to a close, our 11-year-old son had a boxer puppy that was the delight of his life. The day before our flight home we went to the airport to check into the cost of flying the puppy home also, but found it to be prohibitive. When we drove away from the airport Ron knew that the last possibility of keeping his puppy had evaporated. He began to cry softly. As I drove along, tears came to my own eyes, and before long they so blinded me that I had to pull the car over and stop beside the road. With that he began to cry more openly, and in a few moments I was weeping as I have not wept from childhood, nor have since. All over a dog? No. Over the pain of a child whose father had opted for a calling that had once again inflicted upon the child the suffering of breaking an attachment that had become dear to him.

The many moves the children of minister parents undergo offer advantages, among them a breadth and variety of ex-

periences available in no other way. But I thank God that He moved me to enter into the pain of my son that day. It seems that deliberate awareness of and empathy with such pain is the least the minister parent can give.

Relating to another of our occupational hazards, I believe that it is important for ministers to sit down with their children—most desirably, well before the teens begin—and talk frankly about the distress of living in the ministerial fishbowl. Talk about the inescapable reality of the community's unrealistic expectations. Convey deep regret for the pressure the child inevitably will feel from those expectations.

My own judgment is that ministers should vigorously repudiate any part in holding such expectations themselves. "Son, daughter," you might say, "I want you to know that I will have no part in laying such expectations upon you. My ministry is a product of my own conviction, and my own response to what I believe was God's call. I cannot deny wanting with all my heart for you to choose to be not only a child of God, but an instrument in His hands to draw others to Him—never to mislead another. I would welcome your helping to make our family a witness for the power of God. But not for a moment will I lay upon you behavioral demands on account of my decision to be a minister, a decision that I recognize you had no part in. I can only hope that you won't hold against me the fact that I cannot abandon my ministry, even to relieve you of the pressure of those expectations."

Promise your child that you will tell your congregation that you expect no more and no less of your child because he or she is a preacher's kid, and that you wish the congregation would not expect more either. Then carry out your promise in the hearing of your child.

### Let your child grow up

As a parent the minister needs to remember to progress from being the parent of a toddler to being the parent of a preschooler, then of a preadolescent, of an early teen, and finally of a late teen. While Ellen White says that the very first lesson for a toddler to learn is obedience, she just as surely says that the time comes for the youth to learn to make more and more choices without external control.

Of course, granting this freedom leaves the minister liable both to embarrassment and criticism, as well as to dis-

appointment. About here many of us panic. We remember that other analogue of the minister parent, Eli, and the fact that God held him accountable for the disgrace of the priesthood that the behavior of his sons caused. I am convinced, however, that it was not for the failure to control the behavior of his adult sons that God condemned Eli. Rather, I believe God's condemnation came because of Eli's failure to remove his sons from the priesthood in the light of their disgraceful lives. At any rate, it has neither been required of us nor even given to us so to control our children as to guarantee their faithfulness to the truth.

It may help the minister parent to remember that when the Almighty wanted light He said, "Let there be light" and there was light, and it was very good. He was just as easily able to accomplish His will when He wanted trees and grass and lions and birds. But when He created human beings, He could not say "Let this man [woman, child] be good," and be assured that it would be so. From that moment on, He could only unceasingly work at it—sometimes successfully, sometimes not. And no parent ever had children with whom he or she could do more, nor with whom less would be enough.

### Love your child

Parents enjoy being loved by their children. Sometimes they even seem to expect it as a right. Certainly children are commanded to honor their parents. However, as important as it is for children to love their parents, their doing so is not nearly as important as their knowing *themselves* to be loved "no matter what."

For ministers who walk with God, loving their children seems to come naturally. Unfortunately, however, it is very possible that the children will not recognize that love. It is remarkably easy to love without conveying that you love. But love that is not conveyed has no effective impact on the beloved. I commend to you the book *How to Really Love Your Child*.<sup>2</sup> Pastor parents whose very lives center in loving need to learn the skills of conveying that love—not only to their congregations but also to their children.

Paul tucked a significant sentence into Ephesians: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Eph. 5:1, NASB). Children universally tend to imitate models. Even children of abusing, tyrannical parents imitate those par-

## Granting this freedom leaves the minister liable both to embarrassment and criticism, as well as to disappointment.

ents. Their lives may depend upon it! They have a seemingly invincible hope that they can thereby win their parents' love. There is a vast difference, however, between the way such children imitate their parent models and the imitating that is done by children who know themselves beloved. The greatest gift the minister can give to his or her children is the sense of being loved continuously, "no matter what"—no matter how the child fails or disappoints, or what discipline the parent must administer.

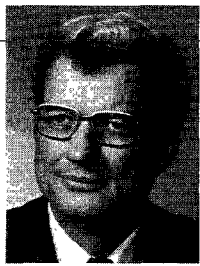
If you are not moved to fall on your knees with the cry "Lord, who is sufficient for these things?" then you have not yet grasped the awesomeness of being a minister parent. But if you have, let me remind you that Ephesians 5:1 includes you also. And if we are beloved children, there must be a very loving Father who loves us no matter what.

Through the centuries, those who have taken God seriously have often reversed the loving and the imitating, putting the imitating before the being loved. For them, being loved and accepted was conditioned upon successful imitating. On the other hand, some have discarded any notion whatever of the imitating, holding it to be an attempt at salvation by works. The truth lies in neither of these camps. Paul affirms the astonishing but glorious truth that by nature *God loves us no matter what*. And God extends to us the incredible invitation—within the unbreakable context of that love—to bend our energies to *imitating Him*!

As a minister parent and a beloved child, you can give your child no greater gift than to live your life in just such imitation of your heavenly Father. ■

<sup>1</sup> E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1958), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Ross Campbell, *How to Really Love Your Child* (New York: New American Library, 1982).



