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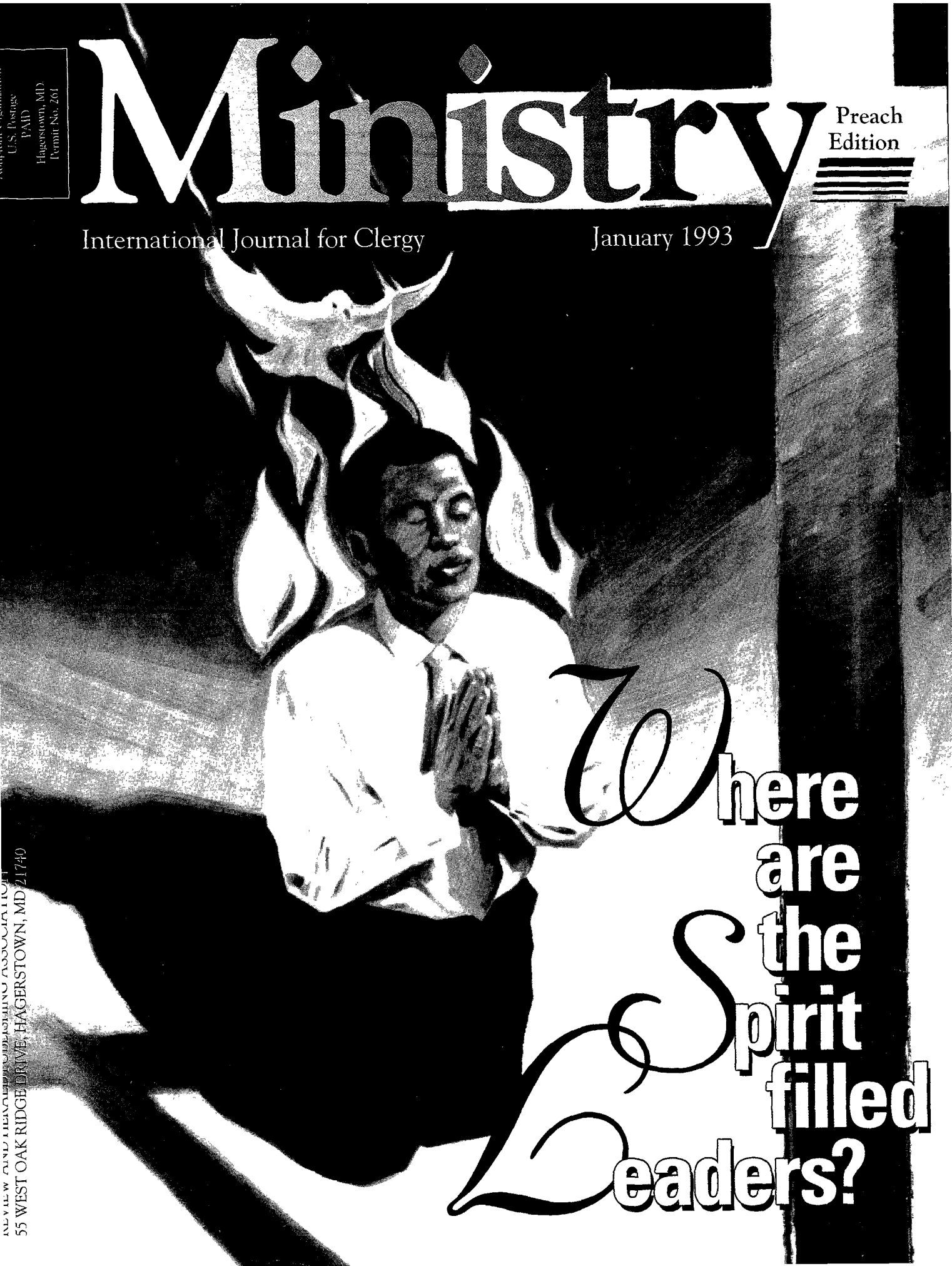
Preach
Edition



International Journal for Clergy

January 1993

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Where
are
the
Spirit
filled
Leaders?

The abortion dilemma

At a time when abortion discussions often deteriorate into shouting matches, I commend *Ministry* for a cluster of articles (September 1992) that doesn't insist on absolutes and doesn't engage in name-calling.

I hope *Ministry's* coverage of this issue will not stop here, however. First, the writers of these articles happened to be all males. No matter how thoughtful, compassionate, or empathetic men are, the dilemma of an unwanted pregnancy is something they will never experience personally. No matter what rule, law, doctrine, or policy is adopted, they will never have to live with it in their own bodies. Never. Therefore, while women also hold many different views of abortion, it is essential that their voices be heard in this ongoing discussion.

A second reason men's voices alone won't do emerges in these articles: each author in his own way yearns for something clear and unambiguous, something black and white, to base his decision on. Research on gender differences today shows men often prefer resolving conflict based on rules and authority, while women often prefer to resolve conflict by assessing how it will impact relationships. Both are important.

Third, I hope future articles will take into account that sexual relationships, whether or not they bring an unwanted pregnancy, are not mundane—they emerge from human desire and emotion. Weber asks this rhetorical question: "If the woman willingly engages in sex that results in conception, hasn't she already exercised her freedom of choice?" I doubt it. Most literature suggests that males are the primary aggressors in such relationships. Isn't there some male culpability in this matter?

In Jesus' day a group of concerned men brought forward a woman "caught in adultery" to be judged. Today we seem to be bringing forward women

"caught in abortion." It seems to me that Jesus' response—to both the men and the woman in the story—is instructive for our current dilemma.—Kit Watts, assistant editor, *Adventist Review*, Silver Spring, Maryland

■ I am against abortion on demand. I believe its widespread practice is a sign of the degradation of society, but we must be sure that our theological arguments are sound and our actions Christian. I have yet to read a clear theological treatise that can prove that a developing fetus has the same rights as a living, breathing person. Ron du Preez's article was a good attempt, but I suggest that the final word on Exodus 21:22-25 has not been said. The contents of the passage and its historical/social associations would seem to support the traditional majority opinion—that the value of a fetus is not on par with that of the mother. This gives clear room for abortion without apology in genuine cases of real need.—Lyndon K. McDowell, Scottsdale, Arizona.

■ David Newman says that the SDA Church "should make a statement giving a high value to life . . . but leave it up to each individual as to how he or she will practice that ideal." If the SDA Church had taken a similar stand on the mode of baptism, it would be like Martin Luther's stand on baptism: Luther knew immersion to be the biblical mode, but, by not insisting on it, ratified sprinkling and pouring.—Ron Thomsen, Houston, Texas.

■ I read with appreciation the article "The Fetus in Biblical Law." The status of the fetus has been debated through many generations from numerous points of view. I write not to take any issue on that matter, but to correct a statement that touches upon Jewish laws.

First, in researching Jewish aspects of the matter, the author would have

done well to consult a competent rabbi to clarify the complicated Talmudic statements and differences of opinion. Relying on secondary sources and translations is dangerous academics. I would maintain that *all* translations are to some degree commentaries.

Du Preez cites David M. Feldman's *Birth Control in Jewish Law*. A more careful reading of the section on abortion and the cited sources would reveal that there is no "uniform interpretation of Talmudic commentators."

Also, you can be absolutely sure that a child upon birth is considered totally equivalent to any other person and certainly has to be considered as having lived, no matter when the child dies. However, if the child dies within 30 days, the relatives are not required to observe the rituals of mourning. But they may do so, if they wish. I assure you the 30-day stipulation has nothing to do with the rights or status of the born child. That custom has only to do with mourning rituals.—Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks, Temple Israel, Omaha, Nebraska.

■ One article in the September *Ministry* says, "If the woman willingly engages in sex that results in conception, hasn't she already exercised her freedom of choice?"

A woman doesn't get pregnant by herself! Does the man who impregnates a woman accept no responsibility for what happens to the fetus? Are Adventists subscribing to the old double standard?

Pregnancy, abortion, prostitution, and sexually transmitted diseases involve both sexes. Our God continues to challenge both men and women to purity of lifestyle.—Ruth Wright, Vienna, West Virginia.

Certainly the father shares responsibility for pregnancy. But the question under analysis was the mother's right to choose, and the point was that if she

(Continued on page 30)

If you're receiving MINISTRY bimonthly without having paid for a subscription, it's not a mistake. Since 1928 MINISTRY has been published for Seventh-day Adventist ministers, but we believe the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. We want to share with you our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help to you too. We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use. Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. Requests should be on church letterhead.

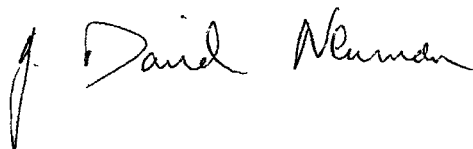
If Christ is the heart of the church, and the Holy Spirit represents the lungs, then evangelism epitomizes its life blood. Thus, we begin in this issue an exciting twelve-part series on evangelism in the local church. Each article or cluster of articles is written by an expert in a particular area and is designed to be easily implemented by the local pastor.

We have also made this series into a continuing education course and the publishers have given us a great discount on two marvelous books on evangelism. You will want to sign up for this course if for no other reason than to get these books.

You will also want to read Ben Maxson's article on "Where Are the Spirit-filled Leaders?" If ever there was a time when we need spirit-filled leaders it is now. Do we make spiritual leadership a priority? What exactly is spirit-filled leadership? Read and be edified.

We introduce our new Ministerial Association secretary and his wife (the new coordinator for Shepherdess International), James and Sharon Cress, on the back page.

May God's richest blessings go with you as a new year introduces itself. May you share those blessings in fruitful ministry.



Cover artist: Greg Fox

- 2 Letters
- 4 Special assistant editors appointed
J. David Newman
- 5 What pastors think about the Year of the Pastor
J. David Newman
- 8 Where are the Spirit-filled leaders?
Ben Maxson
- 12 Evangelism
Michael Green
- 16 Evangelism: getting the church ready
Ron Halvorsen
- 20 Evangelism through the local church: self-study course
- 21 Teaching Christian values to children
Boyd Doctor Shawa
- 23 Unfinished business
James A. Cress
- 25 The year of your pastor
Martin Weber
- 26 Biblio File
- 31 Shop Talk
- 32 Youth takes charge at the Ministerial Association
J. David Newman

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Volume 66 Number 1



Special assistant editors appointed

J. David Newman

Ministry serves a diverse and international audience of pastors. It is important that we meet the ethnic, cultural, and gender needs of this diverse audience. Thus our editorial staff represents American, British, and Indian backgrounds. In order to broaden these backgrounds, we have appointed three special assistant editors. These individuals are practicing pastors and will help us focus on additional areas of need.

The pastors meet quarterly with the *Ministry* staff via a teleconference and each year attend the annual planning session. They also help us find articles, particularly within the group that they represent. I will introduce them in alphabetical order.

Nancy Canwell

Nancy Canwell is an associate pastor at the Walla Walla College church in College Place, Washington. She is responsible for youth and family ministries. She holds a B.A. in theology from Walla Walla College and is currently in the third year of a Master of Arts program in pastoral ministry. Her spouse, Keith, is also an associate pastor at the same church. As women pastors are still somewhat of a rare breed in our church, I will quote verbatim her view of ministry:



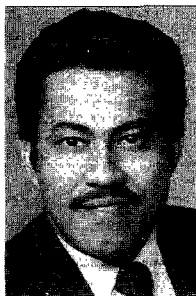
"I felt my first call-

ing to be a pastor the day I was baptized at age 10. Although women pastors were unheard of back in 1967, I believe God began preparing me at that young age. Throughout academy and college I never lost sight of what I believed was God's call to the ministry. After working with my pastor/husband for no pay, then being on a quarter salary, and then a half, after eight years of waiting I finally became a full-time pastor. It seems trite to say that the opportunity is a thrill for me, but that's just what it is. I love what I do. It energizes me, feeds me spiritually, and gives me joy. Every Bible study, every sermon, every baptism, and every counseling session is a meaningful experience for me. I can't think of anything better to do with my life than to spend my days being a servant."

Nancy will help us find articles by women that address the needs of pastors and the people they serve.

Miguel Angel Cerna

Pastor Miguel Cerna is a pastor-evangelist who came to the United States in 1958 from El Salvador. He holds a B.S. from Loma Linda University and an M.Div. from Andrews University. Miguel is in a unique position of being both a pastor and an administrator. He pastors the Norwalk Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church in southern California and is also a vice president of the Southern



California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Miguel is known for leadership in explosive evangelistic growth through small groups. Even though his church now has 700 members, he spends only a quarter of his time there. He has trained his leaders and members so well that they have truly become ministers. Last year his members conducted more than 500 Bible studies, and more than 200 were baptized. His members make some 200 visits a week. He spends much of his time conducting seminars and consulting with churches on how they too can reproduce the New Testament church.

Miguel will help us get articles from the Hispanic community and other ethnic groups.

Eric C. Ward

Pastor Eric Ward is a native of Los Angeles, California. He has served as pastor, local conference evangelist, ministerial secretary of the Southern Union, and associate secretary of the Southern California Conference. He holds a B.A. in theology from Pacific Union College, a M.A. (Min.) from Andrews University, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in pastoral ministry. Pastor Ward is senior pastor of the Oakwood College Church in Huntsville, Alabama, where he has served for more than 20 years.



Eric is a bundle of energy. As well as

pastoring more than 2,000 members, he is overseeing the building of a new elementary school and academy; currently four groups of local church elders are conducting Revelation seminars; the Oakwood church has a goal of birthing 12 satellite churches, with eight already born. These churches work closely with Oakwood College and the Religion Department.

Pastoral Advisory

Since *Ministry* is published primarily for pastors, we feel that we need to do more than even appoint pastors as special assistant editors. We have also established a pastoral advisory. This advisory consists of the pastors from North America who serve on the General Conference Executive Committee. Nine pastors were appointed, one for each of the nine unions. Since then one has left and joined conference administration, and one has become a conference ministerial secretary. These eight individuals (we are still including the ministerial secretary) are: Desmond Francis (Atlantic Union), Dennis Fortin (Canadian Union), S. Peter Campbell (Columbia Union), Dwight Nelson (Lake Union), Walton Williams (Mid-America Union), Charles Ferguson (North Pacific Union), Robert Lloyd (Pacific Union), and E. C. Ward (Southern Union).

