

Ministry

International Journal for Pastors

May 1995

AFRICAN-AMERICAN
Preaching
Saga and Sermon

Dreaming the impossible

Richard Duerksen ("Dreaming the Impossible," January 1995) has oversimplified the process of dealing with youth in the church. Many of today's youth leaders have catered to the wants of the young but have not addressed their spiritual needs. Thus we have managed to keep many of our youth on the fringes of the church but have not managed to tie them to anything within the church. This is where we have erred. We need to challenge the youth to give their lives to the Lord and dedicate themselves to His service.

Will they all respond? Probably not. However, those who do, and I believe them to be a great majority, will not only respond but will change their community and the world.

Deuteronomy 6:3-7 instructs parents to be diligent teachers of their children. Diligence in teaching is the watchword. This teaching must begin in the homes and be strengthened by the Adventist school and the church.—Harry Mayden, Ed.D., director of education, Euro-Asia Division, Moscow, Russia.

■ "Dreaming the Impossible" reminded me of the days I spent as a member of the Adventist Students Association in Bandung, Indonesia. I have read many similar articles written for pastors by pastors on how to work among students. I have listened to many sermons telling the students how the church loves them. But reality is different from theory. With more than 100 students in non-Adventist colleges in Bandung, we did not have a single chaplain to care for our needs. No pastor was close enough to know us. Many times we tried to get the attention of pastors and leaders all the way to the

General Conference, but to no avail.

I am not in Bandung any more, but I still dream the impossible: a loving and working relationship between students and pastors so that they can work together to nurture the youth and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to others. We have little time to lose in caring for our youth.—Arnold P. Siboro, Takamatsu-shi, Japan.

Pastor and sexuality

Our Clergy Families in Crisis Project committee appreciated your November 1994 issue on clergy ethics as it relates to sexuality and marriage. Marie Dickson spoke clearly to the issues we have organized to address out of concern for the growing numbers of ex-spouses of ministers.

Our project committee is aware that spouses who may suffer verbal, attitudinal, or emotional abuse more than physical find it hard to admit they are abused and so tend to live in denial, keeping up a front in public. We hope to fill the gap in advocacy and resources to support spouses of clergy facing ethical charges. Our survey responses from ex-spouses so far indicate one striking commonality: the alienation of children from their pastor parent because of neglect and abandonment long before any divorce. It's time for churches to work together, so that ex-wives and abused and betrayed wives can network and begin to verbalize their experiences and offer their expertise, as is happening in the Netherlands and Germany.

Our initial focus is on women. We will help ex-husbands and children connect too.—Mary Stamp, Project Coordinator, Clergy Families in Crisis Project, 245 East 13th Avenue, Spokane, Washington 99202.

■ My minister husband fell to the temptations *Ministry* discusses in the November issue. Thank you for admitting that there is a real problem in this area in our church. All too often we stick our heads in the sand and pretend we don't have problems.

I shall feel the pain and shame for a long time, but the main hurt is on the children and the parish members. My children, wonderful as they are, feel deceived and hurt. If the person tempted to adultery would only stop and think of the consequences, he or she would see its devastating consequences. Why is it we can't see beyond the immediate desire?

The person who commits adultery should bear the results. Just to move the minister to another area (and possibly provide opportunity to repeat the experience) is wrong. How can such a person, living a lie, stand in front of a congregation? Leadership has a real responsibility to be kind and fair; it should also help that person take responsibility for the actions involved.—Ann Steiner, Greenbrier, Tennessee.

■ Marie Dickson ("My Husband Committed Adultery," November 1994) aptly portrays the deathly pain a person experiences when betrayed by adultery. As one who left the ministry because of this problem, I find some of her statements hurtful.

Sometimes adultery occurs because of a marriage breakdown. This cannot condone adultery, a hurtful, heinous sin. However, to generalize from her situation to other "ex-pastors who have committed adultery" and say that she is unsympathetic and "tired of hearing how badly the church treats ex-pastors" is harsh indeed.

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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.

“What she has done will be told” (p. 4) is a biblical tribute to women’s ministry in celebration of “1995—Year of the Adventist Woman.” Mary showed us long ago that the beauty of ministry is to do what we can where we are.

Scripture, history, and experience are the most significant sources of African-American preaching, says Leslie Pollard in “Saga and Song” (p. 5). He lists five principles of African-American preaching that can help any preacher who wishes to benefit from the powerful mode of Black preaching.

Trauma can shatter trust in people, institutions, and even God. Andreas M. W. Bochmann, from Germany, suggests that just *listening* in a nonjudgmental way will help break the cycle of silence and denial (p. 10). Teresa Scott Caine argues (p. 12) that “listening works if you work it”—listening to the pain and frustration of hurting church members.

Pastors, who are called to lead God’s people, need to understand the proper use of power, as well as to learn to avoid its abuse. James Cress (p. 26) points to Jesus as history’s most outstanding example of one who willingly emptied Himself of power and came as a servant-leader. There lies the essence of personal power.



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“What she has done will be told”

John M. Fowler

*“And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her” (Mark 14:9).**

A banquet at Bethany. Simon was hosting the social event of his life. The great teacher from Nazareth was the honored guest. Other invitees were seated, each according to tradition. The dinner was about to begin when suddenly the atmosphere of conventional wisdom was disrupted by a daring ministry of love. “A woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head” (verse 3).

The fragrance filled the air and brought forth two varying responses: rejection and acceptance.

Rejection

Mary’s ministry was rejected by erudite arguments.

“*Why this waste?*” cried the economists. “A year’s wages” (verse 5, NIV) gone to waste! How many poor could have been helped! How much the Master’s mission could have been advanced! But the surge of the heart cannot be understood by the marketing forces of the mind. Nor can mathematical precision measure the fine nuances of sacrifice and love. Love is extravagant in its expressions and does not count the cost. Is not the cross the most costly expression of love ever?

“*Why a sinner?*” murmured the other sinners who condemned sin in their proclamation and tasted its allurements in their practice. The first

step toward the kingdom of God is the admission that one is a sinner—helpless, hopeless, but repentant and rejoicing in the possibility that grace can give birth to a new life. Mary found that life and, in a moment of absolute self-denial, publicly acknowledged the cross to come.

Why a woman? wondered both saint and sinner in that Bethany home. How could a woman dare to anoint Jesus? Anointing as a sacred ministry was usually performed by a prophet or a priest. And the culture cautiously guarded that right, marginalizing women to the four walls of the house. But Jesus came to break every confining wall. His heart was deeply stirred by Mary’s daring and self-denial. Here was a person who risked social disapproval in order to stake her claim that the presence of Jesus and ministry to Him know no limitation. Mary’s ministry, performed a few days before the cross, anticipated not only redemption from sin but also the tearing apart of every wall of prejudice.

Acceptance

Mary’s ministry was accepted by incarnate love. The One who came to show what love and service is all about rebuked her critics and affirmed her ministry. Jesus made four significant statements to show that in a case appearing hopeless in human eyes, He saw “capabilities for good. He saw the better traits of her character.”¹

“*Let her alone; why do you trouble her?*” is the rebuke. A world partitioned by prejudice and plagued by self-assertion tends to crush the less

privileged and shove them into their place. Troubling the other person because of gender or race or caste is a preoccupation with the lords of this world, but Jesus shows us an entirely different world, whose values originate not from self but from selflessness, not from a scale of legal equivalence but from an outpouring of love. It’s a world of grace that offers forgiveness, effects reconciliation, and celebrates joy.

“*She has done a beautiful thing*” is how Jesus defends Mary’s ministry. Judas was interested in the cash box. But Mary chose the alabaster box. The transition from one to the other is the mark of spiritual beauty and maturity. In one moment of eloquent self-denial Mary lifted gratitude to a priceless pinnacle of love, from where all the Marys and all the Johns of the world could cry out: Break the alabaster box and discover the meaning of the cross. Nothing is too precious in life when compared with the treasure heaven emptied in the death of Jesus to save one lost sinner. That sinner was Mary. That sinner is me. To recognize that, to rush to the Saviour’s feet and break the alabaster box, is “a thing of beauty” that becomes “a joy for ever.”² Surrender to Jesus has many competitions but no alternative.

“*She has done what she could,*” says Jesus further in her defense. Ministry is to do what we can where we are. Nothing more. Nothing less.

My 6-year-old grandson and I went shopping in a mall. We stopped at a computer store, tried various comput-

(Continued on page 30)

Saga and song

Leslie N. Pollard

A cross-cultural primer in African-American preaching.



Leslie N. Pollard, D.Min., (Ph.D. candidate), is pastor of Oakwood College church, Huntsville, Alabama.

When Christians discuss African-American preaching (ie., Black preaching), stylistic features generally are in the forefront. Asked to describe African-American preaching in my homiletics class, those favorably disposed would use words like “dynamic,” “spirited,” and “enthusiastic.” Those not so favorable would use words like “loud,” “showy,” and “emotional.” However we feel about African-American preaching, we cannot but take note of a statement by one of today’s most widely respected homileticians, David Buttrick of Vanderbilt University: “All things considered, it is probable that the finest preaching in America today is black.”¹

In order to appreciate fully African-American preaching and understand its effectiveness, we must not only look at the style of its presentation but also analyze its sources and assumptions. The way these elements interface within African-American preaching grants it a unique place in the history of Christian discourse. Such study promises to enrich not only African-American preachers but others as well.

African-American preaching: a definition

African-American, or Black, preaching signifies a unique sociohistorical method of pulpit discourse that was born, reared, and nurtured in the church of America’s Black people. While primarily narrative in nature, Black preaching began as an indigenous amalgam of West African religious

tradition and American religious culture. It developed and matured during the four-century pilgrimage of African-Americans in America. It is preaching that arose from a life of suffering, expressing the gospel through the experiences, idioms, folkways, and images of the African-American’s identifiable ethnic/cultural community. While elevating the centrality of the gospel and interpreting communal suffering, African-American preaching aimed to teach, heal, and impart hope and personhood to the hearers.

My description of African-American preaching presupposes an acknowledgment that a people’s culture impacts the way that people understand and express theology and ministry. Once, I heard a well-meaning preacher say, “I do not believe in Black preaching and White preaching. There is no such thing as Black or White preaching. There is only Christian preaching.” I understand the intent of such a statement, but it has two problems.

First, it confuses content with mode. The difference between Christian preaching and, say, Islamic or Buddhist preaching is in content. African-American preaching, on the other hand, describes the mode through which the Christian content is communicated. Second, it does not account for the very obvious differences in style and emphasis between the preaching of Anglo-American and African-American preachers.

Consider the preaching of a George Vandeman and a Charles Brooks.

While both are extremely effective evangelists, how do we explain the stylistic differences in their presentation? I suppose we could say, "Well, the difference is because they are different individuals." While I do acknowledge differences between individuals, why is it that groups of individuals who look like the two preachers reflect different styles and emphases? The answer is simple: African-Americans, as do Anglo-Americans and others, utilize their collective experiences and their personal socialization as essential resources for preaching. While Brooks and Vandeman share a profound commitment to the Advent movement, their presentations reflect the outlooks, values, and attitudes of the communities that incubated their preaching ministries. And those factors impart a distinct identity to the way they preach the Word.