# Too many theological societies?

**K**enneth R. Samples, in his four-page, February 5, 1990, *Christianity Today* article titled "The Recent Truth About Seventh-day Adventism," divides us into three distinct theological categories—evangelical, traditional, and liberal. Adventist readers may not agree with everything he said, but he recognizes rightly the theological divisions among us. (Fragmentation might be a better word.)

Respondents to my December 1989 report on the newly organized Adventist Theological Society (ATS) shared their concerns over our theological disunity. Several deplored the divisive nature of the establishment of ATS. One wrote, "I am quite frightened by its divisive and secretive nature, and the potential it has to split Adventist theological ranks once and for all by forcing people to make *unnatural choices*." Another accused ATS of being "an insulated special-interest group. The entry gate is narrow, and it is hedged about with protective barriers to keep the unwanted out, and with authority to purge the unfaithful from within." Others delineated their disagreements with the ATS statement of mission/purpose. One interesting letter stated, "Our church should be big enough to listen to all who would speak, while dispelling fear of isolation or censure." Then the writer proceeded to condemn ATS for being "harrowingly self-righteous. . . . Its policy of invitation only by nomination—how haughtily safe . . . its purpose—how seemingly honorable . . . yet its potential effect on the SDA ministry/church in North America—how horribly divisive and destructive."

Some lamented the choice they were being forced to make: the ATS and the Andrews Society for Religious Studies (ASRS)—the other Adventist theological society—have scheduled their annual meetings for the same time. ATS and ASRS meet in conjunction with the conventions of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) and the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature (AAR/SBL). Scheduling the meetings of the Adventist societies for the weekend between the meetings of ETS and AAR/SBL allows interested Adventists to attend either or both of these larger conventions—but forces them to choose between the Adventist societies.

But why are there two theological societies within Adventism?

## Origins of the societies

Russell Staples, president of ASRS and a professor at the seminary at Andrews University, kindly shared with me that organization's constitution and bylaws and also a brief history of its origin. According to him, it began to develop about 20 years ago. When Adventist teachers attended the annual AAR/SBL meetings, they gathered together at convenient times to get acquainted and to ascertain what their colleagues were doing. This affirmation of their common identity as Adventist academics eventually led to special sessions in which they would meet separately from AAR/SBL/ASOR. Finally in 1978 our group was advised that space for meetings could no longer be allocated to small denominational groups unless they were organized as a society. This resulted in our group deciding to form a society with a formal name.

The first duly constituted meeting of ASRS took place in New Orleans in 1979. Eventually a constitution and bylaws were developed. Article II lists objectives, goals, and purposes: "This organization shall provide intellectual and social fellowship among its members and encourage scholarly pursuits in all the religious studies disciplines, particularly with reference to the Seventh-day Adventist tradition. Means of implementing these purposes shall include the presentation of scholarly papers by members and invited guests and the preparation of society publications." Article III states that "any person interested in the organization and accepting its objectives is eligible for membership." The rest of the constitution deals with details relating to officers, elections, committees, meetings, etc. Its bylaws are quite standard for any organization.\*

What led to the formation of ATS? One leader expressed it as follows: "Some of us wanted to be able to fellowship with like-minded individuals who felt about the Bible the way we did, and to have the opportunity of speaking up and saying conservative, loyal things about Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy without feeling that we would immediately be differed with." Another ATS leader pointed out that the very existence of their organization is merely a symptom of a problem that has existed for many years and is now surfacing.

When I asked why ATS has a closed membership, I was told that their intention was to make certain that their aim and objectives would be maintained as much as possible. My informant added, "We are merely following a normal practice of many academic societies that wish to maintain their identity." He further



stated, "It needs to be emphasized that the ATS meetings at which papers are read are open to the public. Anyone can attend and even react to the papers during the discussion time. The only meetings that are closed are the business meetings." He added that there has been a change in membership procedures. Anyone can apply, without prior endorsement of two members. The executive committee then handles the process.

### A pastor's concern

One pastor expressed concern about the polarization in our church "beginning to appear with the establishment of magazines, journals, newsletters, theological societies, camp meetings, speaking tours, etc." He proposed that the General Conference initiate some reconciling, healing theological discussion groups among our scholars and concerned individuals. Subjects suggested for discussion ranged from hermeneutics to creationism.

This proposal was made to the leadership of both groups, with responses that were less than enthusiastic. One General Conference officer pointed out that several meetings of this type have been held in the past with disappointing results.

In conversation with one of our scholars, I asked if there really is a deep theological difference among us and if so, how deep. In reply he shared his perception of what some Adventist scholars believe today: Creation, yes—creation by increment over long periods of time. A flood, yes—many floods that destroyed portions of the earth. Ellen G. White, yes—for devotions only. Second Coming, yes—but without signs, and nobody has any idea when. 1844, yes—but mostly on the earth; not too sure what went on in heaven, if anything. Sabbath, yes—to celebrate, but not to keep holy, and not to keep very carefully, and certainly not to be made a memorial of an *ex nihilo* six-day Creation, or connected with eschatology.

Of course, there are varying degrees of belief on the continuum. And this man's perceptions should not be taken as indicating what the majority of Seventh-day Adventists or of Seventh-day Adventist scholars believe. Neither do they represent the position of either of the theological societies nor necessarily of any of the members of either society.