We are constantly in need of good articles written by pastors. We are especially interested in articles that show the relevance of the cross. We would like to know how you make Christ the center of every sermon; how you have adapted your Bible studies to make each one reveal some facet of Christ's great sacrifice; how the atonement informs Adventist doctrine.

Without the cross theology has no passion, programs have no ultimate meaning, and existence becomes a deadly bore. A denomination may vote the finest doctrines, it may have an outstanding heritage, it may even be actively involved meeting humankind's physical, mental, and social needs, but if the cross is not the focus of its mission and practice it will never meet the spiritual needs of the people it tries to reach.

Ministry serves the pastor. We solicit your continued suggestions, your prayers, and your manuscripts. We pray that we will always be looking for ways to serve you better, uplifting in every issue our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ. ■

What pastors think about the Year of the Pastor

J. David Newman

Should you get excited about the Year of the Pastor?



J. David Newman, D. Min., is the editor of *Ministry*.

Every year is important in the life of the pastor, but 1993 will be an even more important year if the church has its way.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in an Annual Council action, has designated 1993 as the Year of the Pastor, with the following objectives:

"(1) Reaffirm the importance of the pastorate in the mind of each church leader, pastor, and member as the pivotal function of ministerial endeavor; (2) update and strengthen communication and understanding between pastor and administrator; (3) establish a global theology of ministry that defines the role of the pastor as watchman, shepherd, and preacher in modern society; (4) address the issues threatening the church's mission; (5) structure, with broad input from pastors, systems of evaluation, communication, and accountability for all levels of church organization that will assist in improving effectiveness in achieving church ministry."

Seven pastors and one local conference ministerial secretary currently serve on the General Conference Executive Committee. These individuals also serve as a pastoral advisory to *Ministry*. The editors of *Ministry* met with these pastors during the 1992 Annual Council and received much helpful advice. In addition, these pastors agreed to contribute a paragraph outlining their expectations concerning this special Year of the Pastor. We have also asked Nancy Canwell, one

If ever there was a time when the church should be calling the brightest and best of its young to the pastorate, it is now.

of our new special assistant editors, to add her reflections on the Year of the Pastor.

Dwight Nelson

I'm excited about the church setting aside a year for corporate and global affirmation of the ministry of the Adventist pastor. As one who has responded to Christ's call to radical discipleship in pastoral ministry, I want to join the men and women of the pastorate in renewing my vows to serve the Master in parish ministry.

If ever there was a time when the church should be calling the brightest and best of its young to the pastorate, it is now. With human society in escalating disintegration, now more than ever, the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to enable and equip men and women for an end-time mission of redemption and reconciliation. For that critical task God continues to call pastors to live His life and lead His people through the bloodied up trenches of human survival.

Pastoral ministry is the incarnation of Jesus' life of service in the midst of a suffering world. "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21, NRSV). To follow in the steps of the Chief Shepherd and Pastor—is there a greater joy or honor? In this Year of the Pastor, let us who are pastors make it the Year of the Master.—Dwight Nelson, senior pastor of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Denis Fortin

In the fast-paced ever-changing world in which we live, the pastoral ministry has become diversified and multifaceted. It is not uncommon for a pastor

during a day's work to be a shepherd, an administrator, a teacher, a counselor, and a preacher. Few vocations require a working knowledge in so many fields. However, as pastors we can easily become entangled in our various tasks. Thus we need to be reminded of the meaning of our calling. To me, this Year of the Pastor means that our church will emphasize three major aspects of pastoral ministry.

First, that it is a spiritual ministry calling our pastors to deepen their relationship with Jesus through prayer and Bible study. Second, that it is a professional ministry encouraging our pastors to enhance their pastoral skills through continuing education and professional growth. Third, that pastoral ministry is a valuable asset to our church, asking both membership and conference leaders to tangibly care for their pastors and their families.—Denis Fortin, pastor of the Quebec City church in Quebec.

Desmond Francis

The work of the minister is a constant day by day activity. It is one where pastors find themselves giving more and more of themselves. As plans are made for celebrating the Year of the Pastor, emphasis should be placed on the fact that the pastor should also receive as he or she gives.

Ministers are required to give of their time as teachers, counselors, trainers, nurturers, and shapers of the lives of church members—especially new believers. Pastors must use his or her talents to help each parishioner achieve their goals and be better equipped for service. The pastor must be one who is a lover of people, ensuring that his or her life will positively touch the lives of children, senior citizens, and all age groups in between.

For the Year of the Pastor to be meaningful, special emphasis needs to be placed on each area of the pastor's involvement. Although pastors may not be asking anything in return for their service, they appreciate it if both employer and congregation would affirm and love them in return.

The Year of the Pastor should be a time for improved fellowship between pastor and members and pastor and administration. It should be a year when each group would appreciate the other more and build up trust and understanding that the gospel might go to all the world.—Desmond Francis, pastor of the

Mount Vernon Church in New York City.

Charles Ferguson

Encouragement for pastors is more imminent than I had imagined before attending the North American Division year-end meeting. Action taken should bring hope to all ministers. Having personally participated in the process of designating 1993 the Year of the Pastor, I am satisfied that this initiative is not an administrative strategy to patronize those of us engaged in grass-roots ministry.

Opportunities are ripe on all levels of our church structure to affirm the worth of the pastor. Perhaps the most promising is that of clarifying our identity as pastors. We, as well as our members, need a consensus regarding the biblical basis of ministry and our unique role as pastors. The year ahead offers much potential.—Charles Ferguson, pastor of the Spokane Valley church in Spokane, Washington.

Peter Campbell

The Year of the Pastor is a good idea, but seems an attempt by the powers that be to placate those on the front line rather than truly help them. We are constantly reminded that we are the most important part of the church organization, yet as soon as we leave for a "higher" level we are "rewarded" with higher pay.

If the church is really interested in improving pastoral morale, the single most important action it can take is to implement pay equity between pastors and the other levels of the church. I do not need another plaque to hang on the wall. I would like recognition from my church that pastors need to be given a truly living wage. Help me live in the nineties by unshackling the Depression mentality and relieving me where it hurts most—in my pocketbook.

I love this church and will continue to give my life for it, regardless of whether the brethren give us adequate recognition. —Peter Campbell, pastor of the Dupont Park church in Washington, D.C.

Eric Ward

I would like to see a clarification and strengthening of the servant-leader role that the pastor plays in the church. I would also like to see the guilding of greater relationships between: the pastor and conference administration, the pastor and church members, the pastor and his or her family.

The Year of the Pastor should also

help strengthen the pastor in three important areas: biblical preaching, nurturing of the church family, and evangelism. Evangelism includes: personal, public, converting, conserving, training, and nurturing of the flock.—Eric Calvin Ward, senior pastor of the Oakwood College church in Huntsville, Alabama.

Nancy Canwell

As my plane lifts off the runway at Baltimore-Washington International Airport, I think of the 15 new friends I'm leaving behind. We came to one place from many: California, Ohio, Delaware, Washington, Illinois, North Carolina, and Maryland. Our backgrounds are different, as well as our family life, skin color, and dreams for the future. But there is one thing we all have in common, something that serves as a bond between us: we are Seventh-day Adventist women pastors.

This year marked the first North American Division Women in Ministry Committee, cosponsored by the NAD Ministerial and Women's Ministries departments. We were invited to come and meet fellow women pastors, share what God is doing through us in our various churches, and become acquainted with the NAD officers.

The most memorable experience for me was the afternoon we shared our individual calling to the ministry. I can picture the faces of the women as they shared something obviously meaningful to them. One woman at age 6 sat on her father's knee and told him of her desire to become a pastor; another responded to an academy Week of Prayer call to dedicate her life to the ministry; yet another was lovingly encouraged at age 12 by her mother's challenge, "You can be anything you want to be—just keep following God;" others were established in various careers but felt pulled continually toward the ministry until they retrained for a pastoral career.

A few of the pastors shared that their journeys had been painful at times. They had experienced some criticism and prejudice through hurtful words and letters. Yet they kept on keeping on, because they felt called and wanted to obey.

All had positive stories to share, for each pastor holds in her heart memories of how her ministry has touched lives. There was the woman pastor who was ministering to a terminally ill member; another has had the privilege of baptizing an entire family; another has organized

an early-morning worship option on Sabbaths; several have prepared couples for marriage and performed their weddings; others have been invited to speak throughout the division; all have been active in pastoral counseling.

Listening to their stories left me longing for our church to have a greater awareness of the contribution women pastors are making. And increased awareness could lead to opportunities for increased involvement. During the 1993 Year of the Pastor, lay leaders and administrators have an opportunity to affirm women in pastoral ministry. They could do this in several ways: (1) encourage and support young women studying for the ministry; (2) hire those who have qualifying gifts; (3) affirm women pastors at the local church level; and (4) invite women pastors to serve on committees, to write for our periodicals, and to speak at workers' meetings, camp meetings, and seminars.

As I fly I look out the window and think of all the people below. People who need the Lord. People who could benefit from the ministry of women pastors. But there are so few of us. In a world where broken homes, hearts, and minds need the healing touch of a pastor, God needs the gifts of both men and women in ministry. Both are called to be servants.—Nancy Canwell, associate pastor of the Walla Walla College church in College Place, Washington

Ministerial Association

The General Conference Ministerial Association has produced a number of items of special relevance for the Year of the Pastor. The *How to Love Your Pastoral Family* video, available from the Ministerial Association, should be shown in every church. Church Ministries is also developing a number of strategies to encourage church members to recognize their pastors. Pastors usually do not want to toot their own horn, but they could casually mention to their local leaders that this video is available.

A new and completely rewritten *Minister's Manual* is now available for all pastors. A new *Elder's Manual* will soon be available. Projects to be completed in 1993 include an Ellen G. White compilation on pastoral ministry and a book on Adventist worship.

The Ministerial Association will continue to educate church leaders regarding the needs and interests of pastors. It is not

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that church leaders are unsympathetic toward pastoral needs, but sometimes they have been away from the pastorate so long that it is hard for them to really appreciate what it is like to be a pastor. When Ken Wade joined the Ministerial Association a few years back he added a dimension, having come straight from the local parish. He would remind us at certain times that we had forgotten what it was really like at the grass roots.

This need to keep in touch drove me back to pastoring a local church for the past two years. The press of work and other obligations have caused me to give this up for the time being. But during those two years I gained a new appreciation for the joys and sorrows that come with pastoring.

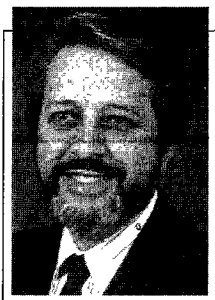
The arrival of Jim and Sharon Cress to head up our association adds another dimension. They come straight from the parish. They know from personal experience what it is like. Be sure to read the Pastor's Pastor in this issue. We want to keep in touch. We bear the same burden that you have—that of ministering to men and women, boys and girls, the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Let us continue to remember the words of Jesus:

"Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45). ■

Where are the Spirit-filled leaders?

Ben Maxson

Spirit-filled leadership is necessary for revival.



Ben Maxson, D. Min., is the ministerial secretary and evangelism coordinator for the Upper Columbia Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Members from the Jonesboro¹ church met with Elder Jackson, the conference president, and complained that their pastor, Elder Smith, was not preaching historical truth. They accused him of being part of a general apostasy pervading the church and demanded that the conference either move him or let them start a new church.

On another occasion, Sue and Shirley approached me with their concerns about their pastor. They hunger to hear the gospel and understand how to walk closer to Jesus. Yet their pastor, they report, presents only legalistic sermons focusing on guilt and external behaviors.

Those situations illustrate scenes that happen every day to all of us in leadership. We find ourselves frustrated fighting the fires that erupt out of someone else's agenda. We are trapped in circumstances that are really symptoms of deeper problems. Limited time and resources are left to actively address the core issues that really count.

Some probing questions deserve examination: Are we working together as a united body or torn by internal forces? Do we rejoice and hurt together, as described in 1 Corinthians 12? Are we vibrant, dynamic, and Spirit-empowered, or are we guilt-motivated and program-orientated? Are we more concerned that we be identified by doctrinal purity than by relationships to each other? (Remember Jesus said: "All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" [John 13:35].)² Do we put God and His kingdom first? Do we accept Christ and find assurance in Him, or do we wander in the wilderness of modern gnostic forms?

Driven by our mission

God's ideal for His organization is that we be recognizably His instead of marred by struggles for power, position, and church ownership. As His movement we are to be mission-driven, not tainted by corporate selfishness or controlled by institutional self-preservation. As the body of Christ we are to be corporately and individually spiritual, not squabbling over theological trifles and/or procedural policies. We are to be vision-motivated and Spirit-empowered, not inclined to an "old-boy network" seeking to maintain itself. We should be known by the fact that we worship God and have "been with Jesus" through time on our knees and in His Word.

Scripture's description of God's church reflects primarily an intimate connection and relationship with Him. The Bible is the history of God seeking to establish a relationship with His people. The promise of the new covenant is: "I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people" (Heb. 8:10). Could it be that God is more concerned about having a people who are clearly identified more by their connection with Him than by a set of external lifestyle rules? Is it possible to have the lifestyle without the relationship? Do we really fit the biblical description of His people if we don't know Him?

It is easy to consider these factors and conclude that we can never attain God's ideal. However, God does not present His ideal for His church as an exercise in frustration or guilt, but rather to show us what He can make of His church when we allow Him to work. It may just be that we need to give Him a little more room to work out His will in His church—and

watch Him surpass our greatest dreams.

God prescribed a remedy many years ago: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work."³ Making the church what God wants it to be starts with revival, and that begins with leadership—organizational leadership. We must not only be spiritual ourselves, but we must also know how to lead spiritually. While revival must happen in each church, we need revival on a much larger scale, and that depends on administrative leadership. How do we become such leaders to guide our people into such a revival?

Leading for revival

While we cannot create such a revival, we must believe that God yearns for it just as desperately as we do. We dare not attempt to manufacture a revival, but we can open ourselves personally and corporately to the workings of His Spirit. We can respond to His challenge and invitation: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

We have already discussed here the fact that the key to revival lies with leadership. Biblically, revival normally happened when leaders led the people back to God—away from their preoccupation with self to a focus on walking with God. Even in Elijah's case revival did not take place until the corporate leadership came face-to-face with God on Mount Carmel. In the context of revival, Ellen White wrote: "We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world."