As a further background for understanding African-American preaching, we must contrast Black preaching with historical homiletics. Historical homiletics is grounded in the Aristotelian speaking traditions of proposition and proof. This approach has relied heavily upon the structure of introduction, body, and conclusion. Homiletical writers like John Broadus, William Evans, and Illion Jones reflect this method. African-American preaching utilizes selected elements of historical homiletics, but does not limit itself to them. This is evident when one examines the sources, assumption, and stylistic factors of African-American preaching.

African-American preaching: sources

Scripture, history, and experience are the most significant sources of African-American preaching.

Scripture. "Black preaching, almost without exception, is biblical."² Here "biblical" is not to be understood in the same way that a fundamentalist may understand. But it means that the images, stories, metaphors, and teachings from the Bible form the foundation of the sermon. African-American preaching does not draw a straight line from the first to the twentieth century. A contextual use of Scripture pervades

much of Black preaching. I am not dogmatic on this point, but this may be a vestige of the slave period. American slavemasters routinely drafted the Bible as an ally in the continuation of their oppression.³ Since the American slaves were forbidden to learn to read, the only exposure they had to the Bible was aural.⁴

The slaves who listened to this type of preaching engaged in an eclectic hearing, similar to that of Howard Thurman's grandmother. She remembers how the slavemasters had their hired preachers come and preach that the slaves should obey their masters. She recalls: "At least three or four times a year he [the master's minister] used as a text: 'Slaves, be obedient to them that are your masters . . . , as unto Christ.' Then he would go on to show how it was God's will that we were slaves and how, if we were good and happy slaves, God would bless us. I promised my Maker that if I ever learned to read and if freedom ever came, I would not read that part of the Bible."⁵

This was one way that the early listeners in African-American communities learned to discard politicized interpretations of the Word. Those few slave preachers who learned to read, read the Bible with an eye that saw freedom themes, especially applicable to their struggle in this world and redemption in the next. In that sense the Bible became the exhaustless referent for the articulation of faith to seekers of personal and corporate freedom.

What I am describing is a "seeing" grounded in experience. To illustrate: My family recently purchased a van. Now, I have been driving for more than 20 years. However, since purchasing a van, I can honestly say that I never noticed that there were so many vans on the highway. I "suddenly" saw red vans, blue vans, minivans, oversized vans, cargo vans, passenger vans, stock vans, customized vans. Does this mean that vans were not on the road before I purchased mine? No. It simply means that my seeing was conditioned by my experience.

Similarly, experiential discernment is what happened within the African-American slave preachers. The clear

ethical teachings of the Bible had always been there. However, the experience of oppression enabled the Black preachers to see themes, teachings, and images in Scripture that spoke to their experience. The Exodus signaled to them the promise of God's liberation from bondage. Soteriology became not only salvation from sin but from social servitude as well. Ecclesiology was translated into a community seeking not only Christ, but survival as well. Eschatology promised a God who would interrupt history not only with reward but with justice and judgment.

History. Another source for Black preaching is its own history. As historian Albert Raboteau points out, African-American spirituality is the confluence of two streams of tradition: (1) African, with its spirituality, and (2) American, with its adaption.⁶ Both were passed down through generations of earlier believers. African religious customs with their emphasis on the spirit world, a high God, and the principles of community expressed in tales, proverbs, and stories formed a cradle in which African-American preaching was born and continues to draw on today.

Contemporary experience. African-American preaching finds much of its context in the everyday experiences of a community of marginalized sufferers. The context is one of alienation, disenfranchisement, and in many cases, hopelessness. Black preachers speak the gospel to men and women who are often reminded that they stand on the periphery of society. Black preaching affirms the significance of all humans in their role as the centerpiece of creation and the focus of the great controversy.

African-American preaching: assumptions

Five assumptions are peculiar to Black preaching.

Participation. Black preaching assumes audience participation. It is an oral art that uses rhetoric to create a tapestry of thought, sound, and experience for the listener. P. T. Forsyth (1848-1921) argued that preaching is not a monologue, but a dialogue. His

statement has been widely quoted because of its relevance for those who saw preaching as a spectator event. The major homiletic texts of Forsyth's period emphasized the speaker. Sermonizing was primarily speaker-centered, the preacher sending a communication to the listener. Forsyth argued against this preaching paradigm of his day.

Contemporary Black preaching takes Forsyth's dialogical concept further by asserting that effective preaching is not simply a monologue or even a dialogue, but a *triangulated communication*. Black preaching assumes a participatory exchange between preacher, congregation, and God. In the Black tradition, preaching is not, and has never been, a spectator event. Indeed, preaching provides the opportunity for the congregation and the preacher to give witness to the reality of God in their midst. And because God is immediately present, preaching cannot be one-way communication; it is a dynamic conversation in which empowerment takes place. Black preaching, then, is not a preacher-led, isolated, excursion into the world of the Bible, but a group tour, full of sights, sounds, and experiences.

Possession by the Spirit.

This assumption separates Black preaching from historical homiletics, because the Black community views the preacher as the vehicle for the transmission of God's message. The Black congregation consciously takes a "high view" of the sermon. Preaching is not simply the shared reflections of the speaker. Preaching is a genuinely charismatic experience. Similar to the freedom of the early church, the word of God moves freely between the preacher, the people, and God. Thus, with all things being equal, it is rare for a Black listener to challenge the preacher on the content of the sermon. Of course, it goes without saying that this relationship to the sermon is also tied to the congregation's perception of the sermon's credibility.

Contextualization. Preaching as simply historical study is unappealing

to the general Black audience, as it is to most others. The preacher and preaching must be incarnationalized at the level of common experience. The sermon must reflect rhetorical devices such as contemporization, colloquialism, and everyday speech. Black believers expect their minister to communicate in their common language. This contextualizing of theological lingo also makes such language less alien to listeners.

Contrary to appearances, the African-American audience is interested in theological discourse. Therefore, the wise theologian/preacher takes the insights of academic theology, subtracts its vocabulary, and baptizes its terminology in the language of the audience. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was a master at this type of transformation of technical theological language.

African-American preaching engages the whole person: hearing, thinking, feeling, and action.

Motivational communication. In African-American preaching there is no sacralizing of the listener's will. The Black pastor informs the audience on what it must do to complete the cycle of the sermon. The sermon is not so much a call for reflection as for action.

Celebration. Celebration culminates in celebration. Celebration as a component of the sermon is a uniquely African-American contribution to homiletics. As far back as Cicero, it was believed that speech should delight the audience. But African-American preaching has advanced the idea a step further, by adding a celebrative, even festive, element to the homiletical endeavor. African-American preaching moves to an intentional climax. If we check the classical texts of

homiletics, we won't find the idea of celebration in preaching. This absence, I believe, comes from the West's somaphobic (bodyfearing) view of the human being. African-American preaching takes wholistic anthropology seriously and engages the whole person: hearing, thinking, feeling, and action. Thus, Black preaching welcomes varied expressions of jubilation, inasmuch as they are the outcome of the rational and relevant sojourn through which the preacher has led the people.

Interestingly, in many Anglo-American congregations, a substantial amount of mental energy is spent in maintaining emotional control, because the public expression of emotion is viewed as conveying a loss of rational control. In Anglo-American community, a sign of rationality is acting "appropriately" in the appropriate forum.⁷ On the contrary, African-American preaching appreciates, celebrates, and encourages the free expression of genuine emotion. This show of emotion, rooted in the notion that the sermon addresses the entire being of the listener, increases the freedom of other worshipers and intensifies the impact of the message.

African-American preaching: style

"Style," says E. L. Epstein, "is the regard that *what* pays to *how*."⁸ Thomas Kilgore points out that "the expectancy in black worship is not about the liturgy, the music, or the offering; it is about what the preacher is going to say, and how he or she is going to say it."⁹ Style and content are not mutually exclusive. Augustine in his *On Christian Doctrine* pointed out that style should be commensurate to the importance of the content. Thus, for Augustine, plain content required ordinary style; extraordinary content called for more elevated style.

The modern African-American audiences expect that the more significant the event, the more important the style of the sermon will be. At big gatherings Black audiences revel in

the style of the message. However, when style substitutes for substance in the sermon and spirituality in the preacher, it becomes an offense that works to the detriment of the message.

What are the elements of style in Black preaching? Henry Mitchell has outlined them well, and I have included several of them here.

Freedom. "The black congregation is very permissive. It accepts a considerable variety of behavior unrelated to the message, in order (consciously or unconsciously) to free preachers to be themselves."

Call and response. Rhythm is an important part of Black preaching, and in this call and response plays a significant role. "Many preachers who pause to breathe or for other reasons receive a response from the audience."

Role playing and storytelling. This aspect of style takes on the character and assumes such aspects as the tone and mannerisms of a given personality.

Slow delivery and building up to climax. The preacher deliberately uses vocal pacing as the sermon marches toward its summit.

Aphorism and hesitation. Clever, pithy statements—along with the impression that the preacher is stumbling, stammering, and reaching for the message—combine to produce a profound effect upon listeners.¹⁰

Dramatic nonfluency. Nonfluency is the inclusion of extraneous vocal elements in preaching, and is used to heighten the sense of expectation of the audience. In traditional homiletics, the lower the number of nonfluencies, the higher the approval rating of the message. Black preaching, however, transforms nonfluency—whether transitional, adversative, or consecutive—into a rhetorical device that advances the sermon.

African-American preaching: music

Black preaching has a close affinity with Black music. Jon Michael Spencer notes: "Rhythm is the element that gives Black preaching locomotion and momentum. Without it preaching would not only be static, it would hardly have an audience."¹¹

Likewise, Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya, in the first major sociological study of the African-American church in 60 years, point out that in the Black church "good preaching and good singing are almost invariably the minimum conditions of a successful ministry."¹²

Improvisation. African-American preaching uses many of the devices present in Black music. For example, consider improvisation. For the African-American preacher, it is not enough simply to talk of the text from the perspective of its facility. The Black preacher does with the text what the Black musician does with score: exercise creativity within bounds, but creativity nonetheless. In the African-American community, improvisation takes place around formulas and set pieces. A set piece is a mobile section of a sermon or song that the preacher/musician can insert into a number of sermons/songs. The formula is a shorter, easily recognizable, sentence that belongs to the folk traditions of the African-American community that immediately trigger a response in the congregation.

James Tinney notes: "Sentence forms (in Black preaching) are also distinctive. Special combinations of sentence patterns contribute to both the antiphonal and the rhythmical qualities. The sentence is usually shorter than in everyday speech. . . . There are phrases that have become familiar in almost all the black churches. Sometimes they are taken from the everyday speech of the black community ('truth is light'), from gospels or spirituals ('my soul looks back and wonders'), or from favorite scriptures ('you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free'). Often these formulas are used to begin sentences or introduce new thoughts; and as much as they form natural divisions. Among these introductions are 'after a while,' 'I can see,' 'Every now and then,' and 'I saw John early one morning.'" ¹³

Every effective Black preacher understands and uses these rhetorical formulas. Formulas are those short familiar sayings that create mood, invoke memory, awaken aspiration, or

activate imagination in the Black listener. Examples:

"The old folks used to say. . . ."

"You don't hear me."

"If it had not been for the Lord. . . ."

"You're not with me this morning."

"The truth is the light."

"You don't know what I'm talking about."

"It's the truth anyhow."

"Can I get a witness?"

Imagination. Another tool Black music and Black preaching share is vicarious imagination. Through the Negro spiritual, the Black musician created a scene at which all the participants in the here and now experienced a foretaste of the "not yet." Think of the song "Were You There?" In this song imagination is operative, and the listener stands at the cross in first person.