I continued my inquiry by asking him if it really made any difference whether we believed that the eschatological Sab-

bath is a memorial of a literal seven-day Creation week and a sign of God's remnant in the end-time as long as we recognized the Sabbath as a definite command of God. I felt his answer worth sharing with our readers. He stated, "It seems to me that it's the children or the students of the revisionists you have to look out for, because they go beyond their teacher. A person who has been brought up to have spiritual habits of Sabbath-keeping will often continue these habits even though the rationale has been removed. But their students, without the rationale, may never develop these spiritual habits. So we see people termed *liberal* [whatever it means to be a liberal Adventist] who are very conservative in their lifestyle—vegetarians, Sabbath-keepers, no wedding rings—but their students and their families are far from being conservative themselves. When you take away the rationale, then the fruit of the rationale is likely to wither within a generation."

### Points to ponder

As I reviewed the letters on this subject, I picked up points that need specific answers. I trust the following will help.

1. Ministry is not endorsing ATS or ASRS. Note carefully that my article was printed under the heading *Ministry Reports*. It was not an editorial, and though it was a positive appraisal, it does not constitute an endorsement.

2. Neither society is a church-sponsored organization. This should not be interpreted either negatively or positively. Even though the name "Andrews" is used in ASRS, it is not sponsored by Andrews University. And even though the name "Adventist" is used in ATS, it is not sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some complained about the word "Adventist" being used in their name, since this can be misinterpreted by some as to mean ATS represents our church in theological beliefs. It was pointed out that the word "Adventist" is used by several nonsponsored church groups, such as the Association of Adventist Women (AAW), the National Association of Seventh-day Adventist Dentists (NASDAD), and the Association of Seventh-day Adventist Nurses (ASDAN).

3. No one is forced to join either society, and neither society is involved in the hiring or firing of any teachers or employees, nor do they have anything to do with a person's church membership.

4. Both groups are organized for the express purpose of presenting and discussing various theological papers.

### Hope for unity

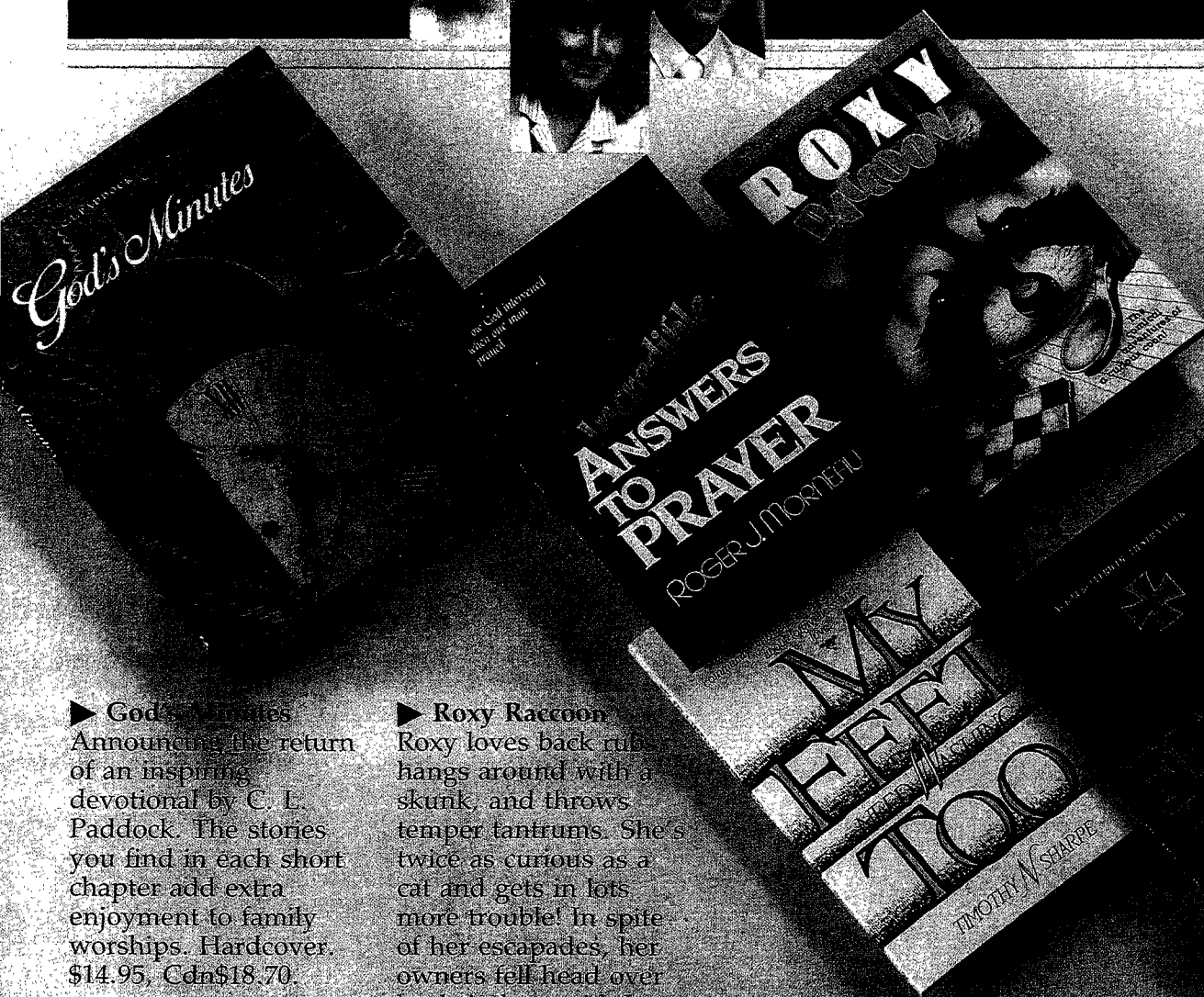
A few months ago I attended the sixty-eighth anniversary performance of the United States Army Band (Pershing's own). It was delightful to hear music performed with such precision and harmony by capable musicians. As I listened to the invigorating sounds of diverse instruments playing harmoniously together, my mind turned toward the church. Christ's prayer in John 17 came to my mind. He pleaded with His Father: "Let them all be one. Just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am with you, let them be in union with us" (verse 21, Goodspeed). He was praying not only for the unity of His disciples, but for their witness to the world, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." One of the most powerful witnesses to the authenticity of Christianity is to see a worldwide movement of dedicated, earnest, loving, lovable people sharing in a joyful way the tremendous message that God has given the Adventist movement. This type of witness brings despair to Satan's soul, but deep joy to the heart of our Lord.