She continued with the startling statement that these blessings depend on our preparing the way for them: "When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promise."⁴

There can be no doubt about it. God's dream for His church calls for us as leaders to walk with Him, and out of that walk gain a vision of what He wants the church to be and do. Rather than trusting in our own wisdom or abilities, we can recognize our need for His guidance and power. As His leaders we can focus our priorities on first seeking Him and His kingdom. We can base our decisions on principles rather than expediency, and thus set the pace spiritually and relationally.

We cannot begin to make a difference until we realize we are part of the problem as well as part of the solution. We must confess our own failure to give God room to work organizationally as He wants to. Only as we personally implement spiritual renewal and are open to revival can we lead our church back to God and integrate that spirituality into our ministry of corporate leadership.

Temptations of leadership

Confronting the common temptations of organizational leadership is one of the prerequisites of revival. This involves resisting the urge to control His church and instead yielding to and depending on His Spirit. We must confront the allure of worry with a constant awareness that this is His church, and He is able to protect it, empower it, and make it what He wants it to be. We must resist the seduction of coercive leadership with the assurance that "only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good."⁵ We must turn our backs on the enticement to "go it alone" and instead seek a constant awareness of God's presence and the infilling of His Spirit.

Revival also requires that we model an unswerving loyalty to God and His principles. We cannot be effective spiritual leaders while knowingly violating biblical principles of behavior or leadership. Just as important, we must also be willing to step out and lead, and there are some practical implications for doing so.

The predominant secularization of the church, the growing materialism among members, the increased pluralism, the increasing levels of apathy, and the escalating polarizations within the church are only symptoms that call for leadership action. It is time for us, transformed by the empowering presence of God, to become transformational leaders.

We cannot begin to make a difference until we realize we are part of the problem as well as part of the solution.

Here are four foundational principles that, when integrated into our lives and ministries, will shape and transform us corporately and individually.

1. "Seek first the kingdom"

From the top of Mount Sinai, God asked His people to have no other gods. Now He asks us to love Him with all our heart, mind, and soul. That means passion—a response to His passion—for we have been His consuming passion ever since Creation. To the degree that He is not our consuming passion, we practice a form of idolatry for something or someone else. Is Jesus the passion of our lives, or do the kingdoms of this world, or even the church, excite us more? Our people know our passions, do we?

It is easy for some of us to be more concerned about "the work" than we are about the Master. We can get more excited about "the truth" than we become about Him who is the truth; about the "church" than about the Head of the Church; about the nature of Christ than Christ Himself. Some of us are more interested in power and leadership than in Jesus as the only One who can empower our leadership; in policies and programs than in Spirit-controlled lives.

Our passion for Him comes from a realization of what He has done for us. Only as we daily experience His redeeming grace are we prepared to lead. As we live by faith, sure of our own standing with God, He becomes our passion, and other things fall into place.

Being where God wants us to be and doing what He wants us to do are more important than achieving success in our own or others' eyes. The life lived in conscious awareness of and connection with God is the ultimate success. All other accomplishments are mere by-product.

It is easy to become so busy doing the "Lord's work" that we forget our need to spend time with Christ.

ucts of what is at the core of the life. Trust God! Either He is who He says He is, or what we call Christianity is all an empty farce. He is able! This is His church! He is big enough to control it; and even better, He can and does take care of it. Our worry or attempts to make it what we think it ought to be may only get in His way. In trying to solve another's problems, we may fail to care for our own.

2. "Tarry until you receive power"

Intimacy fuels and nurtures passion in any relationship. We need the regular quality and quantity of time with God that will assure the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Can God trust us with leadership of His church if our own devotional lives are not fervent? It is the time alone with God, corporately and individually, that sharpens the focus of our priorities and opens us to receive God's presence and power. The scarcity of consistent devotional time is the primary reason for our lack of power, and the intimacy of our lives with Christ is the measure of our power for God. It is in this intimacy with the Master that we by faith accept His promised Spirit. As we ask Him to open our lives and control them with His Spirit, He fulfills His promise and comes to us anew in the Comforter. By faith we individually accept what He poured out on His church on the Day of Pentecost—the Holy Spirit in "former rain" power. Daily we yield anew to His control, accepting the promised infilling and praying for the "latter rain." As we yield to this infilling of the Holy Spirit, we discover that He first brings the presence of Jesus and then convicts of sin and righteousness. Thus the Holy Spirit guides us while empowering us.

Our connection with Christ must be our first priority. God can remain the

passion of our lives only as long as we keep Calvary in focus through daily devotional time. Perhaps we could even follow the example of the supreme biblical administrator, Daniel. He thought it critically important to have three established daily times of communion with His God. We need to guard the personal time with God with greater care than any other appointment or schedule. A secretary or family member can help us protect that crucial time with God.

It is easy to become so busy doing the "Lord's work" that we forget our need to spend time with Christ. Committees, programs, and simple busyness can replace the communion time with God. We can be so active that we lose the tranquility of quietness with God—the source of our only power. "But the word busy is the symptom not of commitment but of betrayal. It is not devotion but defection. The adjective busy set as a modifier to pastor should sound to our ears like adulterous to characterize a wife or embezzling to describe a banker. It is an outrageous scandal, a blasphemous affront."⁶ From the depths of our devotional experience, the intimacy with God permeates every area of our lives and transforms every act into a sacrament of grace springing out of our continual walk with Him.

Those of us in organizational leadership also need to assume our responsibility for helping pastors implement this principle. We can first challenge them with our own example, then invite them to join us in a commitment to time daily with God. We can remove some of the "busywork" that we too often ask pastors to do, and we can help our church members understand that too often they expect their pastors to "wait on tables" (Acts 6) instead of being spiritual leaders dedicated to "prayer and the ministry of the Word." We must also help our pastors surrender some of their control of the church and allow the Holy Spirit to work through others as they function in their leadership roles.

3. "And I will draw all to me"

Joe had served as an elder for 12 years. When he saw Christ lifted up, he was drawn to Him. I was then able to lead him to accept Jesus as a personal Saviour for the first time in His life. He then became a powerful spiritual leader who soon led others to know Christ.

The exalted Christ is the secret of success in ministry. Our power to change

others is the sum of our ability to exalt Christ. It is too easy to trust to our many good programs and evangelistic techniques to convert people. While programs and methods have their place, the best thing we can offer the secular mind, the "baby boomers," the materialistic, or the indifferent is the reality of Jesus lifted up in life and word. The temptation to depend on some technique or gimmick can often lead us to use unethical or unbiblical methods instead of depending upon Christ. Today's Christianity has failed to appeal to many, not because of the lack of the right programs, but because of the lack of the empowering presence of Christ. "Christianity has not so much been tried and found wanting, as it has been found difficult and left untried."⁷

When we come face to face with Christ, we may reject or resist Him, but we cannot ignore Him. And if we don't resist, He will draw us to Him.

Have we trusted more in our strength and methods than in His presence and power? Have we tried to convert people to a truth without drawing them to the One who loves them? How can we integrate principles of spirituality into the evangelism process?

4. "Go and make disciples"

As Jesus draws people to Himself, He then trusts us with the responsibility of making disciples. The gospel commission to make disciples is the epitome of Christian leadership. Pastoral ministry reduced to its least common denominator is spiritual formation—the moving of the entire life toward God. That is discipling. While we have tended to focus this aspect of ministry on those who are not church members, it must start at home.

When Jesus sent His disciples out to minister, He told them to "go rather to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 10:6). He understood that evangelism truly begins within the church. We too need to realize that the need for discipling, or evangelism, within the church is every bit as great as the need to evangelize our communities. Only a small percentage of our members truly enjoys a close discipleship walk with God—a walk of total commitment and "seeking first the kingdom of God." Only as they gain a vibrant walk with God do they have something to share. Too often we try to compel members to go out and witness about someone they don't even really know. We must

begin with helping our members become disciples of Christ. Then He can reach others through them, for true discipleship means sharing what we have received with others.

Our primary role as leaders in the Christian church is one of spiritual formation, on both a corporate and an individual level: and that, simply put, is the art of making disciples. Wherever we may be in church leadership, we share the gospel commission to make disciples. We each lead others who want to be disciples—who want to grow into the passionate relationship described in the first three principles. If we fail to keep active in this process of discipling others, we will begin to die spiritually. We can grow only to the degree that we share Christ with others. This is as true for an administrator as it is for a pastor or member, and public preaching alone does not satisfy this basic need.

The commission to make disciples means more than merely gaining intellectual converts to an abstract set of cognitive truths. Often we limit our evangelism to doctrinal presentations alone. We can make disciples best by reversing the first three principles. We start by making Jesus real and lifting Him up—integrating Him as Lord into every area in our daily lives:

“We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realize His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.”⁸

Then as He draws others to Him, we teach them to walk or “tarry” with Him until He becomes their consuming passion. Once they have fallen in love with the Master, doctrinal and lifestyle presentations become part of the overall discipling of people already submitted to Christ’s Lordship.

Working with committees

We can make the spiritual growth of the church a supreme priority, recognizing that evangelistic growth can only truly take place in the context of spiritual growth. Working with committees provides opportunities to nurture corporate spirituality. To do so, we need to bring a spiritual dimension to the committees we chair.

Heeding this counsel, we can make spiritual renewal and revival a personal issue for each member of a committee. We can choose committee members more for their spiritual maturity than for their political clout or financial potential. We can challenge each committee member to recognize his or her responsibility to grow spiritually in order to be a more effective member. This can be done through modeling spiritual priorities, committee spiritual retreats, personal challenges, and the integration of these principles into committee life and function. We must give more than mere lip service to spiritual priorities.

We can make committee devotional times significant and meaningful. Prayer can become more than a token exercise in our committee meetings—asking God to bless our decisions. Instead, we can allow prayer to become such a significant part of our corporate activities that it helps bring the group together to God, seeking His guidance in making decisions. We can explore different ways of giving each committee member the opportunity to pray. That prayer experience can focus on lifting each other up in prayer, praying for divine guidance in specific agenda items, and/or praying for specific requests or concerns. Two hours in focus on God’s Word and vital prayer time before entering the business of a conference committee might transform our committees and decisions. Where this has been tried, it has proven to actually save time lost in needless discussion and bickering.

Some conferences are finding strength and renewal simply through fostering a systematic corporate prayer life through daily worships and small prayer groups. Meeting together to pray can be an important step in resolving many conflicts and becoming open to change and the Holy Spirit’s work.

If we are going to make revival and spirituality a corporate priority, we must keep it ever in our corporate attention. We can make spiritual renewal and revival a regular agenda item for planning, strategizing, or reviewing. Business as usual is not enough. Let’s make spiritual growth an intentional and integral part of our corporate life.

Some of the more important tools for spiritual formation, personally and corporately, are: authentic prayer; study and memorization of the Word of God; meditation on God and His Word; and sharing with others. We can foster and facilitate

spiritual growth as we use these tools to increase our openness to the vision and presence of God. They will also help us integrate the gospel and Lordship of Jesus Christ into our daily lives.

“We cannot have a weak faith now; we cannot be safe in a listless, indolent, slothful attitude. Every jot of ability is to be used, and sharp, calm, deep thinking is to be done. The wisdom of any human agent is not sufficient for the planning and devising in this time. Spread every plan before God with fasting, [and] with the humbling of the soul before the Lord Jesus, and commit thy ways unto the Lord. The sure promise is, He will direct thy paths. He is infinite in resources.”⁹

“It is in the order of God that those who bear responsibilities should often meet together to counsel with one another and to pray earnestly for that wisdom which He alone can impart. Unitedly make known your troubles to God. Talk less; much precious time is lost in talk that brings no light. Let brethren unite in fasting and prayer for the wisdom that God has promised to supply liberally.”¹⁰

Let’s lead for revival

Ultimately, our leadership can be an extension of Christ’s ministry and leadership—and so it must be if we are to break out of the shackles that bind His church. Only the empowering presence of Christ and His Spirit can solve our problems and transform us as a people. We can base our leadership on the personal experience of God’s transforming grace and the enabling power and presence of His Spirit. We can unreservedly accept others and lift them closer to Jesus Christ. We can be more interested in leading people to become men and women of God than in making them do all the right things. We can understand that true obedience and the finest performance will always be the results of a redemptive experience with Jesus Christ. We can also recognize our role in leading the way to revival, working with people where they are without resorting to sinful methods. We can be so identified with Jesus Christ as to confront others with the presence, power, and vision of the risen Lord.

Christ has called us to His ministry. He is well able to use us in His will. He challenges us to lift people’s eyes higher—to the foot of the cross. In the presence of Jesus we find our greatest ability to

(Continued on page 29)

Evangelism

Michael Green

What exactly is evangelism? How long does it take? When is it accomplished? What kind of results should be expected?



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Evangelism does not enjoy good press. It literally means the sharing of good news, but for most people there is little good news about it.

It conjures up images of strident, perspiring preachers, of smooth-talking televangelists, or of strange characters at street corners urging passersby to repent and meet their God.

In a word, evangelism seems something no self-respecting person would want to be involved in. It has overtones of manipulation. In a permissive age it smacks of wanting to change the way another person is. And that is an insult. It is unacceptable.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that in many mainline churches evangelism is in eclipse. It belongs to the *demimonde*. It is what unbalanced enthusiasts, with no theology about them, get up to. It is emphatically not respectable. A balanced, thoughtful church should have nothing to do with it. And yet those same churches have second thoughts when they see bare pews where once there were people in their services. Sometimes they wonder afresh about evangelism when they reflect on the godlessness, materialism, and selfishness that are becoming more and more rampant throughout society. And if their vision stretches to the fast-growing churches of, for example, East Africa, they may say, as David Jenkins, the bishop of Durham, said to David Gitari, the bishop of Mount Kenya East, after the 1988 Lambeth Conference, "I need to learn from you."

I find it very significant that no church has taken evangelism more seriously in the last decade than the Roman Catholic church, and that the most institutional and respectable of all denominations!

Perhaps the rest of us ought to take a leaf from their book.

What springs to mind, I wonder, when the word *evangelism* is used? Do you think of a preacher, a Billy Graham, coming to take your town by storm? Do you think of a program, carefully designed to reach all parts of your local community? Or do you think, perhaps, of two people (both looking a shade uncomfortable) locked in earnest conversation over open Bibles? And how do you feel when major world churches, including the Roman Catholic and the Anglican, designate the last 10 years of this century as a decade of evangelism?