Participation is also another element that Black preaching shares with Black music. Music in the Black arena is not just performed, but participated in. This is the real power of African-American gospel music and preaching.

Attestation is also common to both African-American preaching and music. It is the communal affirmation of the goodness of God and the truth of His Word. It is where the audience exercises its right to "testify" to the efficacy of the occasion. Black musicians long for the audience to "get into" the music. Passive listening indicates that something is awry, either in the music, its performance, or in the listener. Black preachers find that celebration empowers the congregation to confess, jubilate, and affirm the message.

African-American preaching: God's gift

Recently I preached a series of nine evening meetings in Australia. Repeatedly pastors asked me, "How do you Black Americans preach like that?" My response? "I don't know—but we just do." However, their deep interest in learning from African-American preaching with an eye toward improving their own preaching in their context raised an important question. Is African-American preaching portable?

Can African-American preaching be transcultural, transsocial, transethnic? Is it limited to one community, or might others benefit from instruction in this art and science?

Warren H. Stewart, Sr., has listed the following principles of African-American preaching that can help any preacher who wishes to benefit from the powerful mode of Black preaching.

"1. Know God to be actively involved in the continuous process of humankind's holistic liberation.

"2. Identify with the Word in such a way that the Word will both support and challenge those to whom the message is directed.

"3. Allow the Holy Spirit working through . . . [your] gifts and talents to create a living experience with the Word in [yourself] . . . first, and then in the lives of those to whom the message is directed.

"4. Proclaim the Word in the common tongue of the majority of those

who will hear [your] . . . message on any given occasion.

"5. Proclaim the Word as dialogue with the audience, and utilize the voice and body to communicate interpretively one's message and its meaning."¹⁴

African-American preaching is God's gift to the Christian church. This preaching assures a suffering, pilgrim community that God loves and cares. Further research, reflection, and cross-cultural dialogue concerning this gift will enhance its performance and make its blessings more readily accessible to the Christian community around the world. ■

¹ David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 469.

² William McClain, *The Liturgy of Zion* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), p. 62.

³ See William Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War, and Women* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1983), pp. 31-46, on how the Bible was twisted to sustain the institution of American slavery.

⁴ Historian Albert J. Raboteau chronicles the testimonies of some of the slaves' rejection of

slavemasters' attempts to exploit Christianity for their own ends in "Religious Life in the Slave Community," in *Slave Religion* (New York: Oxford Press, 1978), pp. 212-243.

⁵ Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1949), pp. 30, 31.

⁶ See Raboteau, p. 42.

⁷ For a discussion of the differences in the relationship to emotion and reason between Blacks and Whites, see Thomas Kochman, *Black and White: Styles in Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

⁸ E. L. Epstein, *Language and Style* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1978), p. 1.

⁹ Thomas Kilgore, Jr., "Preaching in the Black Church," *Christian Ministry* 19 (March-April 1988), p. 19.

¹⁰ See Henry Mitchell, *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), pp. 88, 92, 93, 96, 97.

¹¹ Jon Michael Spencer, *Sacred Symphony* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987), p. 3.

¹² C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African-American Experience* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 346.

¹³ James Tinney, "The Miracle of Black Preaching," *Christianity Today*, January 1976, pp. 14, 15.

¹⁴ Warren H. Stewart, Sr., *Interpreting God's Word in Black Preaching* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1984), p. 71.

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Dealing with trauma

**Andreas M. W.
Bochmann**

Healing and wholeness are possible, even for the most severely abused trauma survivors. What can the pastor do?



Andreas Bochmann recently completed a Ph.D. degree in pastoral counseling. At the present time he is pastor of the Berlin Koepenick church in Berlin, Germany.

At 48 Bill is a complete loner. Ever since he returned from Vietnam he does not like to talk with anyone, not even his wife. He often drives around aimlessly in his pickup truck for hours on end. He is moody and drinks a lot.

Cathy, 32 and single, had been happy and content. But recently she always seems tired and depressed, complains about headaches and nightmares, and cringes if someone addresses her from behind.

Betty is a happy-go-lucky young woman most of the time. She is active in her church and sings in the choir. At times she appears to be different. She seems unable to remember conversations and people, is more argumentative and really strange. But then she is her old self again.

Bill, Cathy, and Betty have one thing in common: they suffer the effects of severe trauma and need help.

What is trauma?

Trauma is an experience that threatens the life and health of an individual or someone close to that person, with the threat going beyond any coping mechanism the individual may possess. If the trauma is human-made, the sense of being overwhelmed and devastated is especially harmful and lasting. Such experiences as cited above illustrate the kind of trauma that war (Vietnam), rape, and child abuse can cause.

Trauma can shatter trust in people, institutions, and even God. It is difficult to believe in a loving God if a grenade ripped to pieces a friend next to you, if you were raped, or if your father abused you as a child. Physi-

ological responses to trauma also make the integration of the experience extremely difficult, resulting in confusion, denial, and isolation.

One way abused children often deal with trauma is by "pretending" that they are not hurting or that somebody else is experiencing the pain. This phenomenon is called *dissociation* and can, if carried over into adult life, result in *multiple personality disorder* (MPD). Some psychiatrists deny the existence of MPD; others diagnose it in almost every patient. Some would suggest that MPD is demon possession and point to increased discoveries of satanic ritual abuse. These discussions should not detract us from recognizing that child abuse (especially sexual abuse, including incest) is more prevalent than previously thought. Child abuse results in deep psychological wounds and possible

Referral resources

American Association of Christian Counselors
2421 West Pratt Avenue,
Suite 1398, Chicago, IL 60645
Phone: 800-526-8673

American Association of Pastoral Counselors
9504A Lee Highway, Fairfax,
VA 22031-2303. Phone: 703-
385-6967. Fax: 703-352-7725

Behavioral Medicine Center,
Loma Linda University
1710 Barton Road, Redlands, CA
92373. Phone: 800-752-5999

VA medical centers
Consult your phone book.

physical injury and should never be blamed on the victim.

Despite the mysterious nature of MPD, it simply is an extreme form of what mental health professionals call *post-traumatic stress disorder* (PTSD). Psychologists began to research this phenomenon when more and more Vietnam veterans showed up in the Veterans Administration hospitals with such symptoms as anxiety, depression, frequent nightmares, flashbacks (horror visions, auditions, or sensations in the waking state), headaches, spaced-out or distant feelings, and suicidal or homicidal fantasies. The researchers found that severe traumatic events can cause immediate or delayed reactions, resulting in such symptoms, independent of the person's background or mental stability. The PTSD was a common occurrence among Vietnam veterans.

Similar reactions were observed in veterans of World War I (often falsely attributed to "shell-shock"), World War II (sometimes called "combat neurosis"), and other wars. Furthermore PTSD is also found in abused and battered women and children, in rape victims, in survivors of catastrophes, and in anyone who survived a traumatic experience. Not all the symptoms have to be present, and many of the symptoms can have causes other than trauma. This makes it sometimes difficult to detect trauma as the cause of a problem.

What you can do

Listen, listen, listen! Trauma victims must be encouraged to voice their experience, pain, humiliation, frustration, and loneliness. Often they have not had an opportunity to share their experiences and feelings with anybody. In fact, they may even try to hide the ugly truth from themselves. But nightmares, flashbacks, cold sweats, and headaches are painful reminders of some dark secret in the past. Often the survivor resorts to some kind of self-treatment and turns to alcohol and/or drugs. If you start to listen in a nonjudgmental way, you can break the cycle of silence and denial and begin to allow a healing process that involves body, mind, and soul.

What about prayer and Bible? The good news is: healing and wholeness are possible, even for the most severely abused trauma survivors. Obviously many Bible texts could be used to help trauma victims. But a word of caution is necessary. Trauma survivors, even if they are believers, may not be able to hear the Word, unless you first have really heard their suffering. It is all too tempting to opt for an easy way out, and "soothe" the pain by simply quoting a Bible text and saying a quick prayer. Often this serves more the pastor's need to avoid the pain, rather than the survivor's need to deal with it. Pray *for* the person, if you cannot pray *with* him or her. And pray for patience and stamina to listen to the horrendous stories that are part of our sinful world. By listening, being deeply moved, and sharing the pain, you will proclaim the gospel loud and clear, long before you open the Bible or bow your head in prayer.

Learn more about trauma. The list of suggested readings provides some relevant literature to learn more about trauma. But here most pastors will quickly reach their limits in time and expertise. Do not attempt therapy if you are not trained for it! Be pastoral in your help, and refer the trauma survivor to a trusted counselor or therapist. Referral is not a cop-out, but a skill that requires tact and sensitivity. Affirm the person in his or her struggle to talk about the trauma. Explain that you want to offer the very best and therefore would like to recommend counselor X, or psychologist Y, or the VA outpatient services (if the person is a veteran). If possible give the person several names to choose from and offer your continued support and availability. You are not giving someone up, but you are utilizing the best resource available for the person's benefit!

Good resources for a referral of the trauma survivor are the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and the more conservative American Association of Christian Counselors. AAPC certified pastoral counselors usually hold at least a master's degree in pastoral counseling in addition to their theological training and have re-

ceived many hours of clinical training and supervision. There are no comparable standards for the AACC. Thus it is advisable to check for other credentials, such as licenses or state certification. For any war-related trauma your parishioner should be referred to the nearest VA medical center, where specialists in trauma work are available, and services are usually free of charge for veterans. The Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center, Loma Linda, California, can also provide referral sources.

One final word of caution. As long as you have to deal with trauma or when referral is not an option, be aware that working with trauma survivors is a highly intense, draining, and painful activity. You will often find yourself confused, angry, sad, or hurting. This is normal and may just give you a taste of what the person you deal with is going through. What is true for them is also true for you. You need someone to talk to. As pastors are bound to confidentiality, this may be a difficult issue for you. However, not getting help can produce a double risk. It can seriously affect you ("secondary traumatization"), making your efforts of pastoral care unaccounted for at best, harmful at worst. Thus the strong recommendation has to be: treat yourself to some counseling and/or supervision. ■

Further reading

Chestor, S. E. *Making Effective Referrals: The Therapeutic Process*. New York: Gardner Press, 1991.

Flannery, R. B. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: The Victim's Guide to Healing and Recovery*. New York: Crossroads Publishing, 1992.

Herman, Judith L. *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. New York: Basic HarperCollins Publisher, 1992.

Putnam, Frank W. *Diagnosis and Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder*. New York: Guilford Press, 1989.

It works if you work it!

Teresa Scott Caine

Helping professionals need a helping program that works.



Teresa S. Caine is a freelance writer from Grand Bay, Alabama.

Statistics indicate an alarming rise in divorce, family violence, teenage delinquencies, addictions, and a host of other dysfunctional problems within every church of every denomination. A survey by the Fuller Institute of Church Growth and Evangelism reveals that 90 percent of pastors do not know how to resolve dysfunctional issues that arise within their churches. Much of the help given by pastors may not even be appropriate. The result? Troubled persons are often driven further into their dysfunction.

Paul Cannon, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor and director of The Bridge, an institution that helps addicts and their families through recovery, says he gets calls from pastors who admit they don't know how to handle many of the problems they face in the ministry. "They care," he says, "but they admit that they are untrained in therapeutic work."