As I continued listening to the band, the thought occurred repeatedly to my mind that there was no uniformity as to the individuals and their musical instruments. But one thing was certain: they all followed the leader in perfect unison. They were supportive of one another in their musical presentation. Would to God that all of us would search our hearts with the intent of being, first of all, in harmony with the will of our Lord, and then in harmony with our brothers and sisters in love and doctrine.

I challenge both groups, as well as any other independent organization that claims to be Seventh-day Adventist, to produce articles that ring with the authority of Scripture. Let us do away with fragmentation and unprofitable arguments, and begin sensing the great message that the Lord has given us. Ring the Bible bell, and the saints as well as the world will know it's time for a spiritual feast! —J. Robert Spangler. ■

\* For further information or to join, write to Andrews Society for Religious Studies, c/o Russell Staples, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104.

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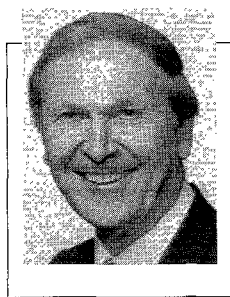
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# How to keep what you reap—1

Floyd Bresee

**T**oo many Adventist congregations are like the fisherman who caught fish but had nothing to show for it because he put them in a sack with a hole in the bottom. God has blessed our church with success in fishing for people. But we're not keeping enough of what we're catching.

Sewing up the hole in the sack cannot replace fishing. A church that does not evangelize will die. *But we must come to realize that our business involves both catching and keeping.* In other words, to return to a metaphor we used in an earlier column, we must learn to keep what we reap.

To become better at keeping:

**1. We must prepare our candidates carefully before baptism.** "God would be better pleased to have six thoroughly converted to the truth than to have sixty make a profession and yet not be truly converted." \* Satan is not the least disturbed by our baptizing large numbers of people—if those we baptize are not thoroughly converted. For his purposes, the more unconverted persons brought into the church the better.

So there is much truth to the argument that we should concern ourselves primarily with whether or not candidates for baptism are converted—that we mustn't expect too much too soon of those just beginning the Christian life. If they're truly converted, the changes in lifestyle will certainly come.

We might liken these newly baptized members to fruit trees. Our desire that they bear fruit must take second place to ascertaining that they have been planted well (converted and rooted in Christ).

Complicating the matter of setting the right priority is the fact that we humans can only tell whether or not the tree is planted by the fruit it bears. So while we cannot expect a lot of fruit in the prebaptismal life of the candidate, nevertheless some fruit must be visible. Surely this fruit should include Sabbathkeeping, church attendance, and refraining from the use of harmful substances.

Now to apply this observation to a situation we have in the church today. With increasing frequency, evangelists from affluent, highly educated, semi-Christian cultures are being invited to conduct evangelistic meetings in areas characterized by low-income, partially literate, non-Christian cultures. These meetings produce masses of baptisms, but some of our pastors in these areas are complaining that the meetings produce too few ongoing Christians.

I do not oppose the short, reaping campaign. But especially in areas where the populace does not have a Christian background, we must depend on the local churches to instruct potential baptismal candidates before the meetings begin. And we should be very reluctant to see those without such a background baptized until they have received further instruction after the meetings end. We ought to be very sensitive to the counsel of the pastors we're working with and cautious about imposing our methods on a culture foreign to us.

**2. We must make their baptism a big event in the local church.** First, I believe that ideally baptism should take place in the local church. Some church leaders are enthusiastic about camp-meeting and youth-camp baptisms. Unfortunately, they sometimes fail to bond the new members with the local congregations they

join. To some degree, these mass baptisms draw the newly baptized away from the local church pastor, Sabbath school teacher, or Pathfinder leader who has spent scores of hours preparing them for baptism. As in a physical birth, it's best if the family that's going to raise the baby is involved in its delivery.

There are two commitments made at a baptism. The candidates commit themselves to Christ and His church. And the congregation commits itself to loving, befriending, enfolding, and training the candidates. Since it is at the baptism that these commitments are made, both the candidate and the congregation ought to be present for that event.

Second, to maximize the bonding process, baptism should be made a big event in the life of the church. Research has repeatedly shown that *the retention rate is directly proportional to the receptivity of the local church.* And the baptizing of the children of the church should not be taken less seriously than that of candidates from outside the church. It also ought to be a big event. Studies in some divisions have shown that the highest dropout rate is not among evangelistic converts, but among children who grew up in the church.

Baptism is a rite of passage. A child often grows up presuming she isn't considered as of much importance because she is only a child. But with her baptism she hopes to be treated a little like an adult, as though she really matters to the congregation. If the church does not prove she is important to it, she will soon decide it is not important to her.

More later. ■

\*Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 370.