Maybe it would be a help, initially, if we were to clear our minds of some of the misconceptions that commonly cloud them when the subject of evangelism is under consideration. Let us at least recognize what evangelism is not.

What evangelism is not

Evangelism is *not the same as filling pews*. Among pastors who are normally suspicious of this kind of thing, it springs to short-lived popularity only when the numbers and the finances of their church sink low. But the motivation of such "evangelism" is suspect, and the results are not likely to be lasting.

Evangelism is not what is euphemistically called in Canada "sheep-shuffling." A great deal that passes for evangelism in fast-growing churches is nothing more than transfer growth from some other section of the fractured church of God. And that serves nothing but the self-esteem of the minister of the new church.

Evangelism is *not an occasional raid by a visiting celebrity*. If that happens, many of the congregation will vote against it with their feet, will keep their heads down while it happens, and will emerge at the end when the coast is clear. Such an

invasion is more likely to polarize the church membership than to unite it in mission. Visitors can, of course, do much to mobilize and encourage evangelism, but not if they are regarded as the experts who have all the answers and are going to "do evangelism" for the local church.

Evangelism is *not a matter of impassioned and repeated calls for decision*. If such challenges are repetitive, they become powerless. If they do not rest on clear teaching, they are shallow. I recall seeing a poster on a wall, "Jesus Is the Answer," to which someone had not unreasonably appended a graffito, "But What Is the Question?" The simplistic repetition of clichés or the issuance of biblical challenges unsupported by biblical teaching and unrelated to contemporary needs is not evangelism, however orthodox it may sound.

Evangelism is *not a system*. Too often it is presented as a package involving three clear points, four spiritual laws, or five things God wants you to know. I have no quarrel with such aids to the memory of those who are communicating the good news. The danger arises when the gospel is shrunk to the dimensions of such limiting and selective formulae. In the name of simplicity the door is opened to misconception, shallowness, and even heresy.

Evangelism is *not an activity proper to ministers alone*, nor is it only a matter of preaching. But we often think it is. If evangelism is to happen at all, it should, we feel, happen in the church building on Sunday, and it should be done by the minister. It is healthy to recall that in the days of the greatest advance of the church they had no special building and no clearly defined ministers. It was seen to be the calling of all Christians, and it was realized that the good news could be communicated in a variety of ways—and not necessarily, or even primarily, in church.

Evangelism is *not proclamation alone or presence alone*. During the twentieth century, both in Europe and in the United States, a disastrous chasm has widened between those who think of evangelism in terms of proclamation and those who, tired of the hypocrisy and exaggeration encountered in a good deal of such preaching, maintain that it is our presence as Christians in the midst of a hurting world that counts, not our words. A very similar dichotomy separates those who think in terms of a spiritual gospel or a social gospel. In each case, the distinction is

either illusory or mischievous. To separate word from action is to put aside two things that God has joined together. To separate the spiritual from the social is to be blind to the fact that they are the outside and the inside of the same thing. As ever for Christians, Jesus is the supreme example. His social concern and His spiritual concern went hand in hand. His presence embodying the kingdom of God was matched by His words explaining the kingdom. The two are not opposed to each other; they are complementary. It is encouraging that "liberal" and "conservative" Christians are not realizing as much and are beginning to act in concert on this matter.

Evangelism is *not individualistic*. In the fragmentation of Western culture it often comes over that way. But so often in the history of Christian expansion, evangelism has been a societal thing; whole villages, towns, and communities of various sorts have, to a greater or lesser extent, been brought over into the faith together. This is in the past how whole countries have been won: currently, how whole tribes are being brought into the faith, be it the Aucas in Latin America or the Sawi in Indonesia. If secularized Europeans, strong in the brotherly solidarities of their trade unions, are to be brought to Christianity, it will be necessary for the church to engage with this corporate aspect of evangelism. For evangelism cannot and must not merely be "plucking brands from the burning," but changing the direction of society toward the living God instead of away from Him.

Evangelism is *not an optional extra for those who like that sort of thing*. It is a major part of the obedience of the whole church at the command of its Lord. He told us to go into all the world and make disciples. It is hard to see how we can realistically acknowledge Him as Lord if we take no notice of what He tells us to do. The church, Peter reminds us, exists not least to "declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9, 10).^{*} Such good news is for sharing, and any church worthy of the name must ensure that it happens.

It is sad but true that so much that passes for evangelism is nothing of the sort.

Evangelism is often too *institutionalized* and can be seen, not inaccurately, as

the church out to gain new recruits.

Evangelism is often too *atomized*, with the spiritual side cut off from the rest of life. Emphasis on the response of the spirit to Christ is not matched by care for the physical and moral well-being of the whole person.

Evangelism is often too *fossilized*: the package in which the good news is wrapped becomes mistakenly identified with the good news itself, and the result is culture-bound Christianity. This has happened all too obviously in the export of European trappings and denominations, along with the good news itself, to Africa and Asia.

Evangelism is, moreover, far too *clericalized*. Evangelism is generally seen as the preserve of the clergy. If a person is contemplating ordination, folk say: "Oh, so you are going into the church, are you?" This virtual identification in many minds of the church with its ministers is one of the most serious distortions of Christianity hampering the spread of the gospel in our generation.

In some circles evangelism has become too *secularized*. As a reaction against simplistic, pietistic calls to repentance, many of the more radical Christians of our day have identified evangelism with taking the part of the poor and oppressed. That identification is utterly right and praiseworthy. But when it extends to supplying them with arms and embracing terrorist liberation movements, the case is much less clear. And when such action is described as evangelism, we have moved a long way from the Jesus who refused to take the sword and yet was crucified upon a freedom fighter's gibbet.

At the other extreme, and more commonly, it is easy to see a Christianity that is "*pasteurized*." Like milk, it is treated and bottled before being served out. You get an evangelism that is not definite, annoys nobody, challenges nobody, transforms nobody. An evangelism that is not about radical change, but a gradual osmosis into the ecclesiastical system. That is a very far cry from Jesus, the most extreme radical the world has ever seen, who was always challenging men and women to leave the cherished areas of their selfish lives and come, follow Him. The church has often domesticated Jesus and emasculated the good news.

These are all expressions of impoverished evangelism. We need to get back to the breadth of the good news as Jesus

Evangelism is simply telling a fellow searcher where he can get bread.

Himself proclaimed it to an astonished home synagogue in Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). Jesus shut the scroll of Isaiah 61 from which He had been reading this passage and amazed His hearers by informing them "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (verse 21). This was no ordinary good news and no ordinary messenger. It was nothing less than God's long-awaited salvation, proclaimed by the Messiah Himself. God had indeed come to the rescue of a world in need. No wonder, then, that it became known in short as to *euangelion*, the good news.

The passage in Isaiah was highly significant. It relates to the period after the Babylonian exile; and the messenger, anointed with God's own Spirit, announces God's signal victory, His kingly rule. It betokens nothing less than the dawn of a new age, and one from which the heathen are not excluded. The days of salvation have arrived. The people of God are ready and waiting for Him like a bride for her husband, their unworthiness covered by a robe of righteousness, their relationship with their God established by an everlasting covenant. These are days of liberation, days of healing, days of great good news, which is meant to spread like wildfire. God is reaching out from a rebuilt Jerusalem to make His ways known to the Gentiles. All that, and more, is contained in the chapter of Isaiah from which Jesus read this manifesto at the inauguration of His good news for the world. Evangelism is a many-splendored thing.

What is evangelism?

There are three definitions of evangelism I have found helpful.

The first is one word: *overflow*. It gives the right nuance, of someone who is so full of joy about Jesus Christ that it overflows as surely as a bathtub that is filled to overflowing with water. It is a natural thing. It is a very obvious thing. Accordingly, it has the quality that so much evangelism lacks, spontaneity. Incidentally, "overflow" is a very passable translation of a Greek word that occurs a good deal in the New Testament to describe the liberated confidence of the Christian, *plerophoria*. Paul reminds the Thessalonians that "our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and [in much *plerophoria*]," much confident overflow (1 Thess. 1:5).

The second definition is a phrase attributed to C. H. Spurgeon, the famous nineteenth-century British preacher and evangelist. Evangelism, he maintained, "is one beggar telling another beggar where to get bread." I like that definition. It draws attention both to the *needs of the recipient* and to the *generosity of the giver*: God will not give us a stone when we ask Him for bread. I like the equality it underscores. There is no way that an evangelist is any better or on any higher ground than the person to whom he is talking. The ground is level around the cross of Christ. The only difference between the two hungry beggars is that one has been fed and knows where food is always available. There is no great mystique about it. Evangelism is simply telling a fellow searcher where he can get bread. But there is another touch that is important in this definition. It reminds us that we cannot bring this good news to others unless we personally have come to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8).

But perhaps the most all-embracing definition of evangelism, and one that has won the most wide-reaching acceptance, belongs to the English archbishop William Temple. It comes at the outset of the report entitled *Towards the Conversion of England*, and it runs as follows: "*To evangelize is to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Saviour, and serve him as their King in the fellowship of his church.*" If we accept that definition, it says some very important things

about evangelism.

First, evangelism is *not the same as mission*. Mission is one half of the reason for the church's existence; worship is the other. In these two ways we are called to display what it means to be "a colony of heaven." But the mission of the church is, of course, much broader than evangelism. It embodies the total impact of the church on the world: its influence; its involvement with the social, political, and moral life of the community and nation where it is placed; its succor of bleeding humanity in every way possible. This mission includes evangelism. The greatest thing we can do for people is to bring them face-to-face with the Christ who died for them. But it is clear that evangelism is one aspect, and one only, of the total mission of the church.

Second, evangelism is *good news about Jesus*. It is not advancing the claims of a church, of a nation, of an ideology, but of Jesus Himself. As Pope Paul VI put it, "There is no true evangelism if the name, the teaching, the promises, the life, the death, the resurrection, the kingdom, and the mystery of Jesus Christ the Son of God are not proclaimed." At the time of the 1960 Olympics a magazine carried an amazing cartoon showing the celebrated runner from Marathon arriving in Athens and falling exhausted on the ground while he mumbles, with a blank look on his face, "I have forgotten the message." Alas, that often seems to be the case with the contemporary church. Unless Jesus Himself, who *became* the gospel through His death and resurrection, is the essence of our message, whatever we are doing is not evangelism.

Third, evangelism is *centered in God the Father*. Jesus Christ shares God's nature and ours. He is a reliable indicator of what God is like. But He does not exhaust the Godhead. He said, "The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). Accordingly, any evangelism that is so Jesus-oriented that it leaves us with a forgotten Father is less than fully Christian. The Jesus movement of the 1960s, for all its strengths, had a notable weakness in this area. It was a Jesus religion. But the religion of the New Testament is firmly trinitarian. It brings us to the source of the Godhead, the Father Himself, through the agency of the Son, and at the instigation of the Holy Spirit.

And that is the fourth characteristic of evangelism, as defined by William Temple. It is something that depends

entirely for its effectiveness on the *work of the Holy Spirit*. We human beings are quite unable to draw others to Christ. It is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to convict people of their need of Christ, to make Him real to them, to bring them to confess that He is Lord, to baptize them into Christ's body, the church, and to assure them that they belong. All this is the Spirit's work, not ours. That must never be forgotten. We can speak and challenge, urge and encourage, as we will, but we are totally unable to bring anyone "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God" (Acts 26:18). That is God's sovereign work alone.

Fifth, evangelism means *incorporation into the church*, the body of Christ. And here we encounter one of the very worrying features of so much televangelism. Viewers are invited to put their hands on the TV set, to open their lives to Christ, and so forth; but only a tiny fraction of those who make some profession of faith in this setting ever come into the family of the church. Yet evangelism in the New Testament is shamelessly corporate. You may come to Christ on your own, but as soon as you do, you find yourself among a whole family of brothers and sisters. It has been well said that a Christianity that does not begin with the individual does not begin: but a Christianity that ends with the individual ends. This is something that Protestant Christians have to learn from their Catholic brethren. As Pope Paul VI expressed it:

"Evangelization is for no one an individual and isolated act. It is one that is deeply ecclesial. When the most obscure preacher in the most distant land preaches the gospel, gathers his little community together or administers a sacrament, even alone, he is carrying out an ecclesial act, and his action is certainly attached to the evangelizing activity of the whole church."

Sixth, our definition makes it very clear that *evangelism challenges decision*. It is not enough for people to hear the preaching of the gospel and to be moved by the quality of Christian lives among them. They have to decide whether or not to bow the knee to Jesus as their king. The decision may be slow or sudden; that is not the point. It may be implicit if the person has grown up and been nourished from early years in a believing home and community, or it may be very explicit. In either case it has

to be made. It does not matter whether or not I can recall the day of my surrender. What matters is whether or not I am in that relationship of commitment and obedience to Him now. The teaching of Jesus and of the apostles, the evangelistic preaching of Christians down the centuries, has always had this element of challenge. There are two ways a man may travel. There are two foundations that a life may rest on. There are two states, darkness and light, that we may inhabit. Two, and not more. There is a choice that we cannot evade. Not to decide is, in fact, to decide. And that decision carries immensely important and far-reaching implications. Shall we or shall we not come to put our trust in God through Him? Shall we or shall we not accept Him as our Saviour? We must choose.

Finally, the definition that Temple adopted makes the important point that *true evangelism issues in discipleship*. It is not simply a matter of proclaiming good news, or of eliciting decisions for Christ, getting hands raised, or a cry of commitment made. The goal in evangelism is nothing less than fulfilling the Great Commission and making disciples

of Jesus Christ. A disciple is a learner. And evangelism that is truly evangelism issues in a life that is changed from going my way to going Christ's way. There will be many a fall, of course, but the direction is what matters. And the direction of the Christian is to be headed Christ's way and to seek to serve Him as our King in the fellowship of brother and sister Christians in the church. The evangelist has no business to be looking simply for decisions, important though the element of decision undoubtably is. He is out for disciples—and not for himself, his church, or his organization; he is out for disciples of Jesus Christ.

Such—and nothing less—is evangelism. And the earliest Christians were always at it: in the shops and the streets, in the laundries and on the seashore. In many parts of the world, especially Africa, Asia, and Latin America, they still are. But in much of Europe and North America we hang back from forthright, warm, enthusiastic evangelism. Why is that? ■

* Texts in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

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If I could just remember where I saw it!
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Evangelism: getting the church ready

Ron Halvorsen

Evangelism is team work uniting the local church, the pastor, and the evangelist.