H. B. London, director of Focus on the Family's Pastoral Ministries, says that "most pastors, like other helping professionals, come from dysfunctional backgrounds themselves." Even leaders behave dysfunctionally when they tend to deny the existence of problems or when they attempt to get rid of the persons with the problems. London warns that "the statistics that are true about problems in the overall Christian world are just as true at the local church level."

Cannon also complains about some statistics that are purposely underrated to present a false image. Take, for example, the statement "Only 10 percent of my church members drink alcohol" when the statistics are much higher. "Any group minimizing statis-

tics to protect its ranks hinders the drinker who feels alone."

That hurting cry

Here's a sample of what many members and former members say about much of the church and its leadership:

"They'd like to think the church can handle any problem themselves, but they can't," says one former Adventist who is now in a recovery program for chemical dependency. "They need to understand that my problem is a disease that couldn't be resolved just by their quoting scriptures at me. I needed help beyond what they could give, and they stood in my way of getting it. Rather than admit that they failed, they just got rid of me."

"I still don't understand why I was told to remove my name from the books," confided a former Seventh-day Adventist writer. "I had already received treatment for my alcohol problem and was making amends for past wrongs through a recovery program. Why punish me when I was doing the right thing?"

"I don't see why the church has to treat me like I've just committed the unpardonable sin for divorcing my husband," cried a woman who left her husband because of an abusive situation. She finally left the church also because of the emotional abuse she received from her pastor and fellow church members.

"I was told that it was because my life was centered on self, that I was led into sin, and since I had fallen from God's grace, I was a lost soul," relayed a person who committed adultery. "Through therapy I discovered that it was my early childhood fear of

abandonment that led me to sin, not a life centered on self. The irony is that in the end it was the church that abandoned me, but God's grace saved me anyway and got me through recovery."

"I knew the church didn't like my mom because of her problems," said a teenager who attempted suicide because he felt rejected by the church. "But I was really giving my heart to Jesus and trying to be a good Christian. Why couldn't they accept me? Why did the pastor have to give up on me?"

"Why should I respect and obey my teacher when she never treats me with any respect?" retorted an angry 9-year-old about his Christian teacher who used shame and intimidation tactics to control her students. "I think the grown-ups should practice what they preach!"

Time to listen

If we would only listen to the pain and frustration coming from hurting church members, we would realize the importance of therapeutic skills needed to face today's problems. Drs. Pancoast and Garland, authors of *The Church's Ministry With Families*, say, "A church can minister more effectively to families if it understands the developmental crises and issues which families face. . . . When natural support networks (the church) cannot meet the needs of their individual members, they can be supported by self-help and professional groups designed to deal with specific problems, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon for family members."

London, who pastored a 3,500-member church in Pasadena, California, and later joined Dr. James Dobson at Focus on the Family, says, "Every church should have recovery programs or support groups to meet these needs. The most successful churches are those that can deal with dysfunctionality."

Most large denominations have established institutions with professional, well-trained staff to help recovering addicts, codependents, victims of abuse, etc. These programs have shown a good success rate. So why does the problem still exist at the local church level? It is because the message is not getting to the people.

"Members are being told not to go to AA or other support groups," says Cannon. "We should not think that our doctrines will solve every problem."

London agrees. "Religion alone does not bring the healing we desire. Don't just hope that prayer will make it go away," he says. "Use the resources of the church to bring help. And don't discount good Christian counselors."

"I lost trust in God completely," says one recovering codependent. "I had so many 'why' questions, and I wasn't getting the answers from pastors or church members. They didn't understand my crisis anymore than I did. Then I began attending ACOA (Adult Children of Alcoholics), and there I not only found my answers, but rediscovered God in a whole new healthier light. I think I will always trust Him now, no matter what!"

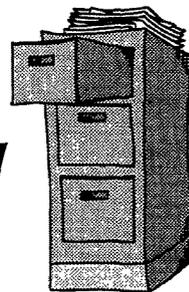
"I'm a better person since I went through recovery," says a former drug addict, "but it has been difficult finding church acceptance. They never let me forget my past sins. I wish they would forgive and forget like God does. But they don't understand how a recovery program works, and so they don't trust it."

Because the 12-Step concept is the most effective remedy for dysfunctional problems, pastors, evangelists, and church leaders alike would find it a powerful soul-redeeming tool. To use it, they must be educated in it and accept its principles in their own lives. The members would greatly benefit from a pastor who understands the true nature and cause of their problems, and who knows how to refer them to help.

Even before they enter the ministry, prospective pastors should be taught about the cycles of family dysfunctionality. Seminary courses need to focus on counseling and referral techniques. Pastors already in the field could benefit greatly from seminars and workshops by *trained* professionals. The Institute of Alcoholic and Drug Dependency at Andrews University has information and materials designed to educate pastors about these issues.

But any recovery program can work only if pastors and church leaders get involved with it. "It works if you work it!" ■

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Avoiding adultery

Marvin Wray

Since all are vulnerable, honesty and accountability are essential.



Marvin Wray is the ministerial director of the Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Staunton, Virginia.

I'll never forget the first time I heard about a fellow minister who lost his ministry through marital unfaithfulness. I was a young worker in the northwestern United States. It was camp pitch time, and we pastors were having our morning meeting. The president stood and related how a few years ago one of the pastors had fallen from some scaffolding during camp pitch and died. It was a sobering remembrance, and things were pretty quiet. Then he disclosed that there had been another tragedy: yet another worker had just "fallen," with deadly results. The realization of what he was telling us made an unforgettable impact on me.

Well, many years have passed since that day at camp pitch, and I don't even want to recall the many sad variations I have heard on the theme. Too many friends and colleagues lost their ministry, and it hurts each time I hear about it. I'm also shaken by the realization that I too could fall. My only hope is that God will help me keep my focus on Him and my senses under His control!

I am being vulnerable and dangerously frank because it is high time for us to address frankly some of our earthly problems. As Christian men and women we need to be confronted with and confront ourselves with the grim reality that we are sinful beings. We need, by God's grace, to become proactively involved in building hedges to protect ourselves, our families, and our church.

The stimulus for this article comes from the testimony of a former pastor in the July 1992 *Ministry*, in an article entitled "I Committed Adultery." I'm concerned about whether his analysis is accurate about what happened. You see, I have a close friend whose story so closely parallels his that perhaps he is the same person. In any case, I care deeply. I suggest it would be good for him to be a bit more realistic and objective. There is help available for pastors in trouble—if they will be honest. The first step is to recognize that options do actually exist.

Self-analysis

One option is to continue in denial, refusing to admit that danger exists and promising yourself that you will not let things get completely out of control. Another option would be to accept that things are not right but rationalize away the warnings and do nothing. I think all Christians would agree that neither of these first two options is proper—yet they are the ones most often chosen.

The honest truth is that the road to sexual involvement is exciting. We may fool ourselves into thinking that it is innocent at first, but the feelings generated by attraction to the opposite sex are powerful and often addictive. How much better it is to evaluate honestly any relationship that conscience brings to mind, being aware of the obvious danger signals.

Let's review some of those briefly.

1. *Do you find the person physi-*

cally attractive? There is certainly nothing abnormal, unhealthy, or unspiritual about this. I mention it only because when you can acknowledge a physical attraction, you can be more alert to other signals.

2. *Do you find yourself frequently thinking of the individual when not in his or her presence?* This could be the first step in a relational fantasy, and while you don't want to become paranoid, neither should you ignore an important early signal.

3. *Do you find yourself anticipating counseling sessions, visits, or projects where you know you will be together?*

4. *Do you deliberately arrange or schedule extra appointments?*

5. *Is physical touch a regular and anticipated part of your relationship?* Hand-holding during prayer, a touch of understanding or concern, or a friendly hug can easily carry more feeling than is intended for either party. Be aware that while you may feel nothing improper, the other person may be having difficulty.

These are just a few of the early signals to watch for. They can seem so innocent that you might easily dismiss them as trite. If that is happening, I would count that as signal number 6: You are either in denial or ready to practice it.

What if the situation has already advanced into a full-blown affair? What are the options then? At this level either you are practicing rigid denial and rationalization or you are experiencing enormous guilt and shame—or some combination of both. My first plea is: Be honest with yourself. Allow the Holy Spirit to convict you of your sin and show you how you got into this situation. Major questions must be dealt with: Where do I go from here? How do I get there? Who needs to be told? Should I leave the ministry?

You will undoubtedly need some help with these questions. If you are truly repentant and remorseful and at the same time frightened, it is difficult to be objective and fair. You need to consider the best results for yourself, your family, and your ministry. The problem so often is that ministers are

“go it alone” types. It is difficult for them to reach out for help. We have heard so often or perhaps even experienced, the horror stories of others who reached out and had that shared confidence used against them.

Help is available

There are resources available for pastors in trouble or in danger of trouble. Consider the Ministry Care Line, operated by Kettering Clergy Care Center. By calling a toll-free number in North America, church employees or family members of *subscribing conferences* can access a trained professional, remaining anonymous if desired. Lines are open Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. (Eastern U.S. time), and evenings Monday through Thursday from 7:30 to 10:00, except on holidays. Every conference should subscribe to the Ministry Care Line or a similar service and encourage workers to use it. We all need to reach out and touch someone at some point in life. For further information call (800) 324-8628.

Another resource is the Behavioral Medicine Center at Loma Linda University Medical Center, which also offers a wide variety of help programs that can be initially accessed toll-free: (800) 752-5999. The center will put a pastor in touch with professional assistance or discuss his or her needs directly in a crisis situation.

Obviously, if you are in trouble you need to make some effort to get help before it's too late. Take that initial step in order to be fair to yourself and fair to your family and your church.

Acknowledging attraction

I'd like to deal with this by just speaking for myself, and you can jump in where you feel comfortable. I'm going to risk sharing personal information because I am tired of seeing quality individuals either lose or severely impede their ministry. Please be assured that I have no latent sins to confess, nor do I have any desire to be anything but faithful to my wife of 23 years or to my Lord. But I have a healthy fear because I know myself.

To remain faithful, I need to proactively seek the help of Christ and of my closest human allies. I have come to grips with who I am. The truth is that I still find women attractive. Now stop and think about that before you fax a copy of this article to my conference president. That's not really so startling, is it? Actually, my wife thinks it is good news, because that means I still find her attractive as well.

Acknowledging an attraction is a vital first step in coming to terms with it. It reminds me that I am human, that all my systems are working, and that I need to remember whose servant I have chosen to be. This does not mean that I can't develop friendships with women I find attractive. Quite the contrary, but it does mean I am aware that my God-given senses have been tainted by millennia of sin. This first step takes place only in my own mind. Sometimes a second step is necessary.

Recently I was conducting a smoking cessation program. We had a good response with about 60 participants. After the first night's program a very attractive and well-dressed woman came up and began talking. She shared some of her background, letting me know she was divorced. She also complimented me on my presentation and on my suit and tie. Now and then as she spoke she touched my arm. She also was the last participant to leave.

It did not take a rocket scientist to figure out this development was potentially dangerous. My antennas were working. Now, in saying that, what do I mean? Was I wrestling with whether or not I wanted to pursue a relationship with this woman? Not at all. I was recognizing the reality of temptation, knowing that unchecked and unguarded emotions could lead to disaster. What did I do? I thanked her for her compliments and assured her we would provide help with the tobacco habit. Then I also let her know that I needed to get on the road so I could have a little time with my wife that evening.