# Is it safe to celebrate?

**J. David Newman  
and  
Kenneth R. Wade**

**Are the celebration churches bringing Pentecostalism into the Adventist Church? Should the church allow this style of worship?**



*J. David Newman is editor and Kenneth R. Wade is associate editor of Ministry*



**A**re the celebration churches, as some would say, prairie fires that soon will spread and engulf all of Adventism in a conflagration of Pentecostalism? Is *celebration* a code word that stands for “no standards, no doctrine, just clubhouse happiness,” as one critic has warned? Have these churches been appointed by denominational leaders for the purpose of attracting back “Fordites, Brinsmeadites, liberals, and kinship adherents” with “hot music and cheerful laughs”? Is the combination of celebration worship with small groups meeting in homes a satanic ploy to bring pluralism into Adventism? Do celebration churches lull listeners into believing they have received the Holy Spirit when in reality they have only had a flesh-based ecstatic experience?

In case you haven't heard the term, *celebration church* is a loosely defined phenomenon that in recent months has raised both excitement and fear among Seventh-day Adventists. The idea behind these churches is to make Sabbath worship services a time of celebrating our joy in the Lord, and to change the worship service to emphasize this joy.

Several Adventist churches that changed their worship service to be more celebrative began to experience phenomenal growth—partly from baptisms, but largely from transfers and winning back members who had ceased attending church. At that point the American maxims “Nothing succeeds like success” and “You can't argue with success” began to send ripples, then shock waves,

through conference and union offices all across the land. In recent months pastors and church administrators have been flocking to these successful churches to try to learn what they can do to revive churches in their territories.

At the same time, the phones began to ring in the Ministerial Association here at the General Conference. And staff members began to be deluged with questions from concerned church members. People wanted to know: Are these churches leading us into Pentecostalism? Have the pastors in question abandoned belief in church doctrines?

The *Ministry* staff voted to send David Newman and Kenneth Wade to visit three churches that typically are labeled celebration churches and provide a report to *Ministry* readers. We visited the Celebration Center, pastored by Dan Simpson, in Colton, California; the Milwaukie church in Oregon, pastored by David Snyder; and the Buffalo church in New York, pastored by Edward Couser. We were particularly interested in the Buffalo church because Eoin Giller, who introduced the innovative worship service there, has moved to a pastorate in Tucson, Arizona, and we wanted to know whether the church had continued the same emphasis after his departure.

Certainly, attending a church for one Sabbath is no way to determine exactly what is happening there in the long term. Nevertheless, we did not feel that we could write about what was happening based only on second- and thirdhand reports.

## **Use of instruments**

Each of the three churches starts its

worship service with the congregation singing to the accompaniment of a variety of instruments. Each also projects the words of the songs on a screen or wall at the front of the sanctuary. Buffalo calls its accompanists a youth orchestra. Fifteen people participated in the orchestra on the day Newman visited. Instruments included piano, organ, piano accordion, guitars, flutes, trumpets, trombones, violins, a saxophone, and a percussion section that included drums. Two singers led the audience in contemporary songs such as "I Will Enter His Gates With Thanksgiving," "His Praise Fills the Temple," "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Your Love Has Melted My Heart," and "Majesty, Worship His Majesty."

Two different musical groups provide the music for the Celebration Center in California since the church has two services each Sabbath. The accompanists are fewer in number than in Buffalo and use guitars, flute, synthesizer, and percussion, including drums. They lead the congregation in 8 to 10 songs during the service. Songs included "We Have Come to Celebrate Your Name," "In My Life, Lord, Be Glorified," "Jesus, Name Above All Names," and "Draw Me Closer, Lord."

At the Milwaukie, Oregon, service, worship began at 10:45 with everyone standing to sing "Majesty," then "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Perhaps half the people in the congregation joined the song leaders in clapping hands to the rhythm of the latter song. Two women and a man, accompanied by a bass guitar, a rhythm guitar, and a piano (the drummer was absent this particular Sabbath), led the singing. Several of the songs came directly from the Psalms or other biblical passages. Three or four people raised one hand above their heads during some songs, but no one danced in the aisles.

Following the opening songs, a quartet of teenage girls sang "Love in Any Language," à la Sandi Patti. Neither they nor the congregation swayed with the music. Characteristically, the congregation expressed appreciation through applause.

At the Buffalo service some people clapped, but we saw no raised hands, although we understand that this happens occasionally. In Colton, out of a congregation of 1,300, we saw perhaps 20 persons raise their hands and arms. Many in the congregation did clap in rhythm to a couple of the songs.

After the introductory songs, the Buf-

falo service follows a fairly traditional order of worship—prayer, scripture, sermon, offering, closing hymn from the hymnal, and benediction.

The Celebration Center takes one and a quarter hours for its first service at 9:30 a.m. and an hour and a half for the second service, which begins at 11:15 a.m. After celebration in music comes celebration in fellowship. The pastor invites everyone to get up and welcome those around them with warm greetings and hugs, if so desired. The Buffalo church also provided time for welcoming and fellowshiping during the service.

### Garden of prayer

Both the Celebration Center in Colton and the Milwaukie church celebrate the pastoral prayer in a special way. The pastor invites anyone with a request or who feels the need of a special blessing to come down to the front and kneel for the prayer. Some 200 in Colton went to the front. Nearly half of the Milwaukie congregation crowded to the front, spilling over into the aisles. At Colton the pastor or one of the elders leads out in the prayer while other elders move around, placing

their hands on the shoulders of those kneeling.

At the Celebration Center Pastor Dan Simpson preached for 30 minutes from Acts 2:41ff. He took four elements of the early church—worship, instruction, fellowship, and expression—and applied them to today.

In Buffalo the conference president, Elder Lee Thompson, delivered the morning sermon.

In Milwaukie Pastor Snyder's sermon focused on the meaning of Daniel's 2300-day prophecy to Seventh-day Adventist Christians today. It is the hour of God's judgment, he insisted. But rather than making us fearful, that should make us hopeful. Judgment is for the saints, not against them. We need to focus on the big issues of the controversy between Christ and Satan and get our eyes off the petty things that Satan tries to use to distract us. We must keep our focus on Christ and what He wants to do for us.