Ron Halvorsen is director of church growth for the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and an evangelist.

Jesus had but one mission on earth, and that mission was to seek and to save the lost. He found Zacchaeus on a sycamore tree, went home with him to lunch, and won him to salvation. He saved him in the face of criticism from the people and defended His action by saying, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). It was Christ's purpose to use His disciples to win the world to Himself.

Paul, the warrior of the cross about to suffer martyrdom, counseled young Timothy and all the other young Timothys to follow: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. . . . But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:1, 5).

When Hannibal died, the Carthaginians placed an inscription on his tomb: "He was very much needed in battle." Today we must write those words on the tablets of our hearts. You and I as Christian ministers are very much needed in battle.

Evangelism a passion

Evangelism must be a passion before it can become a program. It was the passion of Moses: "Oh, this people have sinned. . . . Yet now, if thou wilt forgive

their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Ex. 32:31, 32). It was the passion of Jesus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children" (Matt. 23:37). It was the passion of Paul: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). It was the passion of John Knox: "Give me Scotland lest I die." It was the passion of David Brainerd, who cried out for the North American Indians while coughing up blood in the snow.

Where such passion exists, evangelism is not merely an option for the minister or for the church. It is a necessity—a costly necessity.

There has always been a cost. Remember the story of the four friends of the paralytic—how they tried to reach Jesus by tearing up the roof to get to Him? Someone had to pay for the roof; it is a costly business.

When we talk about the primacy of evangelism as a passion and not a program, we come naturally to Jesus' Magna Charta of evangelism: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). The declaration underscores three things concerning the primacy of evangelism: it is historical, biblical, and practical.

Historical

Jesus at the crib. New Testament evangelism began at the crib—not with a committee meeting or in a church. It

began in a shepherds' field, not in a cathedral. It began with the cry of a cherub, not with the cry of a cleric. Angels proclaimed His birth—a crusade in the night—with music, singing, proclamation, and announcement. Good news in a dark night of Roman humanism, Jewish legalism, and zealots' fanaticism. God brought the evangelistic word from a crib.

Jesus as a child. The history of New Testament evangelism continues in the voice of the child, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). Our Lord knew the direction He must go in the work that His Father had given Him to do.

A Michigan businessman loved to hunt. The only problem was that he always got lost. At his birthday party the staff decided to get him a pocket compass to take with him. But the next time he went hunting, he got lost again. When asked why he didn't use the compass, he said, "It couldn't be trusted. When I headed out for the north, the needle kept shaking and shifting and pointing to the southeast."

It's easy for ministers and churches to get lost in the perplexities of life, to confront situations again and again in which we don't know which way to go in evangelism. The Word can be a compass to keep us moving in the right direction. We are counseled that "evangelistic work, opening the Scriptures to others, warning men and women of what is coming upon the world, is to occupy more and more of the time of God's servants."¹

Jesus as a man. All His life Jesus knew why He came into this world. One thing occupied His mind—the saving of the world. Evangelism was in the miracles He performed, in the words He spoke, in the love He shared. He revealed keen interest in men and women, and desired their salvation. His every waking moment was filled with activity. The saving of souls was His primary task.

Jesus on the cross. Even on the cross He took an evangelistic interest in a thief and offered him salvation. He presented the good news of salvation as He hung there.

The early church. First there were 120 believers, then 3,000, then 5,000, then members were added to the church daily. The church multiplied until it became a myriad. Everywhere the evangelistic voice was heard. The growth of the early church resulted from the primacy of evangelism. Within 10 years of Christ's death

the gospel reached Alexandria and Antioch, the greatest cities in Africa and Asia Minor. It may have even reached Rome.

Biblical

Verbs meaning "evangelize" are used 52 times in the New Testament, including 25 times by Luke and 21 times by Paul. "Evangelize" means to announce or proclaim or bring good news. The Septuagint sometimes uses these words to speak of a runner coming with news of victory. In the Psalms they are used twice to proclaim God's faithfulness and salvation.

In the context of Jesus' Magna Charta of evangelism (Luke 4:18, 19), to evangelize is to preach, proclaim, and set at liberty. Announcement and action cannot be separated. Evangelism is not just theology; it is a deed. It is bringing good news. It is powerful preaching, stilling the storm, casting out demons, raising the dead, and exhibiting powerful signs and wonders. It is proclamation as well as demonstration.

Practical

Evangelism works. After 130 crusades and over 5,000 souls won—I can testify that it works! It changes lives. It radically transforms the lives of people—gang members, drug addicts, prostitutes, drunkards, businesspeople, and professionals.

Evangelism is practical. Its message speaks of God's love, grace, and salvation. When the evangelist preaches Jesus Christ, His preexistence, the virgin birth, the perfect life, the perfect death, the perfect resurrection, and the perfect coming, he offers a message of hope.

Methodology

Although evangelists do much of the training of members for the work ahead—and most of the preaching, teaching, and getting decisions—pastors are the key to the coordination and implementation of an evangelistic program. They know the members and their talents. They perceive the needs and problems of the community. They organize the committees. Both before and after the crusade, they get evangelism going and keep it going.

In the 130 crusades I have held through the years, I have never known of a successful meeting without a team effort. When the pastor or pastors concerned do not get involved fully with the crusade, the inevitable result is fewer converts. God always blesses in spite of us, but

much more could be accomplished with the full cooperation of the pastors. "One man usually performs the labor which should be shared by two; for the work of the evangelist is necessarily combined with that of the pastor, bringing a double burden upon the worker in the field."²

The following is an outline of how the pastor and the evangelist must plan the strategy for successful evangelism.

I. Meet with board members (one year in advance).

- A. Present and discuss plans, goals, and expectations of the members.
- B. Commit members on the plan.
- C. Decide on location, dates, and time for the crusade.

II. Formulate committees.

- A. Finance (one year prior to crusade).
 1. Formulate budget.
 2. Set up bank account.
 3. Collect and deposit funds and offerings.
 4. Prepare weekly financial report.
 5. Control spending.
 6. Monitor accounts payable and accounts receivable.
 7. Submit final statement to conference.
- B. Public relations (six months prior to crusade).
 1. List zip code areas for mailing of brochures.
 2. Place announcements in bulletins of all churches involved.
 3. Arrange with post offices to schedule mailing.
 4. Provide advertising for the rally day: posters and flyers.
 5. Produce drug mobile program promotion, including radio/television interviews.
- C. Platform (three to four months prior to crusade).
 1. Prepare platform decorations.
 2. Assign welcome, announcements, and prayer.
 3. Promote punctuality and smooth flow of the program.
 4. Choose platform participants.
- D. Public address.
 1. Set up system.
 2. Record sermons.

3. Provide for control and care of sound equipment.
 4. Check on number and condition of microphones each night prior to meeting.
- E. Transportation.
1. Organize the routes.
 2. Secure bus/van drivers.
 3. Prepare schedules and distribute them to various churches.
- F. Nursery.
1. Organize nightly programs.
 2. Secure personnel.
 3. Purchase materials needed for programs.
 4. Train personnel in diction, behavior, and attitude.
- G. Greeters and hosts/hostesses.
1. Prepare materials for hand-outs.
 2. Prepare for distribution and collection of nightly coupon booklets.
 3. Greet people.
 4. Prepare Bible distribution.
- H. Prayer warrior team.
1. Set prayer breakfast.
 2. Prepare monthly prayer letter.

3. Select church coordinators.
 4. Organize prayer bands during crusade.
 5. Distribute prayer warrior manuals.
 6. Advertise prayer warrior program.
 7. Distribute praying-hand pins.
- I. Ushers.
1. Usher people to seats.
 2. Help with crowd control.
 3. Collect offerings.
 4. Distribute special materials.
- J. Interest and visitation.
1. Collect names of interests and missing members from church pastors.
 2. Organize typists for entering names into the computer.
 3. Distribute printouts of interests at each workers' meeting during crusade.
 4. Organize visiting teams.
 5. Register decisions into computer data base.

III. Countdown program.

A. Rally.

1. Unifies the church, spiritualizes the people, and motivates the membership to invite friends and to plan to attend the crusade.
 2. To include evangelistic singing, preaching, video interviews of the community, and video highlights of the previous crusade.
- B. Prayer breakfast.
1. Organize on Sunday morning of the rally weekend.
 2. Invite members to become prayer warriors.
 3. Give participants a prayer syllabus, praying hands pin, and prayer request cards.
- C. Training.
1. Making Friends Seminar: See Mark Finley's video on making bridges into the community.
 2. Practical Prayer Seminar: teaches members the fundamental principles of praying effectively for the salvation of souls.
 - a. Praying in the context of the will of God.

Refocusing our priorities

"Priority" is a stimulating word. It implies urgency. It sounds a trumpet. It pinpoints a matter of prime importance and elevates it above lesser things.

Clearly, both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy rate evangelism as the top priority for our church. As Charles Bradford put it: "Evangelism is our *raison d'être*. When it is no longer useful and necessary, then the

church's role is complete and Jesus will remember His own declaration in Matthew 24:14. The end will come."

Ellen White suggests that if soul winning is not a priority with us, we are in an unsaved condition. O to drive that point home when gifted and called pastors curl up in their little cocoons of complacency and comfort themselves that they are being prudent and effective by waiting for the evangelistic team to come to town. Well, we don't have that many teams, and more than 350,000 people are born every day on the wrong side of salvation. The mandate to evangelize is urgent, and the work is too enormous to wait!

Let us not be overwhelmed, but let us get going. Every one of us can win souls. If the gift of evangelism is not yours in a special way and you think that excludes

you from soul winning, then hear Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5). Paul was saying: "You have the Holy Spirit! Don't be timid and fearful. Do the work! Don't worry if the results do not appear as bountiful or that you seem less flamboyant. Do the work of an evangelist."

Better to baptize 20 than none. This soul-winning principle must be our priority, pursued with *passion*.

The word "priority" speaks to me in another way, too. I am amazed how easily some projects are funded that appear to offer little for finishing the Lord's work. These may be good things to do, but mainly from a public relations or social perspective. Budgets of secondary importance are easily voted or raised, while evangelism goes begging. This hurts the church not only spiritually but financially.



C. D. Brooks is a general field secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and speaker/director of the Breath of Life telecast.

- b. Types of prayer.
- c. Holy Spirit's involvement in prayer.
- d. Prayer of thanksgiving.
- e. Prayer as a tool to decision getting.
- 3. Telephone ministry.
 - a. Training members.
 - b. Organizing telephone use to distribute literature and generate interest in prophecy.
 - c. Training to make the final call back and to distribute reserve tickets for opening night.
- 4. Small groups serendipity training.
 - a. All participating churches should organize these friendship study groups.
 - b. All converts are encouraged to belong to one of these groups.
 - c. Group leaders are given a one-night-a-week, six-week training program on small group ministry.
- 5. Witness.

- a. Teaching members to share Jesus in a non-threatening way with others.
- b. Training on giving Bible studies.
- c. Sharing simple testimonies.

Summary

Evangelism must be a priority in pastoral ministry because it is historical, biblical, and practical. "If every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan has stolen a march upon us."³ The challenge for leadership today is to create caring teams of pastors and evangelists cooperating together in the proclamation of the gospel. It's high time to put evangelism back in its proper perspective. ■

¹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 170.

² ———, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 4, p. 260.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 29.

After one campaign we started a new church. In one fiscal year that fledgling congregation replaced every dime appropriated from three sources: the General Conference, the union, and the local conference. Every year since, that growing church has returned hundreds of thousands of dollars in tithes and offerings while purchasing beautiful properties for a church home, nursery school, recreation, etc. Above all, that church became a living witness in a new community to extend Christ's boundaries in our needy world. That's a better investment than we generally make in the corporate world.

Finally, evangelism is not just for those outside our church. The "cycle of truth" presented in a Spirit-led campaign is of invaluable worth in fostering confidence, faith, and focus for those who are already members. I see it again and again, year after year. In fact, the work of evangelism is a grand elixir for all of the church's troubles. It gets members praying, it dissipates trifling theological contentions, it stimulates a spirit of sacrifice, it raises Ingathering, building funds, etc.

Above all it brings peace among the saints.

On a personal level, evangelism develops preaching and reasoning skills, builds confidence in our calling and ministry, and in the destiny of the remnant church. Ministers learn to be more spiritual and more dependent on Christ. Repeating our powerful truths tends to cleanse the thoughts of worldly obsessions, strengthens our prayers, and affirms our faith.

Once a rabbi and I had a conversation in a park. He and I enjoyed ourselves, though we differed in many areas. Before we parted, he remarked, "Pastor, one of the differences between your church and my synagogue is that our members do not evangelize. We do not proselytize anyone for our faith." I shall never forget how this defined for me the current problem in his faith. Could it be our problem too?

May the mercy of God forgive and revive a church that votes No to evangelism. Lord, help us understand the meaning of "priority."

Primary Task

Without evangelism, no one becomes a committed Christian, and without evangelism, no one continues to grow into a vital Christian maturity. If this task is not done, the Christian community cannot exist; if it is not done continuously in the Christian community, it may soon degenerate into a formal religious institution.

The life and work of the church depends upon the primacy of the apostolic mandate. The outsider has no ordinary way of knowing the gospel except he be brought the message. Discipleship is not self-generated. And even in the life of the Christian congregation, it is impossible to separate the apostolic mandate from the various ministries of the church whether education, pastoral care, worship, or social service and action. The gospel of Jesus Christ must be the constant motivation for all the ministries of the church, or they cease to be infused with the dynamic of commitment and re-commitment. Evangelism is not the only ministry of the local congregation but it does come first if it is to exist at all; and it must remain first if it is to keep its sense of commitment alive. This does not mean that every congregation will be seeking to convert its people over and over again! That is a distortion of the Christian enterprise and makes it into a continuous recruiting station without reference to education and training for the issues of the committed life.

The late Professor Karl Heim of Tuebingen once said that when the apostolic dynamic was lessened in the church, it was like throwing the master switch of a great factory that stopped the entire machine. Without the apostolic dynamic, a congregation may be a religious establishment and even a successful institution, but it has lost its soul.