Upon arriving home, I discussed with Ingrid how things had gone, and part of my report went like this: “There

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is a very pretty young woman there, and I think she likes me." Now, what do you think the chances are that I am going to call my wife the next evening and tell her I will be a little late? That, my friends, is called proactive accountability. And it works! When I came home the second night the first thing my wife said to me was "How's your girlfriend?" She did have a smile on her face.

My wife was not necessarily thrilled when I first began to share with her these situations. She changed, however, when I helped her to understand that my reason for doing so was to help ensure that I always would remain faithful. I do not want to endanger my relationship with my wife. I have seen disaster strike so many seemingly safe homes that I have developed a healthy fear that it could happen to me too.

Don't forget *phileo*

Recently I did a study involving the three faces of love depicted in the Greek words *agape*, *phileo*, and *eros*. One conclusion I drew was that no woman in the world can give me through *eros* alone what my wife can give me through *eros* accompanied with 23 years of *phileo*. The sexual relationship between a husband and wife is continually enhanced by the process of working through and sharing all of the other experiences of life.

Another interesting note is that frequently when I share with my wife that I sense a somewhat more than normal attachment by a church member, her response is "Well, good morning! I saw that a year ago."

Gentlemen, listen to your wives. They know these things.

Accountability

Beyond the safeguards discussed so far, I'd like to recommend strongly to each man: Cultivate an accountability relationship with another man. We all need a soul mate whom we can go to with any problem, any fear, or any confession, knowing we will never be repulsed. For men, this person should not be a woman. I have men challenge me on this all the time, but I am getting more set on my position every day.

There is a kind of intimacy that

develops when we open up to someone. This level of intimacy should not be shared with a woman other than your wife. The second reason that this comrade should be a man is simply that a woman cannot see all things from the same perspective. That statement is not chauvinistic or sexist; it's a fact of life. Only a man can fully understand my viewpoint on some things.

How do you begin and build such an accountability friendship? You already have a certain group of friends whom you enjoy being with more than others. Choose one or two and simply ask them if they would be interested in meeting together once a week, twice a month, or some other agreed-upon frequency. Spend some time just sharing how things are going. Perhaps you will agree to read a chapter or two of a designated book beforehand and discuss it when you meet. Take some time to pray together about individual and common concerns. Go slow. Don't reveal deeply personal information until you know it is a trustworthy friendship. I can tell you from personal experience that it is a wonderful thing to have a friend whose confidence and judgment I have come to trust.

The bottom line? Be deliberate in your choices. "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2, NIV). Perhaps if my colleague who wrote in *Ministry* about committing adultery had considered these options, his course would have been different. We will never know. But now you and I can avoid the pain and loss suffered by all affected by such sad occurrences. While shunning sin, we also can enjoy the fullness of the ministry and the relationships God has given us, trusting Him to keep us from falling.

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Cor. 10:12, 13, NIV).

An overlooked crisis resource

Julia C. S. Vernon

Communion can be more than a scheduled quarterly event.



Julia C. S. Vernon is a chaplain in Salt Lake City, Utah.

My patient was a frail, elderly woman. Under religion on her chart were the code letters "OTH," a catchall term for "other" religious groups not large enough to warrant their own code. Mabel* seemed withdrawn into herself, a bundle of misery trying to be invisible.

Mabel's illness was a crisis point of unprecedented magnitude in her life; she was waiting for test results that might spell disaster. Around her room were evidences of a spiritual background: a Bible, devotional book, religious get-well cards. Our conversation revealed a woman of faith who enjoyed a personal walk with Jesus. Yet seemingly incongruously, she was suffering from spiritual thirst and loneliness. Mabel's personal relationship with Jesus added to her discomfort because she felt it was "sinful" for her to be struggling spiritually "like an unbeliever." She seemed in need of something extra, something above and beyond the normal everyday spiritual food and support she was receiving.

As our visit drew to a close, I asked if there was anything in the way of spiritual ministry she needed. I'll never forget her answer. "It has been so long since I had Communion. I would dearly love to have it."

I responded, "Perhaps I could call your church and ask the minister to bring Communion to you."

Mabel looked startled, then shook her head. "Oh, no. We don't do that."

"Your church doesn't bring Com-

munion into the hospital?" I asked.

"We do," she replied. "But we have Communion only four times a year, and it isn't scheduled for now. But I would love to have it." Her voice trailed off, and I saw tears trickle down her cheeks.

"May I ask you what the name of your church family is?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. I'm a Seventh-day Adventist."

An overlooked resource

Mabel felt the special need for Christ's presence as she endured one of the most crushing, frightening experiences of her life. I'm sure local Adventist ministers would not have refused her need. My patient, however, suffered in silent longing because of her limited, ritualistic understanding of Communion and its potential role in a spiritual crisis.

Without question, Adventists as a people as well as individuals will be in grave crisis soon. We all know the importance of spiritual resources that can prepare us, such as the Bible, prayer, abiding in Jesus, the latter rain, and Christian armor. One often-overlooked element of crisis support is Communion.

Hospitalization is a model of church members in tribulation, a concentrated dose of the many trials, emotional stresses, and needs that people encounter in crises. Having labored with many patients over the years, I've come to believe that Communion in the hospital environment is a model of what

the sacrament can become for us in our soon-coming time of trouble.

Meet Earl

Earl's story is a shining example. Far from home, Earl had been diagnosed with a terminal illness that left him weak and confined to a wheelchair. Cut off from all familiar supports and comforts, he pondered the possibility of renewing his relationship with God. He remembered the spiritual fullness he had enjoyed in the Adventist church of his childhood, and he longed for a return of that grace. In that state of yearning he reached out to Jesus. With joy he confessed his sins. Still he felt incomplete, needing something more intimate, some tangible celebration of the nearness of Christ and the Christian hope.

One day an Adventist elder was visiting another patient in that unit. Upon learning about Earl, he visited with him. When preparing to leave, the elder asked if there was anything Earl would like. Hesitantly, he answered, "Well, there is, but I don't know if it's possible . . . I'd like to have Communion. I feel like it would be the greatest blessing in my life right now."

"Is tomorrow soon enough?" the elder inquired.

"Yes, that would be wonderful," Earl replied. The next day the elder returned and held a Communion service just for Earl. They prayed and wept together. Earl testified: "I haven't felt so close to the Lord since I was a boy. Something happened just now. Now I know He'll stay with me."

This was the beginning of a transformation in Earl's life. He still had worries, misery, and emotional challenges; but now he also had spiritual staying power. He had an obvious Source of spiritual support not drawn upon before and a keen sense of God's nearness. These changes did not happen because Communion was some kind of mystical potion; that sacrament was simply the vehicle of the Holy Spirit in reinforcing for Earl the reality of Christ's nearness and His care.

Not just quarterly

Sometimes the Communion service assumes the semblance of a ritual that must be performed only four times a year, only in the sanctuary, and only with the full array of pastors, elders, and deaconesses. However, the purposes and benefits of Communion are wonderfully broader and freer than this. Although the order, doctrine, solemnity, and manner of Communion are not to be subjected to wildly diverse experimentation, which would rob them of sacredness and meaning,¹ Communion can bring tremendous benefit outside of its traditional setting. For example, pastors frequently bring Communion to shut-ins and patients after the celebration at the church. Also, many revivals and other high days are blessed by extra Communion services.

"It is the means by which His great work for us is to be kept fresh in our minds."

The descriptions of the Communion given by Ellen White in her chapter on the Lord's Supper in *The Desire of Ages* mesh wonderfully with the needs of Christians in crises:

1. *The need to meet with Christ more tangibly.* Isolated from familiar support systems, surroundings, and customs, many patients sense an intensified longing for more tangible connections to God. For example, a person may take a Bible and keep it beside her or him in the hospital bed.

2. *The need to focus one's faith.* The isolation and depersonalization of hospitalization can destabilize the soul, particularly with the added threat of major medical problems being revealed by tests or the pain of serious illness. At such times concrete tokens of faith can inspire and focus faith in Christ.

Speaking of the Communion service, Ellen White observed: "It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence. . . . All who come with their faith fixed upon Him will be greatly blessed."²

3. *The need for reassurance of deliverance.* In times of medical stress or tribulation, eternal realities and the need of divine deliverance weigh much on the soul. Even if a person already has accepted salvation in Christ, often he or she thirsts for some token of spiritual deliverance—the very reason for Communion. "The ordinance of the Lord's Supper was given to commemorate the great deliverance wrought out as the result of the death of Christ. Till He shall come the second time in power and glory, this ordinance is to be celebrated. It is the means by which His great work for us is to be kept fresh in our minds."³

4. *The need to channel brokenheartedness and contrition.* Often personal crises stimulate self-examination and conviction. Prayer is enough to carry repentance to the cross for cleansing. Sometimes, however, further healing is needed—not for salvation, but to bring peace to the broken heart. In such cases Communion offers a special balm. Regarding this, Ellen White wrote: "Christ by the Holy Spirit is there to set the seal to His own ordinance. He is there to convict and soften the heart. Not a look, not a thought of contrition, escapes His notice. For the repentant, brokenhearted one He is waiting. All things are ready for that soul's reception. He who washed the feet of Judas longs to wash every heart from the stain of sin."⁴

5. *The need for spiritual light and peace.* Physical crises often act as "cloud collectors." Clouds of pity, doubt, pain, fear, and spiritual oppression gather and linger. In this atmosphere peace is hard to come by and harder to keep. Here too, Communion has a contribution to make: "Now they come to meet with Christ. They are not to stand in the shadow of the cross, but

in its saving light. They are to open the soul to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. With hearts cleansed by Christ's most precious blood, in full consciousness of His presence, although unseen, they are to hear His words, 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you' (John 14:27)."⁵ The Communion, in a unique way, brings Christians out of the shadow and into the Sonshine.

6. *The need of hope.* Often this is the most vital need of a hospitalized patient, even if her or his case is not serious. The blessed hope, which Communion was designed to revitalize for those enduring trials, is the most precious gift any pastor can give to someone suffering or frightened: "In their tribulation they found comfort in the hope of their Lord's return. Unspeakably precious to them was the thought, 'As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come' (1 Cor. 11:26)."⁶ If we develop a regard for Communion as a divine resource outside of the quarterly church context, it could bring tremendous blessings of hope in tribulation.

7. *The need for familiar tokens of Christ's love.* In any unfamiliar environment, familiar tokens—especially tokens of Christ's love—bring healing to the spirit. A hospitalized child, for example, will seldom relax until in the company of a familiar "friend," such as a doll or stuffed animal. Then, content with this token that the love of home is still available, the child will rest. On a spiritual level, we too need familiar tokens of Christ's continuing love and a renewal of His assurances. Referring specifically to the Communion, Ellen White wrote: "These are the things we are never to forget. The love of Jesus, with its constraining power, is to be kept fresh in our memory. Christ has instituted this service that it may speak to our senses of the love of God that has been expressed in our behalf. There can be no union between our souls and God except through Christ. . . His sacrifice is the center of our hope. Upon this we must fix our faith."⁷ Persons in crisis often need a more tangible voice to speak of Christ's

love. Communion speaks with just the right tone to give them assurance.