Because it is the hour of judgment and the universe is looking on to see the end of the great controversy, we as a church need to help to prove that God is right and Satan is wrong. We will not give up,

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as Satan claims, because of suffering. We need to demonstrate that God can have an obedient people on earth. We need to teach and preach the gospel, but not legalistically. We need to live the gospel as a testimony to those around us. "Don't get so settled in enjoying this church that you forget that we have a battle ahead of us," he warned. There will be criticism—it will even increase—but "this church is built on the Rock, and it don't roll!" he exclaimed. It is time to get on with the business of saving souls. In order to do this, the church must be pure, and God is the one to purify it. Just as He removed the filthy garments from Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3), He wants to remove our filthy garments and purify us.

### Sabbath school

Buffalo has a strong, well-organized Sabbath school. The Celebration Center provides Sabbath school classes for children and adults at 9:30 a.m., the same time as the early service. At 11:15 four small groups meet to discuss a variety of topics. Attendance at these varied from 6 to 20.

Sabbath school in the Milwaukie church began at 9:30 with lesson study. Three of the four classes in the sanctuary were studying the book of Matthew: two of them using the quarterly and one taking a more leisurely pace through the book. The fourth class, led by Pastor Snyder, studies the 27 fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. The topic of the day—Christian Behavior—stimulated a lively exchange of ideas.

### Church growth

What are the results of this type of service? The Buffalo church, with a membership of 260, averaged 60 to 70 in attendance before Giller came. By the time he left four years later, average attendance had jumped to 180. The day we visited, one year after he had left, 145 persons attended. Baptisms were not spectacular during this period (29 baptized), but many nonattending members began to return.

After less than one year in existence, the Celebration Center averages between 1,300 and 1,500 at two services. Four hundred sixty constitute the core membership. Many of those attending are Adventists and former Adventists who had not been attending an Adventist church. It is estimated that there are between 50,000 and 100,000 nonattending Adventists in the Riverside/Loma Linda area.

In Milwaukie 1,000 or more people typically gather for worship. This is up from about 135 seven years ago. For several years the church led the conference in baptisms, but the rate declined significantly last year. Those attending appear to cover the spectrum from infants to aged rather evenly.

The Celebration Center pays \$7,000 per month to rent the First Assembly of God sanctuary. Church offerings for the four Sabbaths ending 1989 and beginning 1990 amounted to \$41,383. The monthly church budget is \$26,500. The Milwaukie church's monthly budget is just shy of \$11,000, and in addition, they are collecting \$12,000 a month toward their building fund. It seems that there is more than a casual commitment here.

### Questions to consider

What are the implications of celebration-style worship services?

All three of the churches we visited emphasize the love and forgiveness of God. The common theme that people remark about in all three churches is the feeling of acceptance. If this means that petty criticism and judgmentalism are waning, this is a good thing. The danger may lie in going too far with the acceptance idea and failing to stress the holiness of God and what it truly means to be a Christian.

All three churches downplay the name Seventh-day Adventist. Their intent is to emphasize their openness to the community instead of conveying the message that only Seventh-day Adventists are welcome. About five years ago the Buffalo church moved to the suburb of Lancaster and calls itself the Lancaster Christian Community Center; underneath in smaller print the sign identifying the church says "Buffalo Suburban Seventh-day Adventist Church." The Milwaukie church has just changed its name to New Life Celebration Church of Seventh-day Adventists. The Colton church displays on its church bulletin: "Celebration Center—A Seventh-day Adventist Church."

Some critics quote from *Selected Messages*, book 2, page 36, where Ellen White warns against "shouting, with drums, music, and dancing." She disdains the "bedlam of noise" that "shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing."

We observed that while these services do use a more contemporary type of music than the typical Adventist church, they seem solemn when compared to

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Ellen White's descriptions of counterfeit worship. The question of what is appropriate music plays large in discussions of celebration churches. Ellen White counsels that there is a place for musical instruments in the worship service: "let the singing be accompanied with musical instruments skillfully handled. We are not to oppose the use of instrumental music in our work. This part of the service is to be carefully conducted, for it is the praise of God in song" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 144); and Psalm 150 lists elements to be used in praising God (e.g., timbrel, cymbals, trumpet, dance) whose inclusion in a worship service many Adventists would find alarming today.

Some are concerned that Satan is trying to bring counterfeit religion into the church. And if celebration worship encourages people to just feel good about themselves while avoiding deeper levels of commitment, repentance, and conversion, there is danger here. Giller explains, though, that this is not the intent of a celebrative worship service. Rather, he feels it is important to integrate the experiential with the rational in worship. Many Adventist services are characterized by a great emphasis on the cognitive domain. Those who promote celebration worship say we need to meet the affective needs of people as well.

### Emotion in worship

Are we so afraid of Pentecostalism that we have gone to another extreme? Even saying amen with any enthusiasm causes heads to turn in some churches. Years ago H.M.S. Richards, Sr., commented that some of our churches are so cold and formal that a person could ice-skate down the middle aisle. However, a visit to our Black churches reveals that these congregations typically have music and congregational involvement that brings in more of the emotional elements than in most White churches.

How much of worship is determined by local culture and how much by divine precepts? If one takes a careful look at the Bible, one finds abundant use of musical instruments, including percussion, and many exclamations of joy and emotional outpouring. Even certain forms of dancing were described as expressing praise before God. So again we raise the question—How much of our worship is determined by culture? Is it accidental that Adventist worship practice closely resembles the Methodist service?

We need to go back and define what we

mean by worship. Is "celebration" an appropriate synonym for "divine worship"? If this style is appropriate, is it for everyone? Should members be able to choose from a variety of worship formats?