—"Rethinking the Great Commission in an Age of Revolution," by Elmer George Homrighausen from the book *Issue One: Evangelism*, edited by Rueben P. Job and Harold K. Bales, pages 23, 24.

Evangelism through the local church: self-study course

Have you given up doing evangelism in your local church? Or have you delegated evangelism to a “visiting celebrity”? Perhaps you have thought of evangelism as just an “optional extra”? Then the 12-article series “Evangelism Through the Local Church,” which begins with this issue, is just for you. If this course has any merit, it may well derive from a combination of theory and practice, of studying the Christian faith in some depth, and of sharing it with some consideration. Michael Green brings this word of encouragement: “Whenever Christianity has been at its most healthy, evangelism has stemmed from the local church and has had a noticeable impact on the surrounding area” (*Evangelism Through the Local Church*, p. xiii).

What learning outcomes can I expect?

- Acquire a new attitude about my ability to do evangelism in the setting of my local church.
- Develop an action plan for evangelism involving seminars, small groups and friendship.
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- Outline a method that will reduce drop-outs.

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Types of Evangelism

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8. Seminar evangelism
9. Friendship evangelism
10. Entering the unentered
11. Evangelism through worship

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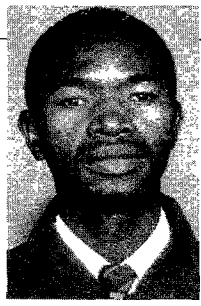
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Teaching Christian values to children

Boyd Doctor Shawa

Parental responsibility is not so much to shape children as it is to help them shape themselves.



Boyd Doctor Shawa is the pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Chipata, Zambia.

The power of example is a priceless teaching tool.

Unless we provide our children responsible Christian role models, how can we expect them to acquire and apply divine values? Unfortunately, this is often taken to mean that providing a strong model is all that is needed, and that somehow by some sort of osmosis our children will soak up values and learn to apply them in their own lives.

Values can be taught, however. I suggest five techniques that have proven helpful in my family ministry.

1. Work creatively with children's readiness

Throughout the New Testament Jesus demonstrates His appreciation for individual readiness. The parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) illustrates the difference in responses of the five who were mature and ready and the five who were neither ready nor receptive. The parable of the sowers (Matt. 13:1-23) speaks about readiness of the soil as necessary for fruit bearing. Expressions such as "if any man have ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:23) are common pre-ludes to the Saviour's teachings.

How do we detect the principle of readiness at work in children? Watch for the obvious signs. Are your children curious? Do they keep at you with questions? Never put off their questions, re-

gardless of how irrelevant or unimportant they may seem to be. Be prepared to be interrupted. To the youngster, a simple why may be the most important question. It shows the child's readiness to learn—*now*.

Encourage readiness by providing creative situations. "Because I say so" is not the way. Spend time with children—quality time. In our home, we set aside one evening a week as special family time. It is sacrosanct for all of us. TV is out. Visiting or shopping that evening is out. We all know it is time set apart to be together as a family. We may cook a favorite dish together, sit around and sing, play games, pop corn, build a bird-house, plan a trip, or leaf through the family scrapbooks. The main thing is we are together as a family with no distractions.

Often during these special evenings we discuss each other's personal aspirations. We solve family difficulties as a group, not as a know-it-all father handing down decisions from on high. We hold family councils and work out the rules of the household. Children are much more ready to obey a rule if they helped set it.

2. Use value incidents

Value incidents help children identify values. You'll find such incidents in literature, history, music, pictures, cartoons, or in today's newspaper.

Suppose a politician endorses capital punishment, and your family hears that statement on TV. Use it to discuss the

death penalty, and lead children to identify values. Such a value incident may be useful for teenagers but too heavy for younger children. Select incidents appropriate to the age.

Bible stories make good value incidents. After reading a story or watching an episode, lead your children in an informal discussion. Ask and encourage questions: (1) What is the central point of the story? (2) Why did so-and-so do or say that in the story? (3) What do people in the story consider important to them? (4) If you were in a similar situation, what would you do and why?

A discussion such as this makes children appreciate what others consider important to them—that is, their values. With that as a setting, you can begin to talk about values you consider important for your children to acquire and cherish.

3. Teach from known to unknown

Most values are intangible principles, such as faith, repentance, love, obedience, humility, reverence, and modesty. Jesus taught such principles by using one of His favorite teaching methods. Educators call it *apperception*—the process of understanding something in terms of previous experiences. That is learning the unknown from the known.

How does this technique work? Begin with the experience of children and talk about things they already know. Then when you move to what you want them to know, they will understand.

For example, I was once trying without much success to explain salvation to our 5-year-old girl, Janet. It wasn't enough to say that salvation is being freed from sin. I wanted to explain the power of the gospel—what God does to forgive sins. How was I to do this? I decided to begin with something Janet knew.

Salvation, I told Janet, is like soap. Soap takes care of dirt. Likewise, salvation takes care of sin. Some people stay dirty because they either misuse or fail to use soap. I showed Janet a white handkerchief, clean and unsoiled. Beside it I placed a fresh bar of soap.

"What would happen if this handkerchief were dropped into a mud puddle?" I asked.

"It would get all dirty," Janet replied.

"But what if I washed it carefully with this soap?"

"Then it would be clean again."

"That's right," I continued. I used a tangible to illustrate an intangible. Janet

and I moved naturally to talk about the gospel truth of salvation, of what God does to cleanse us from all sin and make us clean again.

Other important religious principles can also be taught by the "is like" formula. Faith is one such. Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20).

So faith is a seed. By saying that, Jesus likened faith to something tangible. Now we can build pictures to understand faith. Once my children and I planted some maize seeds. We watched carefully as the seeds germinated and became young plants. Then we watered some plants and let others wither. That led to a discussion about growth—what helps, what hinders. Soon our children were better able to "see" what faith is like, what nurturing means, and how faith grows. Once they understood faith, they found it easier to adopt it as a personal value.

Of course, we must guard against being too literal or too technical. No comparison or "like unto" illustration will answer all questions. Repentance is no bar of soap. Nor is the kingdom of heaven a net. Nor were Pharisees whited sepulchres. Use your imagination.

4. Teach by interviewing

One of the intimate bonds my children and I share is my weekly "interview" with them. Every Saturday evening I spend some precious moments with each child in an actual interview situation. The children love it. These delightful one-to-one moments are, of course, in addition to many hours I spend with the children during the rest of the week.

These interviews offer an ideal time to teach values—provided, of course, you create the atmosphere. Let the children do most of the talking. Let them explore their own world. Let them question you and find out how you feel about issues important to them. Let them learn the value of self-discovery. Good communication must build interpersonal trust.

Be a facilitator of communication, not a cross-examiner. If you act like a cross-examiner, you cause the child to be defensive rather than open, to rationalize rather than explain. Good communication and trust thrive with an informal, open approach. The open approach asks: "Janet, how is your Bible reading go-

ing?" The closed approach would frame the same question from a position of authority: "Janet, have you studied the Scriptures every day this week?"

By their very nature, closed questions are restrictive and tend to shut the door to good rapport. The open question, on the other hand, lets Janet do the talking while I listen and observe. The open approach gives Janet the freedom to determine the nature and kind of information she wants to share. She understands that I respect her ability to carry on a meaningful, mature conversation. She reveals what she considers important. She gains confidence.

As a parent my interest in these interview sessions is not only to solicit information but also to teach values. I try to frame questions that are neutral in tone. I try not to influence the discussions. Yet at times the conversation may lead to a point where the child struggles with the worth of an idea or with measuring the goodness or badness of a particular behavior. In moments like these I gently guide the conversation and help the child to see clearly the issues involved and arrive at a self-discovered answer.

5. Teach through prayer

Family prayer is an ideal time to teach values. Here too set an example in prayer life. Let your children know, see, and hear that you pray for them by name. Express gratitude for each family member, for the love that is shared in the home, for the opportunity to work and earn, for the chance to attend school and learn, for the joy of building friendships and helping others, and for health and strength. Have a special prayer for a family member who is facing a personal challenge or a new situation or opportunity.

Teach your children to pray, to communicate with God. Emphasize the spontaneity and variety of prayer—just like conversation with friends. Make prayer sessions an opportunity for sharing and learning: to share experiences of the day, to build a sense of unity and purpose within the family, to talk of love, and to teach values.

As parents we are only stewards of a divine work. Our responsibility is not so much to shape children as it is to help them shape themselves. Teaching values is part of that responsibility. To forget to teach or to be too tired to teach or to elect not to teach is not an option open to Christian parents. ■



Unfinished business

James A. Cress

When I heard that 1993 had been designated the Year of the Pastor, my initial reaction ran along the lines of wondering if this was some new method to extract more work from the most overextended group of professionals that I know anywhere. Actually, I was too busy to give it more than cursory notice as I got on with unfinished business.

As pastor of a large metropolitan congregation, wondering if I could make it through the weekend, the idea of a whole year devoted to celebrating my hectic schedule and demanding vocation seemed incongruous. My reactions ranged from "I'm glad somebody noticed that pastors are still out there" to skepticism regarding the motives of those who had dreamed up this scheme.

Now that my assignment has changed, I will lend all my energies to see that pastors are affirmed and strengthened, not just during the Year of the Pastor, but every year. Likewise, I begin the Year of the Pastor recognizing that as I leave my congregation, I leave unfinished business. This is not easy for me.

Several years ago, after a decade as a ministerial secretary, Sharon (my wife and partner in ministry) and I determined that common sense and credibility demanded that we return to pastoring and demonstrate that what we had been teaching and advocating would work in the crucible of church life.

As far as we were concerned, our return to pastoring was permanent and our plans were long-range for our congregation. In fact, if they had been otherwise, we would quickly have become discouraged, as "Job's friends" united to declare that our career was over and that we could have done nothing more catastrophic to ourselves than to exchange the security of a union position for a pastorate.

Nevertheless, despite our assurances of satisfaction with our church and reminders to our colleagues that pastoral ministry was what I had trained for and loved, the question was implied—Why would anyone wish to pastor if he or she

could do something (anything) else? And frankly, there will be those who now say "We told you so" when they discover that we have accepted this assignment—our new global congregation—to serve pastors and their families.

My response is simple. I know where my next assignment could be—once again pastoring a congregation. And that would not be a disgrace! Rather, pastoring is a privilege of grace!

My recent pastoral experience has provided something I missed in itinerant evangelism and departmental work—the opportunity to see longer-term progress in the lives of individuals. What a privilege to work with a family as they build themselves back from the brink of divorce. What fulfillment to see individuals struggle with the conflicting demands of society and salvation and end up making the choice for Jesus. What a joy to see an inactive or former member return to fellowship and hand the treasurer his first offering to "finish the work."

In fact, I am convinced that church administration anywhere would take on a whole new flavor if it was bathed in the reality of those who were fresh from the field, while those who had served long and well were recirculated through congregations. What a blessing their talents would be to those churches, and what a perspective they would bring with them when returning to administrative duties. The Holy Spirit might surprise us as to how well business could be handled in the interim.

Which brings me back to unfinished business. I face lots of that these days. All my theories about how well a predecessor should leave the facts and files for the incoming pastor are being challenged by

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James A. Cress is secretary of the Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

the realities of releasing the routine business of my church, coping with guilt feelings because my members—who are themselves grieving the loss of their pastor—cannot get the time they want with me right now, and attempting to grasp the scope of new responsibilities. All the while we are faced with the mundane duties of selling a house, packing and moving, and answering just one more phone call.

So instead of every file being well documented and carefully written for the next pastor, I resort—while I drive—to recording cassette tapes that may be listened to or ignored by the pastor who will replace me. And the realization that someone will indeed take my place is also part of the pain of unfinished business. The next pastor should and will replace me in the lives and affections of my members, and that pastor has the right to be disinterested in what I would prioritize and may choose even to discard the labor of love I am crowding onto those tapes. Furthermore, despite my care in recording these personal perspectives, I must grapple with the fact that my own plans, projects, and dreams for my church now become unfinished business.

Then in the midst of praying for my church family, even as I struggle with the pain of abandoning them, God provides me one more gift of grace—the needed reminder that none of us are indispensable, that the work will go on, that my congregation will flourish, and that His abundant grace will be sufficient despite unfinished business.

The Holy Spirit reminds me that in embryonic Christianity, Jesus could have done the work of ministry much more effectively than the 11 apostles and few dozen disciples He entrusted with the establishment of His church. Jesus left unfinished business at His ascension. He risked the future of the whole church on just those few. He prayed for them. He agonized over them. But He still left them.

Perhaps our Lord knew something about unfinished business. Perhaps He knew that the best way to accomplish His priorities was to release the gifts of the Spirit to those whom He left and concentrate on empowerment for the long-range objective.

So as I leave unfinished business in Georgia, please pray with me for the long-range goal. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

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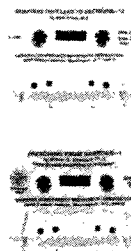
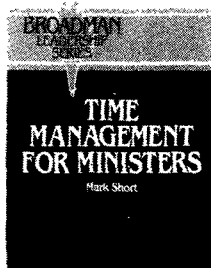
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The year of your pastor

Martin Weber

In this Year of the Pastor, local church elders around the world are seeking ways to make 1993 special for their spiritual leaders. They want to go beyond mere tokenism and sloganeering. Perhaps the following unofficial suggestions can spark some ideas:

Affirm your pastors

Being a pastor is tough in these tumultuous times. Caught between shrinking budgets and the rising demands of a world gone mad, many faithful pastors are struggling to survive their ministry. Further complicating the situation is the strident legalism or liberalism of those who attack rather than support the church body. Elders need not applaud everything pastors do, but they should try to keep disagreements private. Never compare pastors with their predecessors. Whatever their weaknesses, shower them and their families with expressions of love and affirmation. Quickly squelch any slander and gossip that you hear about your pastors.

Forgive your pastors

In a high pressure role with a multitude of expectations, mistakes are inevitable. Even Spirit-filled leaders err, sometimes seriously. Peter, the preacher of Pentecost, compromised his convictions in Antioch, and so did noble Barnabas (see Gal. 2:11-13). Paul battled with Barnabas (see Acts 15:37-39). James gave

bad advice to Paul that resulted in his arrest (see Acts 21:24.) In Old Testament times Moses blasphemously lost his temper (see Num. 20:10, 11). Aaron came up with the golden calf (see Ex. 32:4). Even Abraham, the faithful one, disgraced his calling before Pharaoh and left Egypt in shame (see Gen. 12:18-20).