9. *The need of personalization.* Hospital routine and medical procedures (like homelessness, ostracism, imprisonment, other kinds of tribulation) serve to depersonalize patients. Their clothes are taken and replaced with an anonymous, generic costume. Their distinctive names are reduced to information on a label. The body is

invaded, privacy is nonexistent. Eating, sleeping, socializing, and even private bodily functions are no longer under personal control. Patients must conform to the schedules and demands of others. In this context they desperately need assurances of worth and identity. Most precious are those reflected in the atonement. God loved this patient enough as an individual of worth in His sight to die for her or him.



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Perhaps there is no better reassurance of that worth and identity than Holy Communion. In a physical, tangible way that internalizes the reality of heaven's love, Communion transcends any depersonalizing influences in the environment. This is true only when celebrated spiritually rather than as a formality, with full knowledge of what it represents.

"The ordinances that point to our Lord's humiliation and suffering are regarded too much as a form. They were instituted for a purpose. Our senses need to be quickened to lay hold of the mystery of godliness. . . . Our eternal interests demand that we show faith in Christ. . . . 'He that eateth my flesh,' He says, 'and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.' . . . To the holy Communion this scripture in a special sense applies. As faith contemplates our Lord's great sacrifice, the soul assimilates the spiritual life of Christ. That soul will receive spiritual strength from every Communion. The service forms a living

connection by which the believer is bound up with Christ, and thus bound up with the Father. In a special sense it forms a connection between dependent human beings and God."⁸

Dispensing with superstition

Seventh-day Adventists have always labored to keep Communion free of elements of superstition that might degrade it into being a supposedly magic ritual, possessing power apart from living faith. As part of this effort, early Adventists limited it to once a year. Then Ellen White wrote: "The washing of feet and partaking of the Lord's Supper should be more frequently practiced."⁹ From that evolved the plan of formally observing Communion four times per year. Nothing, however, restricts us to only those four observances. On special occasions many of our churches add extra Communion services.

It is good to safeguard Communion against being taken for granted or becoming a rite of superstition. But while

we must beware of promoting any view of Communion as a cure-all or magic potion, we should consider allowing it a larger role in the lives of our people. With pastoral guidance, we might come to see it as a much greater resource in times of trial than it is now. Unspeakably precious is the thought: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." ■

* Names have been changed.

¹ See *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1986), p. 79.

² Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 656.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 652, 653.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 656.

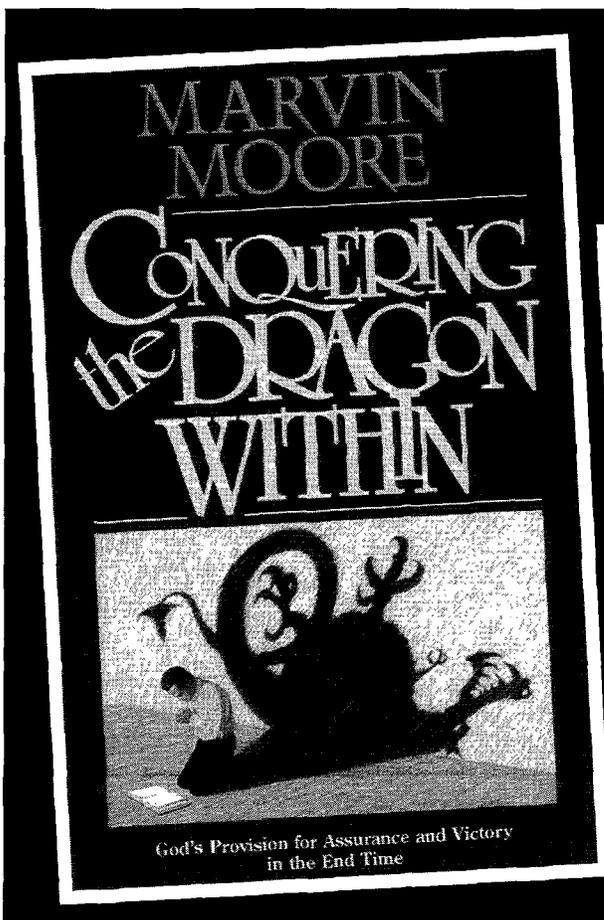
⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 659.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 660, 661.

⁹ ———, *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1945), p. 116.



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The fallen clergy: any hope?

Do we need to develop a system of redemptive restoration for pastors who experience a moral fall?

Norman K. Miles

James Cress's article "A Call to Consistency" (November 1994) addresses a very critical concern in the Adventist community. There has always been some sexual misconduct among the clergy, but the church has traditionally held a high moral standard regarding the conduct of its ministers in this area. The church has a right to expect exemplary moral conduct from its ministers. It therefore insists that violation of the code of acceptable conduct cannot be ignored. Our present policies are the result of such a position, coupled with a belief that stern measures are an effective deterrent to those who might be on the verge of misconduct and an appropriate message to the entire community of faith.

These policies are well-meaning

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Viewpoint is designed to allow readers an opportunity to express opinions regarding matters of interest to their colleagues. The ideas expressed in this feature are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or the opinions of the Ministry staff.

You are invited to submit your ideas to Viewpoint on any topic; however, the editors reserve the right to make a final decision regarding the appropriateness or suitability for publication.—Editors

attempts to address a serious issue in a responsible manner. However, those who have the responsibility of implementing the policies see the need for a system of redemption and restoration. Anyone who has served as a pastor knows that no one, no matter how devoted, is beyond the reach of sexual misconduct. Many ministers who are guilty of a moral fall were committed workers who found themselves entangled in Satan's web because they were either unaware of the danger signs or believed that they were beyond such things. By the time they realized they were snared, it was too late to do anything about the situation but to confess and accept the consequences, or hide the problem and hope that it would go undiscovered.

Conference presidents, executive committees, and in some cases local churches have been reluctant to discipline a truly repentant worker because no standard redemptive policy is in place. The current policy does not allow for a person guilty of sexual sin ever to serve as a denominational employee again. Since many believe this policy is too severe, they circumvent it by allowing the person to resign and retain credentials, by terminating for reasons other than sexual misconduct, or by any number of other creative methods.

The result is a crazy quilt of practices that in many cases diminishes the seriousness of the problem and lowers the respect of the parishioners for the clergy in general and the conference leadership in particular. Moreover, we become very vulnerable to legal actions when we knowingly shift workers who have committed sexual sins to other places. The church is quietly paying large sums of money to settle such cases. We desperately need a consistent policy, but one that has a provision and procedure for restoration when that is deemed advisable.

Cress quotes a resolution of the Ministerial Association regarding clergy sexual misconduct. The second point of this resolution says that "it is unreasonable to ask members to trust pastors who have engaged in sexual misconduct." I disagree. It is no more unreasonable for members to trust a person who has been guilty of sexual sin than it is to trust people who have been guilty of other sins. If our past sins determined whether we could be trusted to lead, many whom we revere as significant and inspiring leaders would never have had the opportunity to lead, including Moses the murderer, David the adulterer, Peter the betrayer, or Paul the persecutor.

The Bible has notable examples of leaders who were guilty of terrible

sins but were rehabilitated. One of the most wonderful aspects of the Christian message is that people who have sinned can be forgiven, cleansed, and completely changed. We teach people that Jesus can redeem and restore people. Whenever possible, restoration should be our goal for fallen pastors. To do otherwise is not to have compassion at all, no matter what we say.

I wish the church would utilize its energies to help administrators develop a system which could help us salvage some fallen ministers. Such a system could have five stages:

Repentance. The guilty pastor should show significant evidence of repentance and a real effort to correct the wrongs the immoral behavior has caused.

Cessation from public ministry. A minister guilty of a moral fall should be required to cease any public ministry for a definite period of time. This could vary between one and two years. During this period the minister should not be allowed to preach, teach Sabbath School, lead meetings, or otherwise engage in public aspects of worship and church leadership.

Counseling. The minister should be required to undergo a specific counseling program that should include an extended period of spiritual counseling with a qualified counselor. This service should also be made available to the minister's family, the other party involved, and his/her family.

Observation and gradual involvement. A fallen minister could be gradually involved in Bible studies and other nonpublic ministerial work under close observation and direction during the time of the minister's censure.

Restoration. When a fallen minister has met all of the previous requirements and is considered rehabilitated, that minister could be recommended for ministerial employment on a probationary basis.

Similar systems are already in place in some denominations. If we had something like this to use, we could have the consistency we need while making provision for those who could and should be restored to denominational service. ■

Taming the beast within us

Ken Hornok

Lust can devour us if we don't keep it under check.



Ken Hornok, D.Min., is the pastor of Midvalley Bible church, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Why is immorality so hard to resist? Why does a man with so much to lose risk an affair? Does lack of romance in marriage drive a man to another woman? Is it an issue of power and control? Is it the challenge of conquering the forbidden? In any case, what can we do when the beast within us wants to jump the fence?

In his book *Hedges* Jerry B. Jenkins says, "One of the major causes of marital breakups in the Christian community is the lack of protective hedges that spouses should plant around their marriages, their heads, their hearts, their eyes, and their hands." He quotes evangelist Robert M. Abbot: "None of us plans to have moral accidents, but we must also plan *not* to! [We] must learn to keep plenty of space between us and sinful acts, so we can start braking soon enough to stop before it is too late."¹

Here are some principles that can help us apply the brakes to temptation and lust.

Realize our vulnerability

Public people attract public. Because ministers are so visible, the congregation gets to know them and their spouses personally. Some would fantasize about their pastors even as they are preaching. Some would even pursue a calculated relationship with pastors or their spouses. Pastors must be aware of their vulnerability, and not encourage any close attachment.

Judi, a pastor's wife, felt that a man in the congregation was being flirtatious with her. One day when he complimented her appearance, she turned to her husband and said, "Did you hear that? Barry likes my outfit." Involving her husband made Barry aware that she interpreted his remark as casual and harmless, whether he intended it that way or not.

No one is immune from attraction to someone else. It is dangerous to feel exempt from sexual sin, or to deny that it could happen to you. Satisfaction in marriage is a deterrent, yes, but that alone is not enough. We need to cultivate a healthy fear that compromise in morality will sabotage our ministry.

The Bible does not admonish us to control lust; instead it commands us to "flee also youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22). The word "flee" means run like a fugitive. Lust is like a house fire. If we don't get out in the first minute, we are going to get hurt. The first time we feel attracted to someone or feel stimulated by someone emotionally or physically, that's the time to flee.

Help our spouses stay above reproach

Satan targets ministers and their spouses. We must pray for each other, and trust each other not giving our spouse any reason for jealousy or suspicion. The only safe flirting we may do is with the person we are married to.

When I am with another woman, I try not to say or do anything I would not do if my wife were present. Occasionally my wife and I discuss women she thinks I need to be careful around, and I alert her to men I wouldn't trust.

Predetermine what we will do

The point is simple: be like Joseph. Eighty-five percent of Christian leaders who have fallen say that the affair occurred with someone they were counseling. Pastors must know what to do if a counseling situation becomes uncomfortable.

One pastor limits his counseling of women to three sessions. By then he can determine the nature of the problem and recommend other women who can help her.

Another pastor I know never counsels a woman alone. He asks her to bring a friend who knows about her problems and is trying to help. Or he asks if his wife or secretary can sit in. Billy Graham once said that he made a covenant with God when he began his ministry that he'd never be alone in a car with any woman, including his secretary.

Confess persistent temptations to someone

James tells us when lust is conceived, it gives birth to sin (James 1:15). Lust thrives in an environment of secrecy. Sometimes we cannot prevent the conception, but we can certainly refuse to let it gestate in secret. We can abort lustful thought, habits, and temptations by getting them out in the open.