Other important questions concern our definition of success. What constitutes a "successful" church service? A successful church? A successful pastor? Is there a danger that some who view increased attendance and attraction of backsliders as success will begin to tailor not only their style of church service but also the message they proclaim to be popular and attractive in preference to truthful and honest? Will Adventist preachers acquiesce to the age-old urge to "prophecy smooth things"? Perhaps of greatest concern here is the significance of the fact that many pastors and laypeople are visiting the celebration churches simply to observe (and perhaps copy) the style of worship. Is it dangerous to emulate a worship style with the intent of attracting greater attendance without giving careful thought to the underlying theology that has produced the style? Is celebration really part of a complex package of ideas that will fall apart if a pastor attempts to just add on certain formats to his worship service?

If success is defined in numbers, will we soon see increased competition between Adventist congregations to see who can put on the most exciting worship service?

Does the celebration-type service magnify God or man? Does it make people want to change? Does it bring commitment and a longing for the soon coming of our Saviour?

Only time will answer our many questions. At the moment we caution against the two extreme reactions: Some are condemning what is happening without ever attending a celebration service or making any attempt to understand what the pastors are trying to accomplish. Others see celebration as the panacea for worship doldrums and are ready to jump on any "success" bandwagon. The stakes in the battle for men's souls are far too high for us to judge without careful thought and reflection. Our only safety is found in prayer at the foot of the cross.

Let us all claim the promise of James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (NIV). ■



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## Adventism in America: A History

Gary Land, ed., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986, 304 pages, \$14.95, paper. Reviewed by Charles B. Hirsch, former vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists now retired and living in Yucaipa, California.

*Adventism in America* is not a definitive history of the church but is a synthesis that provides a base for further study. Of the six contributors, unfortunately four are now deceased. Well-respected scholars in historical and educational circles, they made positive contributions to the church.

Each writer covers approximately a 20-year span of church history. A bibliographical essay by the editor lists available studies dealing with Adventist history and biography.

The authors follow the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church over the past century. Little apologetic work appears in the book. These historians present their material from evidence at hand, both complimentary and uncomplimentary.

Several threads run through the book, providing a continuity in the overall narrative. One such thread is the concern early leaders felt about the inadequacy of evangelists and pastors to present our message. To help resolve this problem, the church established a seminary in the 1930s. To examine whether or not this step solved the problem would take an additional chapter, but one result was an increase in theologians and biblical scholars in the field.

The writers tell how the church has faced its critics and schismatics over the decades—detractors from within and without. But the church has not been deterred from its mission. It has slowed down at times, yet has continued moving forward to implement the command of Matthew 28.

Land discusses Desmond Ford, a contemporary schismatic. He states that as a result of Ford's activities "Adventism was obviously theologically fragmented." I feel this is a strong generalization, for it is Ford and his adherents that have diminished in influence. If the church suffers

fragmentation, it is more the result of so-called rightists and conservatives in our midst.

Land also refers to Ford's loss of credentials and dismissal from his teaching position as causing controversy. Having been present at a meeting of church leaders at the close of the Glacier View meetings, it is my opinion that it was Ford who brought the dismissal upon himself. At that time Ford was entreated to stay by the church and continue his study. The attitude of those present was suppliance, while Ford was unmoving in his position and negative in his response. It was with reluctance that leadership did what had to be done.

Other facets of church work are hardly mentioned in the volume. These include public affairs, religious liberty, the literature ministry, publishing endeavors, and the establishment of an Adventist system of education.

This book is a positive contribution to Adventist history, for it will enlighten teachers, ministers, and laity concerning their church heritage. I commend Land for compiling this material, for along with Richard Schwarz's *Light Bearers to the Remnant* it provides excellent historical information.

## Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail: Why Evangelicals Are Attracted to the Liturgical Church

Robert E. Webber, Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1985, 160 pages, \$13.95, hardcover. Reviewed by Hugh I. Dunton, librarian, Newbold College, England.

Webber, an ordained Presbyterian minister, graduate of Bob Jones University, and the son of a Baptist minister, became an Episcopalian. The story of his spiritual journey and that of six others is not comforting for evangelicals, including Adventists.

What moves an evangelical toward Episcopalianism? Webber lists six factors: 1. A sense of mystery in place of the rationalistic Christianity of the seminary. By rationalistic, Webber means the use of reasoned argument to defend the Bible and defeat theological foes. 2. The drama of Anglican worship contrasted with the informal man-centeredness of a

pastor-dominated worship experience. 3. A desire for sacramental reality. In his evangelical days Webber saw baptism and Communion as man's signs that he loved God, rather than God's signs to man. 4. In a search for spiritual identity Webber desired to get past Calvin, his former authority, to the heritage of the early church, the tradition he felt stretched back to apostolic times. 5. Webber sees Episcopalianism as the best position for ecumenism. 6. Instead of a spirituality based on a conversion experience, on do's and don'ts, and believing the right thing, Webber prefers an ethical and experiential spirituality.

Michael Anderson was drawn to Anglican worship because of "an inner longing, a soul-craving that the mind often strains to comprehend."

John Skillen, a shy person, found the juvenility, sharing, and heartiness of evangelical youth fellowships repellent. He needed to experience worship in another way.

Isobel Anders felt that the readings from Scripture in the Anglican liturgy enabled her to focus on the meaning. In her evangelical tradition it was too easy to gloss over the wording and skip to the accepted interpretation—"the message."