If patriarchs, prophets, and apostles erred, it should come as no surprise that leaders today can also fumble their faith. All of us exist only by the grace of God. The Bible says: "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not" (Lam. 3:22, NKJV). Share that mercy bestowed upon your personal life with your pastors where they also fall short.

Minister with your pastors

The work of pastoring is so wide-ranging that it is impossible for one person to do it all. Besides the time and place limitations of finite humanity, nobody currently walking Planet Earth is omnigifted. Therefore, pastors need a supporting cast. They are coordinators of ministry—and local lay elders are their right-hand associates. So ask not what your pastor can do for you, but rather ask what you can do working with your pastor. Hospital and missing member visitation, phone calls to shut-ins, home Bible fellowships, personal evangelism, church administration, preaching when asked—all of these are examples of invaluable services performed by faithful elders around the world.

Sponsor your pastors

Your pastors can get so caught up in ministry that they never have a chance to sharpen, refresh, and expand their skills.

Ask your pastors what seminars they may wish to attend in addition to what the conference may pay for. Suggest to fellow elders and board members that the church underwrite a visit to the Holy Land for the pastor and his family. All of you will be rewarded with fresh biblical insights in the sermons.

Equip your pastors

Pastors are professionals and you expect professional service, so provide them with professional tools. In addition to a powerful computer for the office, every pastor needs a personal portable computer, and the church should provide it. Stock it with Bible software and anything else they request. The machines will go with them everywhere, doubling their efficiency. Also provide abundant secretarial help, with volunteers if necessary. And make sure your church has a pastors' discretionary fund, with an envelope in the office full of cash from which they can help the needy, buy a little encouragement gift, take a missing member to lunch, and do anything else they see fit.

Pray for your pastors

The apostle Paul constantly rejoiced in the prayers of the churches he served, and so do pastors today. In summary, being a pastor in times like these is not like a day at the beach. Fundamentalist churches tend to be especially hard on their leaders. Make your church different, the one your pastors will always look back upon with fond memories. Affirm them, forgive them, minister with them, sponsor them, equip them, support them, and pray for them. God will richly bless you for it. One more thing. Photocopy this page and pass it around. ■

Bible commentaries

Never before in history has the Bible been studied so thoroughly by scholars from a variety of perspectives as now. The result has been a plethora of books, dictionaries, and commentaries about the Bible. These Bible commentaries and dictionaries have become tools of the pastoral trade.

Pastors need to be selective in choosing commentaries. Dr. Herbert Kiesler, New Testament scholar of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, suggests they shop around and find the best commentaries on any given book of the Bible. For example, if you plan to research the book of Romans, examine its treatment in several commentary sets. When you find the one you like best, buy only the volume on Romans. Kiesler also suggests blending your commentaries, choosing the best of evangelical and critical scholarship for a balanced study. For critical scholarship, you may consider the *International Critical Commentary* (T & T Clark, Ltd., Edinburgh, Scotland), as it analyzes each text thoroughly. According to Kiesler,

the best in evangelical scholarship is offered in the *Word Biblical Commentary*. Among one-book commentaries, Kiesler recommends *Jerome's Bible Commentary* (Catholic) and *Peake's Commentary* (Protestant).

The following list contains recent Bible dictionaries and commentaries you may want to investigate.

"All" Bible Study Series, *Herbert Lockyer, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 17 volumes, \$19.95 each; or complete set available monthly through Christian Book Distributors, P.O. Box 3758, Peabody, Massachusetts 01961, for \$11.95 each, hardcover.*

Dr. Lockyer, an English theologian who came to the United States under the auspices of Moody Bible Institute, carried on an extensive lecturing ministry for many years. He died in 1985 but left this study set as his unique legacy.

The series is a collection of writings on Bible subjects. They include such titles as *All the Miracles of the Bible, All the Parables, All the Women, All the Men, All the Promises, All the Doctrines*

(recommended by F. F. Bruce), *All the Messianic Prophecies, All the Prayers*. The list goes on to include children, books and chapters, apostles, kings and queens, divine names and titles, holy days, teachings of Jesus, the last words of saints and sinners, and trades and occupations.

The Anchor Bible Dictionary, *David Noel Freedman, ed., Doubleday Publishers, New York, Toronto, London, Sydney, 6 volumes, US\$60.00, Cdn\$70.00 each, 1,200 pages per volume, hardcover.*

With almost 1,000 contributors, this series contains 6,200 entries and about 7 million words. Scholars from varied disciplines and viewpoints make this a rare eclectic mix of biblical study. The work integrates scholarly findings of the past 30 years, including those of the Dead Sea scrolls and Nag Hammadi codices. Maps, photographs, charts, and illustrations illuminate the text.

The Asbury Bible Commentary, *Eugene E. Carpenter and Wayne McCown, eds., Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1992, 1,296 pages, US\$37.90,*

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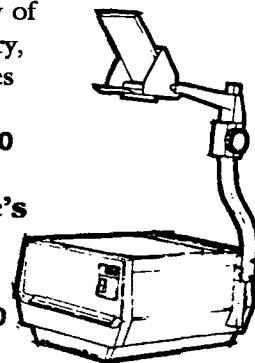
The Scope of Ellen White's Ministry - Part B

MSI 503-2 \$17.50

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Cdn\$51.50 (available through Harper Collins, Scarborough, Ontario), hardcover.

Nearly 50 scholars collaborated on this one-volume evangelical Wesleyan commentary based on the NIV. Their study reinforces the view of scriptural infallibility.

Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Minneapolis, 1982-1990, 15 volumes, US\$195.00, Cdn\$234.00 per set (prices of volumes vary from US\$13.95, Cdn\$16.75 to US\$19.95, Cdn\$23.95).

Written for students, laity, teachers, and pastors, each volume presents an overview and verse-by-verse commentary.

Complete Biblical Library, World Library Press, Inc., Springfield, Missouri, 1991, 16 volumes (9 volumes, New Testament Study Bible; 6 volumes, Greek/English Dictionary, 1 volume, Harmony of the Gospels), \$29.95 per volume.

Scholarly and yet easy to follow, this 10,000-page reference set is the result of 20 years of work by 360 Bible scholars from across denominational lines. An interlinear arrangement helps the reader understand the original Greek text. Using five lines, the *Study Bible* includes the Greek spelling, the pronunciation, the literal meaning of the word, the grammatical construction of the word, and the number that leads the reader to the listing in the *Greek/English Dictionary* (with more than 5,000 New Testament Greek words). Each commentary has an important overview of its biblical book. The large print makes reading Greek easy. The *Harmony of the Gospels* shows each gospel in four parallel, color-coded columns for easy identification. A fifth column adds a diatessaron, an interwoven account of Jesus' life combining what all four writers have recorded. Pastors will find this a helpful set to own.

Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and Howard Marshall, eds., InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1992, 1,000 pages, US\$34.95, Cdn\$44.95, hardcover.

A valuable resource for pastors, this dictionary presents contemporary authoritative evangelical scholarship. More than 200 articles, written by an international team of 90 New Testament scholars, address topics not usually found in such source books.

Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible, David and Pat Alexander, eds., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1992, 680 pages, \$19.95, paper.

A section-by-section guide to the Bible, with notes on difficult areas, 60 articles on the setting and use of the Bible and subjects of specialized interest, 437 pictures, 68 maps, and a complete index.

Eerdmans Bible Dictionary, Allen C. Myers, ed., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1992, 1,104 pages, \$32.50, hardcover.

Evangelical in focus, this dictionary objectively addresses a broad spectrum of interpretation. It includes nearly 5,000 entries identifying every person and place named in the Bible, examines the contents and background of each biblical book and related writings, describes the physical and cultural aspects of the Bible, and explains important emphases of biblical theology.

Harper's Bible Dictionary and Harper's Bible Commentary, boxed set, Paul J. Achtemeier and James L. Mays, with the



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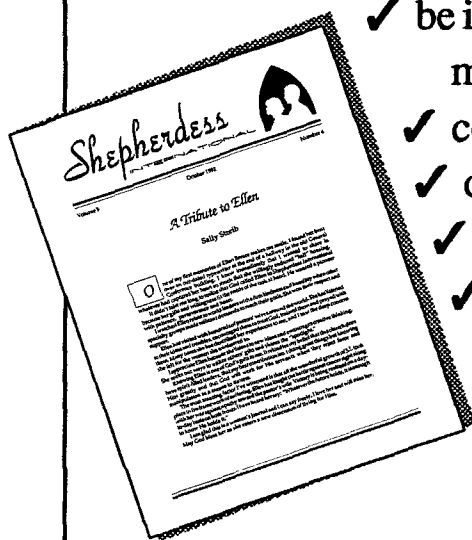
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Society of Biblical Literature, Harper San Francisco, available through Harper Collins, Scarborough, Ontario, 1991, US\$69.00, hardcover.

The Society for Biblical Literature is a 5,000-member international group of experts on the Bible and related fields. The *Dictionary* explains every aspect of the Bible, including archaeology, culture, related writings, influence, history, flora and fauna, concepts, environment, and much more. The *Commentary* features individual writings on each

biblical book, the apocrypha, maps, photographs, diagrams, and bibliographies.

Hermeneia, A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, editorial board, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, prices vary from US\$21.95, Cdn\$26.50 to US\$47.95, Cdn\$47.95, hardcover.

Still in the production process, this set now includes 10 Old Testament volumes and 11 New Testament volumes. *Hermeneia* includes the work of significant worldwide scholars. Each volume

gives in-depth interpretation of the canonical and extrabiblical literature with reference to the latest historical evidence and contemporary studies.

Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, James L. Mays, Patrick D. Miller, and Paul J. Achtemeier, eds., Westminster/John Knox, Louisville, Kentucky, 24 volumes completed, prices vary from \$12.95 to \$24.95, hardcover.

Interpretation is a set of full-length, practical commentaries to assist preachers in their homiletic and educational work. This set bridges the gap between critical and expository commentaries combining biblical scholarship with textual expositions. Beginning in 1982, about two volumes a year have come off the presses.

Jerome's Bible Commentary, Raymond Brown, ed., Prentice-Hall, New York, \$71.95, hardcover.

One of the best commentaries in a single volume, *Jerome's* contains the cream of Catholic scholarship and a wealth of information.

The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, John MacArthur, Jr., Moody Press, Chicago, 1990, 8 volumes, \$137.60 per set, hardcover.

This set is designed for pastors and those who want not only to comprehend the message but live it. Using illustrations and perceptions with clear exegesis, MacArthur explores the practical application of the Word. Matthew (4 volumes), 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Hebrews.

The New American Commentary, David S. Dockery, general editor, Broadman Press, Nashville, 1991, 1992, hardcover.

This 40-volume set will be published over a seven-year period. Volumes so far available: *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and *Philemon* (\$22.95), *Mark* (\$19.95), *Matthew* (\$24.95), *Acts* (\$24.95), *1, 2 Timothy*, and *Titus* (\$19.95).

The commentary includes the NIV text, exegesis, applicable exposition, background material, and documentation of original language citations and reference support. Widely acclaimed by leading evangelical scholars, this should prove to be a popular reference work for many pastors.

The New Bible Commentary, D. Guthrie,

J. A. Motyer, A. M. Stibbs, and D. J. Wiseman, eds., *Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1992, 1,325 pages, \$34.95, hardcover.*

Originally printed in 1953 using 51 international scholars and revised in 1973, this evangelical commentary on the Bible is a one-volume work, with an appeal to those with an unqualified belief in the Bible's inspiration.

Peake's Commentary on the Bible, *Matthew Black and H. H. Rowley, eds., Thomas Nelson Publishing, Nashville, 1987, 1,126 pages plus maps, \$39.95, hardcover.*

The original Peake's appeared in 1919 and became a standard reference work over the years. This new volume contains the latest scholarship of some 60 contributors from every branch of the Protestant church in Europe and North America.

The SDA Bible Commentary, *Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, Maryland, 10 volumes, US\$329.50, Cdn\$411.90, hardcover. Available from Adventist Book Centers.*

Regarded as the most complete resource for Bible study by Seventh-day Adventist students of the Bible. More than 40 scholars worked on the first seven volumes, basing their verse-by-verse commentary on the original Greek and Hebrew for ultimate accuracy. Supplementary articles (1978) cover history, geology, and archaeology. An index gives instant access. Comments from the works of Ellen White are referenced at the chapter ends. The set also includes the *SDA Bible Dictionary*, the *SDA Bible Students' Source Book*, and the *SDA Encyclopedia*.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, *W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, Jr., Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1992, 1,128 pages, \$19.95, hardcover.*

This classic reference book lists more than 6,000 biblical words in their original Greek or Hebrew and gives their meanings. The volume is keyed to Strong's reference numbers.

Word Biblical Commentary, *Word Publishing, Waco, Texas; Word Canada, Richmond, British Columbia, 52-volume series, prices vary from US\$22.99 to*

\$24.99, hardcover.

Advertised as the "best in evangelical scholarship," this series represents the latest historical, textual, linguistic, structural, theological, and archaeological scholarship. It is recommended by *Andrews University Seminary Studies*.

Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, *Robert Young, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, \$21.95, hardcover.*

With more than 300,000 entries based on the KJV Bible, the concordance lists original words so readers can see how Hebrew and Greek words may be translated.

Young's Literal Translation of the Bible (revised), *Robert Young, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, \$19.95, paper.*

Even those with no knowledge of languages can evaluate the plethora of versions and paraphrases with this word-for-word translation that strives for total fidelity to Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic.

Recently Noted

A Guide to Selecting and Using Bible Commentaries, *Douglas Stuart, Word Publishing, Waco, Texas, Word Canada, Richmond, British Columbia, 1992, US\$6.99, paper.*

Dr. Stuart, an experienced professor, administrator, and pastor, evaluates more than 1,000 commentaries.

Who's Who in Theology, From the First Century to the Present, *John Bowden, Crossroad Publishing Co., New York, 1992, 152 pages, \$18.95, hardcover.*

Here is a concise and compact handbook containing information about men and women who have been important in the history of Christian theology. It tells what they thought, said, and wrote. It also contains a listing of the popes with brief biographical entries on each one. This is an excellent resource work for pastors.