In an article in *Leadership*, "The War Within," the author poignantly describes his battle with pornography. After 10 agonizing years, he finally began to sense victory was possible. His first step was admitting his problem to a trusted

tion, she discovered that admitting the problem helped her face it. We agreed that we could speak freely to each other of our problems and thus minister to each other. If a spouse is unwilling to hear your confessions, confide in a close friend who will pray for and with you.

Fast-forward to the consequences

Lust promises more than it can deliver. Mental and physical affairs are exciting for a season, but their end results are devastating. Jerry Jenkins says, "Once that first step has been taken down the road of self-deceit and rationalization, there is no turning back. The key is preventive maintenance."³

Bob, a minister, developed a growing friendship with his secretary. Both had high moral standards and good marriages, so they assumed their conversations were harmless, even after they started lunching together. Soon they were talking at a deeper level, exchanging compliments and sharing intimacies. Bob made his coworker feel loved and appreciated. She made him feel good about himself. Inevitably he compared the secretary, whose faults he rarely saw, with his wife, and his marriage bore the impact.

Eventually Bob realized he was involved in an emotional affair. He began to consider the price he would pay in his marriage and family life, his career, and his own integrity if he did not end the relationship. After explaining everything to his wife they both decided he should seek a new parish.

Bob still struggles with memories of the other woman and the feelings of significance she provided, but he tries to resist such thoughts, not feast on them.

We as pastors are vulnerable to the world, Satan, and our own flesh. Scripture exhorts us to overcome the world, resist Satan, and put off the sins of the flesh. Lust is a beast that can devour us unless we tame it and keep it under check. ■

"None of us plans to have moral accidents, but we must also plan *not* to!"

Christian peer. Eventually he also confessed to his wife, who had the grace to forgive, and helped him shoulder the problem.²

Confession cleanses the soul. It holds us accountable. After confessing to God, talk the problem over with someone you can trust. Talking it over defuses lust. James tells us to "confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16, RSV). Like all sins, lust is self-deceptive. Talking about our temptations helps us see them objectively and deal with them decisively.

Early in our ministry I learned the value of openness with my wife. At first she was not secure enough to understand my vulnerability and weaknesses. Confession of my feelings hurt her, arousing jealousy and blame. However when she experienced sexual tempta-

¹ Jerry B. Jenkins, *Hedges: Loving Your Marriage Enough to Protect It* (Brentwood, Tenn.: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), pp. 1, 82.

² Name withheld, "The War Within," *Leadership* 13, No. 4 (Fall 1992): 106-109.

³ Jenkins, p. 64.

Are you a self-starter?

Richard G. Ensman, Jr.

Self-starters are made, not born.

Just for a moment think about the “human dynamos” you know. Those who exhibit unflagging energy. Those who possess a creative flair for mobilizing others toward a common goal. Those who have an uncanny ability to make things happen in their personal and professional lives. These are the self-starters, who seem to make the world go round.

Self-starters have no special genetic makeup that gives them their energy and flair. They are made, not born. They had to learn the traits and skills needed to accomplish great things.

How many self-starter traits do you understand—and have—right now? To find out, take the brief “self-starter quiz” on the next page. Consider how much each statement describes you and your behavior and then score yourself, 2 for statements that strongly represent you and your behavior, 1 for those that represent your behavior some of the time, and 0 for those that generally do not represent you.

Now, take the quiz (see page 25). Add your scores. If you scored between 45 and 60, you’ve done well. In all probability, you understand what it takes to be a true self-starter, and you’re probably practicing those traits right now. If you have a score over 45 and don’t feel confident about self-starting abilities, you’re probably not aware

of the many things you’ve learned about initiative and success-oriented behavior in years gone by; you do, however, have a genuine ability to make positive things happen around you.

If you scored between 30 and 44, you’re on your way! Use the traits identified in this quiz as a guide to future reflection and action. Try to internalize these principles, and you’ll gradually find yourself practicing them in your daily life.

If you scored below 30, don’t despair! Spend time with successful people around you. Watch the actions of people who seem to have an uncanny ability to make things happen, whoever they are, whatever positions they hold. Try to model your behavior after theirs. Read up on the ingredients of professional success. Try to make your personal and professional attitude just a bit more positive each and every day. Then in six months take this brief quiz again; you may find yourself inching forward on the road to success.

And as the months and years pass, continue traveling that road. With determination, practice, and enthusiasm, you’ll find in time that you are nearing your objective. You may find, in fact, that your journey is just as vibrant as the sparkling qualities you exhibit as a self-starter each day. ■

Richard G. Ensman, Jr., is a syndicated columnist and writes from Rochester, New York.

Self-starter Quiz

1. I set ambitious goals regularly.	2	1	0
2. I seek out new people and new experiences, especially those I'm not familiar with.	2	1	0
3. I'm confident and decisive.	2	1	0
4. I'm willing to call meetings or initiate action on short notice if there's potential for a big payoff.	2	1	0
5. I'm challenged to seek out experiences that I dislike or am afraid of.	2	1	0
6. I keep my casual doubts to myself.	2	1	0
7. When I wake up each day, I know what I want to accomplish over the next 24 hours.	2	1	0
8. I don't hesitate to admit failure and cut my losses when a project doesn't seem to be working the way it was intended.	2	1	0
9. I communicate my ideas and my vision with enthusiasm to other people.	2	1	0
10. I never procrastinate on priority projects.	2	1	0
11. I do procrastinate on trivial and relatively unimportant matters.	2	1	0
12. I try to model my own behavior after the behavior of other successful self-starters.	2	1	0
13. Each day I spend time on projects and activities that will likely result in success.	2	1	0
14. I do important things first.	2	1	0
15. I note my small victories publicly.	2	1	0
16. I set deadlines and benchmarks for myself when I undertake a new task.	2	1	0
17. While I freely admit my limits and weaknesses, I find ways to compensate for them.	2	1	0
18. I try to mobilize others toward goals and actions that I believe to be important.	2	1	0
19. When I plan, I am determined to seek out obstacles—and ways to overcome them.	2	1	0
20. I read the biographies of active and successful self-starters.	2	1	0
21. I look for feedback from others and try to use it to improve my own efforts.	2	1	0
22. I take responsibility for my failures, and am quick to share credit for my successes.	2	1	0
23. I complement my strengths and talents with the unique strengths of other people.	2	1	0
24. I enthusiastically ask for help when I need it.	2	1	0
25. When I ask others for assistance, I try to create win-win situations that can benefit everyone involved.	2	1	0
26. While I consider myself a true visionary, I am realistic about what I can accomplish in a limited period of time.	2	1	0
27. After I've achieved a triumph I look forward to even greater success in the future.	2	1	0
28. I'm excited about the future.	2	1	0
29. I always look for the positive, even when I experience failure or frustration.	2	1	0
30. I'm an optimist.	2	1	0

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The many faces of power

James A. Cress

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18).

Since Jesus first uttered those words, His followers have tried to appropriate some of this power for themselves. Jesus' own disciples constantly bickered about who would be the greatest and who would achieve the most prominent positions in the kingdom they were convinced He was about to establish.

Today we are no less fascinated than they were by the attainment and use of power. It is important for us, as pastors called to lead God's people, to understand the proper use of power, as well as to learn to avoid its abuse.

Ted Engstrom, in the introduction to his book *The Making of a Christian Leader*, says, "Solid, dependable, loyal, strong leadership is one of the most desperate needs in America and in our world today. We see the tragedy of weak men in important places—little men in big jobs. . . . When we decry the scarcity of leadership talent in our society, we are not talking about a lack of people to fill administrative or executive positions. . . . What we are deeply concerned about is a scarcity of those people who are willing to assume significant leadership roles in our society to get the job done effectively. The effective leader doesn't wait for things to happen, he helps make things happen. He takes the initiative."¹

Engstrom goes on to define a leader as "one who guides and develops the activities of others and seeks to provide continual training and direction."² By so defining, Engstrom gets directly

to the issue of power and pastoral leadership. Pastoral power must be focused on the objective of discerning and developing the ministry of the laity in a nonmanipulative way.

This process involves recruitment and training and releases those trained to utilize their training in real-life situations. Pastors should be accountable both to those who supervise their work and to those whom they serve for duplicating their capabilities in the lives of their members. Leaders must train other leaders. In short, the work of the pastor is to work the members.

Sometimes clergy misunderstand and misappropriate power. Usually this is not done from a malevolent motive, but from an insufficient comprehension of the various sources of power and the responsible use of power. What are some of these faces of power?

Position power comes by virtue of the position or office held. By being elected or appointed, the leader receives designated power from the job itself. This power immediately transfers to the individual who is next elected.

Information power comes by virtue of knowledge or skills that the leader possesses. This power is retained as long as the information is necessary to the continuing well-being of the group.

Reward power comes by virtue of rewards or perks that the leader can grant or withhold. Often reward power, like all carrot-and-stick motivation, tends to be viewed as either paternalistic or manipulative even when the rewarder does not intend to utilize it wrongfully.

Relational power comes to individuals by association with those who hold power. Such individuals may be referred to as the "inner circle." Such power tends to evaporate quickly following a change in association or the removal of the leader. Relational power is most stable when it involves a good working relationship between team members.

Personal power is derived by the confidence which others place in a leader's moral integrity, skills, reputation, and past accomplishments. Stronger than other power sources, personal power does not evaporate with a change in status or circumstances. Instead, such changes usually enhance personal power as the individual responds creatively and appropriately to the new situation.

Jesus is history's most outstanding example of one who held the highest of all positions, who was omniscient, who enjoyed the most intimate association with the heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit. Yet, despite all of that, He willingly emptied Himself of all these sources of power and came to this earth as a servant-leader whose ministry was the essence of personal power.

As we strive more to exercise His power in our ministry than to appropriate His power for our own use, the Holy Spirit can grant us an abundance of that which Jesus promised: "Ye shall receive power" (Acts 1:8). ■

¹ Ted W. Engstrom, *The Making of a Christian Leader* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), introduction.

² *Ibid.*

The Big Book on Small Groups

Jeffrey Arnold, *InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1992, 264 pages, paperback, \$10.99. Reviewed by Michael J. Lay, pastor, Kingston, Ontario.*

This is a big book no pastor interested in small group ministry should be without.

Replete with stories, each chapter addresses a significant aspect of small group ministry. The first four chapters deal with discipling, building the church through small group ministry, the basics of such ministry, and leadership. The succeeding eight chapters deal with building a community of faith and service via small groups that is caring, dynamic, studying, worshiping, praying, evangelizing, and mission-oriented. The last chapter discusses structuring the small group ministry to get it started. Resources for training leaders make up the balance of the book (65 pages!). They include how to train small group leaders, leader's notes, key Bible study outlines, and small group activities to use in training. All are adaptable to various sizes and types of training programs and appear to be very practical.

I am looking forward to trying out the ideas presented. Arnold's leadership and training outline can be used as a 13-week program or as an intensive four-session plan.

Doing the Right Thing

Alice Slaikeu Lawhead, *Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1992, 192 pages, paperback, \$7.99. Reviewed by Victor Elliott, general counsel, Risk Management Services, Silver Spring, Maryland.*

When I got to page 4, it hit me: was the author going to toss out all the moral rules we learned as children? "In 60 seconds," she writes, "I could think of three situations where the right thing to do would be to tell a lie." For me the three examples that followed simply sounded like the epitome of the double standard that separates adults from children. In retrospect, I think that page was carefully crafted to "hook" the reader to read on.