David and LaVonne Neff, who left Adventism, perceive their former church to be a believing, rather than a worshiping community. Both felt they received a mixed message from their parents concerning the church. It was the final movement, yet it sought respectability among other denominations. It would be easy to criticize the parents for not constructing a fortress around their children, but this could have resulted in closed minds, rather than a reasoned and felt allegiance to their church. Doubts about doctrine arose for David in college and then seminary. He pushed the problems aside, but they continued to worry him. He found Adventist church services unhelpful and boring; more important, he felt an uncertainty about personal salvation. The tension between evangelical and traditional Adventism found the Neffs with the evangelicals. Their final break with the church came with the Glacier View decision declaring

Desmond Ford's views unacceptable.

Although the Canterbury Trail is not a one-way street, there is also a movement toward Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy. Adventists, with their claims of correctness of doctrine and mission, must address why members join other churches. Is there a temperament and taste that prefers liturgical forms? Do we need different kinds of services for different personalities? Is there a hunger for a dignity of worship that we sometimes lack? Is there a need for more opportunities for the unadorned Scripture to speak for itself? Every Sabbath the congregation has a right to have its prayer answered: "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:21).

For this reviewer of Anglican background, the liturgical service can become a performance. One is not always sure whether the splendor is that of worship or theatrics. It takes mental discipline to keep fresh the familiar words of the prayer book.

At a time when the Anglican primate of Canterbury is calling for papal headship of all Christians, Adventists must demonstrate, through worship as well as teaching, that there is a distinct and final message for the world. It is one that exalts the Lord Jesus Christ, does not depend on oratory or private interpretation, and is truly the everlasting gospel.

### **Angry Saints: The Frightening Possibility of Being Adventist Without Being Christian**

George R. Knight, *Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, Maryland, 1989, 158 pages, \$13.95, hardcover. Reviewed by Wayne Willey, pastor, Bentonville, Arkansas.*

In *Angry Saints* Knight has made a valuable contribution to Adventist literature. Nothing else I have read on the subject has provided for me a clearer explanation of what happened at the 1888 General Conference session in Minneapolis. Even more important, Knight tells why it happened.

Knight defines the 1888 crisis as being fourfold: (1) a crisis of understanding (the factions weren't really listening to each other), (2) a crisis of personality (conflict between strong personalities), (3) a crisis of spirit (lack of love), and (4) a crisis of authority (conflict over who would determine what should be taught in the schools and/or published in denominational papers).

Knight is more objective in this book

than he was in his biography of A. T. Jones (*From 1888 to Apostasy*). When we see A. T. Jones standing beside Uriah Smith, George Butler, and E. J. Waggoner, Jones seems more a product of his times than the extremist we saw portrayed in the biography. We see four strong personalities, each with clear convictions on the "right" interpretation of the Bible. Uriah Smith and George Butler emphasize commandment keeping, while A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner emphasize the faith of Jesus. This sets the stage for a confrontation between law and gospel. This controversy became more severe as the two camps' differing views on prophetic interpretation were brought into the discussion. A caustic debating style, peppered with personal attacks on one another, resulted in animosity between the players. Each of the opponents considered the other's views destructive, and this led to rumors of a conspiracy against the "landmark" truths of the Advent message.

The book is more than the unveiling of historical information. Knight concludes with two chapters that make his presentation relevant today. In these he spans the century between 1888 and the present, showing how the issues of Minneapolis continue to be a center of controversy within Adventism. He calls the church to a new love for Christ and for each other—a love that will produce caring, merciful Christians. According to Knight, "such a caring people will demonstrate to the universe that God can truly transform lives." "Truth is good, but it needs to be validated by a joyful and caring Christianity that avoids the spirit of Minneapolis while exuding the spirit of Jesus."

The only problem I found with the volume is the print. The Caxton Light typeface printed on ivory paper is more difficult to read than standard bookface type. I would recommend that subsequent printings be a bolder, more readable typeface.

### **Urban Church Education**

Donald B. Rogers, ed., *Religious Education Press, Birmingham, Alabama, 1989, 270 pages, \$14.95. Reviewed by Lawrence G. Downing, pastor, Anaheim Seventh-day Adventist Church, Anaheim, California.*

One purpose of religious education is to develop effective ministries that will bring about social change. The unique educational problems of the urban congregation challenges it to be faithful to this calling.

These concerns prompted Rogers to compile essays written by men and women involved in urban education.

The authors describe programs that have made the local church an educational center for city dwellers. Even though many churches have few resources and small budgets, they can develop programs that benefit their members and community. Pastors, church leaders, and teachers must deal realistically with urban people. We conquer our fear of the city as we get acquainted with urban dwellers and understand their needs.

The first two chapters, written by Rogers, give a theological basis for urban ministry. He asks churches to make religious education part of public ministry, shaping programs that teach justice in the social dimension. He invites us to use the information and experiences of the writers to stimulate our creativity rather than to attempt to duplicate their work. As church administrators should already know, direct application of what works well in one setting often creates problems when transferred to another.

Rogers develops an inductive approach that seeks to find theory implicit in the practice of religious education. He calls upon academicians to study the settings and develop a theory to explain what comes out of an experience. In his second chapter Rogers shows how these theories apply to the urban educator. The principles are applicable to any program.

Other chapters discuss Christian literacy, curriculum, spiritual formation, history of religious education in the Black church, diversity, biblical storytelling in the city, and weekday alternatives.

This book offers a good introduction to a practice that too few churches follow. The authors present a powerful case for us to change our ways.

### **Recently Noted**

**Youth Nights Made Easier**, Leo Symmank and Karen Jurgensen, *Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1987, 96 pages, \$8.95, paper.*

Included in this publication are 40 youth programs adaptable to any size group and any denomination. The strong points of the book are that the programs have been tested and work; instructions are complete and even list materials needed and suggested refreshments; they deal with real-life issues, such as holiday themes, grief, self-image, and prejudices; and they have a variety of methods of presentation.

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