My Problem With Christianity Is . . . , *Paul Weston, Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1991, 80 pages, \$6.95, paper.*

A survey of over 600 people between the ages of 18 and 30 reveals the six most common problems people have with Christianity. While Christian denominations quibble over their individual traditions, most of the world rejects the gospel because: There's no proof, it's irrelevant, they've never really thought about

it, problems with the church, there's so much suffering in the world, it can't be the only way to God.

Weston answers these questions in a volume that will make an excellent giveaway book for the nonChristian or secularist people you know.

Where are the Spirit-filled leaders?

From page 11

minister; He is sufficient for any challenge that comes our way. His church can become all that He wants it to be as we lead the way back to Him and give Him room to work. Spiritual leaders and members as well can trust Him to do all He has said He will do. ■

¹ Names of people and places are changed to avoid embarrassment for anyone.

² Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture texts are from the New International Version.

³ E. G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Mar. 22, 1887.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ ———, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 362.

⁶ Eugene Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, (Carol Stream, Ill.: Christianity Today, Inc., and Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989), p. 27.

⁷ G. K. Chesterton, quoted by Dallas Willard in *The Spirit of the Disciples* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco Publishers, 1988), p. 2.

⁸ E. G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), pp. 103, 104.

⁹ ———, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 2, p. 364.

¹⁰ ———, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938), p. 188.

The October 1992 Annual Council and the year-end meeting of the North American Division were both marked by a strong emphasis on the theme "Seeking His Spirit for Service." Delegates reaffirmed their commitment to be spiritual leaders. Many pledged to pray for revival and renewal every morning at 6:15 their local time. *Ministry* would like to hear from conference, mission, union, division, and General Conference leaders about how they follow through with the spirit of the meetings by encouraging spiritual growth among their office staff.

Letters

From page 2

willingly engaged in sexual intercourse, then she already exercised that choice. If she was forced into having sex, then she was raped, and that is a special situation.—Author.

■ Recent articles on abortion in *Ministry* have been thought-provoking. However, it is not always wise to arrive at a position on the basis of one Bible text.

We live in an entirely different culture than the Old Testament period of Exodus. Today would life be required for life if an accidental blow to the abdomen would cause either the death of the fetus or the woman?

The Bible does not give clear guidance on the subject. Theologians disagree. Abortion should be left to the patient in wise counsel with her physician. It should not even be in the political realm. The church is wise to stay out.—Thaine B. Price, M.D., Laguna Niguel, California.

■ It is really unforgivable that any denomination such as the Adventist Church has never taken a stand on abortion. Abortion is the greatest moral issue of three decades, and your church is officially silent! Why? Are you more content to talk about Saturday Sabbath and meatless meals than to be a true prophetic church?

The *Ministry* editor's "middle ground" approach to abortion reflects the Adventist Church's concept of Christianity—the middle of the road, or sitting on the fence—a cowardly position that disgraces Christ and makes the church saltless and lightless in an ever-increasingly evil and immoral world.—Rev. William L. Gutel, Swartz Creek, Michigan.

■ There is no real abortion dilemma among those who deal with conception and maturation. Every farmer knows that if his cow aborts, he has lost his calf, not a blob of protoplasm. Doctors know that after conception, if no ill befalls it, the fetus will grow and be

born. If the baby is not killed, he or she will grow to walk, talk, and go to school.

Everybody is talking the politics of pro-life and pro-choice, but nobody says much about the sin of killing. Here is where we should stand up and be counted.—W. G. Dick, M.D., Iola, Kansas.

Male counselors

I'm a semiretired female pastor in a mainline denomination. The name withheld letters in your July issue broke my heart. One spoke of sexual exploitation by two male counselors; another simply grieved for a "female Adventist pastor when I needed her." Also pointed out by the author of "I Committed Adultery" was the fact that the profession itself can push naive, egocentric male clergy into an emotional need for private and public infallibility. This can further encourage a holier-than-thou attitude and blame-the-victim mentality.

When you toss this kind of volatile, overripe arrogance into a male-dominated system where women are taught to be passive and submissive and in awe of the reflected authority of Christ, as projected by male pastors/counselors, the pot is set to boil.

No matter how sincerely a male pastor deals with women who come to him for counseling, or how sensitive and professional he struggles to be, his conservative theology has already convinced him these women are children in need of male guidance.

This attitude can surely tempt that pastor into more than a clinical interest in the vulnerable flesh wrapped around the dependent soul already bonding to him. My advice for troubled women in any male-dominated system: Do not trust your intimate pain to the man whose clay feet stand in the pulpit. Instead, look in the yellow pages and find one of us: a mainline female pastor. We will welcome you. (Or see a secular professional.)

This is 1993. No woman need feel demeaned by or tolerate insufferable behavior from male clergy/counselors in any denomination.—Laura Odegard, East Dubuque, Illinois.

"I committed adultery"

I want to commend you on your courage for talking about a reality that

exists among our ministry ("I Committed Adultery," July 1992). However, I also wish to chastise you for opening a window without giving instructions on how to pass through.

To begin with, on the preventive side, the General Conference Ministerial Association has recently produced a video, *Sexual Ethics for Christian Leaders*. I believe that is something all our pastors should see to create awareness and to improve prevention.

Second, we should be more supportive and helpful when one shares a weakness with us. Rather than focusing on the error of the improper behavior, we should listen more carefully to hear the multiple dynamics that are creating the vulnerability. Applying a cure without knowing the cause is a dangerous way to heal.

Third, I believe it is time that our church compiles a list of professional, caring individuals with whom pastors and other denominational employees can freely communicate in exploring their emotional and spiritual needs. This will lead them to understand the inner drivings and perceived external barriers, and help them to develop strategies that will be life-giving rather than destructive.—Richard M. Tibbits, D.Min., vice president for mission and corporate culture, Kettering Medical Center, Kettering, Ohio.

■ Thank you for the thoughtful articles and letters concerning pastors and the problem of sexual abuse. I was helped by the insights, and some painful memories were jogged. I feel hurt and betrayed by a Protestant church because it and my husband/pastor led me to believe that it was healthy for my husband to be the same person as my pastor.

Sexual problems between husbands and wives are not uncommon. In my experience they were very difficult to overcome because the person I was having sex with (legally) was also my pastor. He never recommended that I or we seek outside help for our problems. My word of advice for those intending to marry clergy: Find a separate person to be your pastor and encourage your pastor/spouse to do the same. Certainly, if other people need pastors, so do clergy couples. Thank you for letting me air a painful old wound.—Name Withheld.

New manual for pastors

Just in time for the Year of the Pastor, the General Conference Ministerial Association has published a completely new manual for pastors. The *Minister's Manual* is a companion volume to the Seventh-day Adventist *Church Manual*, with a matching manual for local church elders soon to come. It reflects input from every division of the world field. Available for US\$10.95 from your local Adventist Book Center or the Ministerial Supply Center/Seminars Unlimited, P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059; or call 1-800-982-3344. Discover, MasterCard, and Visa accepted.

Visitation

My husband and I recently moved to a new church district. Mike believes it's important to visit each home and get acquainted as soon as possible. To facilitate the process, he came up with the following plan. As the members file out of church after the sermon, he has the secretary stand by the door with him holding his appointment book, and she fills available slots with visitation appointments on the spot.

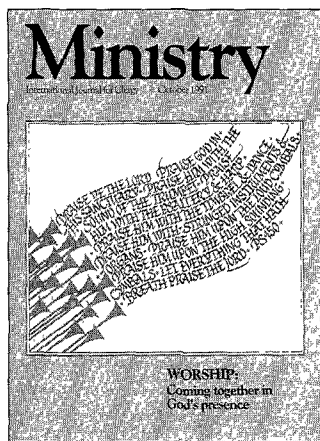
This does several things: (1) it takes the hardest part out of visitation—the scheduling; (2) it keeps him committed to the program; and (3) it lets the whole church know that he is serious about meeting them. Another benefit of this method is that the secretary knows the area and where everyone lives, and she can schedule appointments conveniently and efficiently.—Karen Lawhorn, Petersburg, Virginia.

Special issue reprints

Because of overwhelming response, two issues of *Ministry* have been reprinted and are available for mass distribution. October 1992



featured the lifting up of Christ—how to make the cross the burden of every sermon, the praise of every song, the focus of every prayer, and the heartbeat of life itself. The October 1991



issue addressed the perplexity over celebration worship, how to worship the Lord with our hearts as well as our minds and maintain a balance between emotion and reason.

With a minimum order of 51, both issues are available for just 50 cents U.S. each, postpaid anywhere in the world. For 50 copies or less, the cost is US\$1.00 each.

Order direct from *Ministry*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

The empty pew

I've heard from many pastors that only 65 percent of members attend weekly services regularly. Having faced that problem myself, I wrote *The Challenge of the Empty Pew*, which examines worship from a historical, biblical, and contemporary perspective, with a view to bolster attendance and bring new life to services. Available for US\$9.95 from the North American Division Distribution Center, or contact Linford Martin, Greater New York Conference, P.O. Box 1029, Manhasset, NY 11030; Phone (516) 627-9350.

Sermon manuscripts

For the past two years I've been printing my weekly sermons in manuscript form and handing them to the congregation as they leave the service. This has become a meaningful part of our worship and has encouraged me to begin submitting articles to publications. I'm even considering writing a book or two.—Glenn Woodard, Lodi, California.

Ministerial evaluation tool

The General Conference Ministerial Association has produced a *Manual of Evaluation Instruments*. Categories covered include self-evaluation for the pastor, evaluation of the

pastor by the local church, evaluation of the church by the pastor or by the church itself, and evaluation of the church administrator by pastors, self, or others. The manual also offers several items relating to pastoral job descriptions and establishing objectives.

The complete manual with index and binder costs US\$12.95. The manual with index costs only US\$8.95 (postage included in prices). Order from the Ministerial Supply Center/Seminars Unlimited, P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059. Payment must be included with your order.

Home-Work

The current recession has hit like a Mack truck, affecting families of both blue-collar workers and professionals. Many are seeking to cope with layoffs, cash shortages, and a lack of job security. Many have solved their situation by starting home businesses. To help them find success, now there's *HomeWork*, an eight-page bimonthly newsletter. Each issue contains news, contacts, tips, techniques, and inspiration for those who work at home, all from a Christian perspective. *HomeWork* offers concrete advice about how to operate a home business as well as information on marketing, home business legislation, and taxes.—For information, write *Home-Work*, P.O. Box 394, Dept. CD, Simsbury, Connecticut 06070.

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Youth takes charge at the Ministerial Association

J. David Newman

Two years ago the church elected the youngest president of the General Conference this century. At the 1992 Annual Council the church elected the eighth and youngest-ever secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association. James A. Cress, while only 43 years of age, comes with a rich background in pastoral, evangelistic, and departmental experience. He with his wife, Sharon, the new coordinator of Shepherdess International, have consistently worked together in team ministry.

Pastor Cress, a native of Florida, U. S. A., received a B.A. in theology from Southern Missionary College in 1971 and an M.Div. from Andrews University in 1973. He is currently completing a D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary in California.

Cress pastored in Florida from 1974 to 1978. He then served as evangelist and associate ministerial secretary in the Lake Union. From there he moved to the Ohio Conference to be ministerial secretary (1980-1983). Then Cress served as ministerial secretary of the Mid-America Union (1983-1989). For the past three years Cress has pastored the Marietta church in Georgia.

Sharon, his wife of 22 years, works closely with him. She hails originally from Milan, Indiana, although she prefers to call Florida "home." She has most recently served as an associate pastor in the Marietta church. She teams with Jim in such areas as evangelism and personal soul winning, team ministry, and nurturing pastoral families, besides leading out in children's ministries and conducting Myers-Briggs personality inventories.

Here are some of the areas that Jim and Sharon worked in tandem ministry: (1)



Jim and Sharon Cress

conducting large city U.S. evangelistic meetings in Miami, Jacksonville, Florida, Lauderdale, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Chicago, Lansing, Anchorage, Kansas City, Denver, and overseas in Finland; (2) conducting field schools of evangelism in Nebraska, Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri; (3) teaching courses in team ministry at the New Orleans and Indianapolis General Conference sessions; (4) cofounding Soul Winning Workshops for Pastoral Couples (200 pastors/spouses taught evangelistic skills) in the Ohio, Potomac, Northern California, Georgia-Cumberland, Alberta, and Oregon conferences, as well as for the North Pacific and Mid-America unions; (5) founding and publishing *Praxis*, a journal of pastoral care (1986-1989); (6) teaching for the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary's ninth quarter (pastoral evangelism) in the Pacific Union (1984-1989); (7) instructing for the PREACH professional growth seminars; (8) speaking for workers' meetings across North America and in the Trans-European Division.

The Cresses are intensely interested in increasing the pastoral morale of pastors and their families. They bring tremendous energy and creativity to their work. They are both deep Bible students and believe strongly in bringing men, women, and children to the foot of the cross, where lies the only true remedy for humankind's

problems.

I have personally known Jim and Sharon since 1972 when they came to Glasgow, Scotland, to participate in a field school of evangelism led by Pastor Dale Brusett. I was pastoring in Perth and Crieff at the time. Incidentally, the leader of the student team from the seminary was Ted N. C. Wilson, who has just been elected as president of the Euro-Asia Division.

We discovered that we share the same wedding date, June 7, and never thought that one day we might work closely together. The unexpected happened when Jim was called to the Ohio Conference in 1980 as ministerial secretary, where I was serving as assistant to the president for church administration. There a close friendship developed. Some of our most enjoyable social events were spending evenings together playing various word games.

When Jim and Sharon left in 1983, I never dreamed that we would ever associate as closely again. But the unexpected has now happened twice. I eagerly anticipate a third fruitful relationship. Jim and Sharon have formidable intellects, deep spirituality, engaging personalities, and the ability to cut through minutiae to the heart of the problem.

Jim has a passion for Noah's ark, especially in its more modern whimsical forms. He collects art, memorabilia, objects—anything that bears some resemblance to the ark. While this hobby reminds him of the first destruction of the world, his main goal in life is to prepare people for the second destruction of the world. He and Sharon do this by proclaiming Jesus Christ and Him crucified in the context of the final events that will climax in the coming of our Lord.

We in the Ministerial Association join all the Adventist pastors of the world in welcoming Pastor and Mrs. James Cress as our leaders. We wish them God's richest blessing.

J. David Newman, D.Min., is the editor of *Ministry*.