The book presents *love God and love*

your neighbor as yourself as the Christian's basis for morality and then provides an opportunity to grapple with tough moral decisions. It presents questions, but doesn't spoon-feed you the answer. Various points are made pro and con from scriptural sources, but the readers are left to develop their own opinions by applying biblical principles through inductive reasoning.

Doing the Right Thing would be beneficial for leading a discussion group for teens or younger adults that haven't already confronted similar issues. The author's style is to argue for both opposing viewpoints, and she does not take a clear, authoritative stance. This is helpful when readers want to grapple with the morals of a specific situation. While a definitive rule to cover the predicament might feel more comfortable, it may not allow for as much personal character growth.

This book is organized logically, with the first chapter dealing with case studies that show the nature of moral dilemmas and the final chapter instructing us as to how we could meet similar cases as we confront them. The book has no index, and the chapter titles, while catchy, are not always descriptive of the content.

No Longer the Hero: The Personal Pilgrimage of an Adult Child

Nancy LeSourd, *Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, 287 pages, paperback, \$9.95. Reviewed by Cristina Matos-Grys, associate pastor, Miami Tabernacle SDA Church, Miami, Florida.*

Nancy LeSourd, currently a lawyer, wife, and mother, recounts in a gripping style her incredible journey from a severe dysfunctional home to wholeness and total dependence on God. Her mastery of English entices us into this moving and thought-provoking autobiography. Nancy is the oldest of three children, whose mother and father are both lawyers. Her father, an alcoholic and drug user, had constant outbursts of rage and violence. Her mother meekly submitted to this dysfunctional man until suicide became her last option. Sam and

Peter, her brothers, turned to alcohol and drugs as their solutions. Nancy became the family hero, hiding her dysfunctional family behind her superachievement personality in school and in the community. As an adult, she went through extensive counseling to cope with self-destructive patterns developed as a result of her family background.

The author defines and explains all the relational dynamics of a dysfunctional home, its characteristics, and its results. Then, thanks to her extensive reading and counseling sessions, she maps out the painful road to recovery. On this road God is the main guide, healer, and provider. She weaves God into every single counseling approach, technique, and psychological device. She narrates her personal experiences and stories that will draw the reader into her world of emotions, struggles, discoveries, and healing. It is an excellent tool for those involved in helping others through their emotional struggles.

Faith and Festivity

Paul Beasley-Murray, *Marc-Monarch Publications, 188 pages, paperback, \$7.99. Reviewed by Chad McComas, pastor, Medford, Oregon.*

Worship is a hot topic in ministry today. Churches are trying to make adjustments to bring life back into their services. Paul Beasley-Murray tackles this topic in his book *Faith and Festivity*. He states, "I believe . . . there is a very real crisis taking place precisely in this area of worship. Far too often worship is dissatisfying, it is frustrating, it is downright disappointing. God does not break in, boredom breaks out. It doesn't matter whether I am in a festival crowd of several thousand or in an ordinary service with just 50 or so present, whether the congregation is charismatic or noncharismatic—worship for the most part is a letdown."

Although this book doesn't deliver the punch that the author seems to promise in the above remarks, it will be a good source to pursue as you or a worship committee study worship. The book looks at the various elements in wor-

ship, but does it with a more conservative style.

Putting the Soul Back in Medicine

David Schiedermayer, M.D., Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 160 pages, paperback, \$9.99. Reviewed by Vijayan Charles, M.D., local church elder, Bladensburg, Maryland.

Ethicists sometimes live in ivory towers. David Schiedermayer writes from the trenches. As a practicing internist in

a county hospital, he is on the front line of medicine. Having firsthand knowledge of the practice of medicine makes his book *Putting the Soul Back in Medicine* a welcome addition.

Medicine is high tech at its best and depersonalized at its worst. Wonderful technology devoid of soul and feeling. The cure for "high tech is high touch," not just the physical, but the emotional. Medical personnel and chaplains who face life and death every moment often

become cynical and distance themselves just to cope with the situation. Schiedermayer teaches us to feel not just with our hands but also with our hearts.

Schiedermayer enumerates classic ethical themes, such as the dignity of life and technology's imperative to prolong it. It is the fear of dying and the desire to conquer death and disease that robs us of the joy of life here and now. Then he elaborates with personal experiences that make the reading of this book interesting and enjoyable.

A Christian doctor's ethical view of life, health, disease, and death may not be shared by most health professionals, but it makes good sense in a world driven by secularism, market economy, litigation, greed, and political correctness. In that sense Schiedermayer may be a lone voice.

A useful glossary of terms is provided at the end.

Church Discipline That Heals: Putting Costly Love Into Action

John White and Ken Blue, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1992, 238 pages, paperback, \$10.99. Reviewed by Brian A. Jones, pastor, Frametown, West Virginia.

The authors are experienced Christian counselors. Their goal is to offer a balanced approach to church discipline that heals and reconciles. Recognizing the progressive deterioration of moral standards in Christendom and its adverse effects in the churches, the authors assert, "Never before in human history has there been a time that (so demands) a pure church, a reconciled church, a disciplined church, a repentant church" (p. 12). Taking guidance from God's Word, they explain how such strength can be brought into the church.

The writers are especially sensitive in recognizing that church discipline can be cruelly colored by self-righteous vindictiveness on the part of those who exercise discipline. Yet they also recognize the need to uphold the pure teachings of the gospel if the church is not to become a religious clubhouse purveying carnal religion slavishly adaptable to the trends of a fallen world. With practical, persuasive analysis, the au-

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thors show through case histories how biblical principles may be applied which will enable church leaders to steer in a redemptive direction that is neither permissive nor intolerant in dealing with erring church members. The book also has an excellent chapter on how to apply restorative discipline to church leaders who go astray.

The book shirks no issues; it provides mature perspective on restoring the fallen, while maintaining the purity of doctrine and witness. Highly recommended.

Recently noted

The Message of Galatians, by John R. W. Stott, Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 1968, 191 pages, paperback, \$12.99.

Originally published under the title *Only One Way*, this commentary on Galatians presents the gospel in a lucid, clear, and uncompromising way. The author's experience as evangelist, teacher, and administrator comes through in the content and style of the book. Stott's central theme: "By the grace of God we must determine to remember what once we were and never to return to it; to remember what God has made us and to conform our lives to it."

The Twenty-first Century King James Version, Gary, South Dakota: KJ Twenty One Bible Publishers, 1994, hardcover \$37.95, bonded leather \$59.95.

Four centuries after the KJV appeared with its unparalleled majesty, beauty, and sheer literary delight comes the twenty-first century version of the KJV. An updating of the original, it is easier to read and understand yet preserves the powerful language and the dignity of the KJV. The updating is not a new translation, but uses modern spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing. Obsolete words have been replaced by carefully selected current equivalents without altering the meaning or the beauty of the original. Certain traditional words of worship and prayer (such as thee, thy, thou, art, etc), even though archaic, have been retained for artistic and practical reasons. No passages have been omitted. No words have been changed to conform to current notions

of social or political correctness. Chapter summaries and comfortable format enhances readability.

Letters

From page 2

To say that they "have shown blatant disregard for the spiritual welfare of their flock" is correct. But to go on and infer that the bad treatment could be a consequence of their "premeditated sin and planned repentance" seems judgmental.—Name withheld, New South Wales, Australia.

Portrait of Jesus

The characterization of Jesus on your October 1994 cover caused me great pain and concern. Why are paintings, drawings, and renderings

of Jesus always Caucasian in the publications of our church?

Historically, evidence supports a Black Jesus with African features. Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, described Jesus as a man of plain looks, extremely learned, full of vigor, and with dark skin (W. L. Dillard, *Biblical Ancestry Voyage*, p. 189). A gold coin of A. D. 705 with Jesus and the emperor Justinian II depicts Jesus as having woolly hair (*ibid.*, p. 190). All renderings of Jesus for 15 centuries, either as an infant, a youth, or an adult, show Jesus as a Black African. It was in the sixteenth century (1505) that Pope Julius II commissioned Michelangelo to paint certain biblical works as Caucasian with European features. Among these were the virgin Mary, the Christ child, the three Wise Men, the Lord's Supper, and the Resurrection (see William Mosley, *What Color Was Jesus?* pp. 12, 13).—Timothy P. Nixon, San Bernardino, California.

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by Jack Sequeira

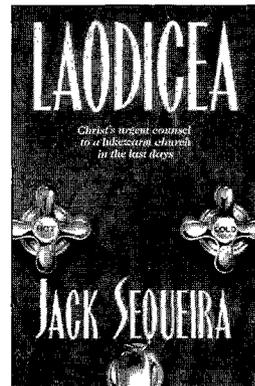
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“What she has done will be told”

From page 4

ers, and left the store without making any purchase.

“Aren’t you buying a computer, Grandpa?” asked the curious boy.

“Not today. Maybe someday when I have some money to spare.”

The little fellow looked at me and with a big smile promised: “I’ll buy that computer for you.”

“But how could you?” I asked.

“One of these days,” he said, “I’ll have a million dollars, and then I will get that computer for you.”

What more does a grandfather need? Sufficient is the joy that comes from such little but lofty thoughts. After about 30 minutes I needed to make a phone call and didn’t have a quarter, but my grandson had three. I asked him for one. Quick came his

reply: “But Grandpa, I have only three.”

Such is the plight of all of us. We would like to preach like Moody, but we are not quite willing to help out in a youth Bible class. We long to get involved in a Global Mission project, but we can’t cross the street to visit a sick person. We wish we could write like Milton or compose like Handel, but we don’t have the time to send a little note to someone grieving. Mary showed us long ago that the beauty of ministry is to do what we can where we are.

“What she has done will be told,”

Jesus said in a final commendation of Mary’s ministry. What did she do? She dared to cross human barriers in order to affirm the call of the Saviour. She acknowledged that being a sinner or being a woman or being misunderstood need not keep her from serving the Master. “Through His grace she became a partaker of divine nature.”³ Through His grace she became part of that valiant band of women disciples

who followed Him, supported His ministry (see Luke 8:1-3), and courageously stood by Him at the cross. Through His grace she became the first to see the empty tomb and the first to proclaim the risen Lord and His victory.

Let the world be told of what she has done. Let not history or forces that shape history hinder the story of Mary’s act of love being repeated again and again. She gave ministry a new meaning: one of beauty, one without borders. So let the Marys of the world today be affirmed in their call to minister to our Lord and find fulfillment in their mission.

That would be a fitting way to celebrate 1995—Year of the Adventist Woman. ■

* Unless otherwise noted all Scripture passages in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 568.

² Keats, *Endymion*.

³ White, p. 568.

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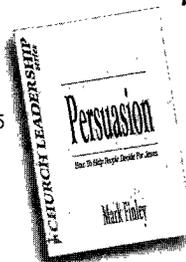
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BibleWorks for Windows 3.0

Software review by Martin Weber

Among the dozens of Bible software programs available, several are particularly valuable for in-depth research. BibleWorks for Windows 3.0 may be the best. "For PC users who want to do serious Bible study, BibleWorks for Windows is tops," says Steve Deyo, editor in chief for *Computer User*, in a review for *Christianity Today* (4/4/94). He adds: "If it's not in BibleWorks, you probably won't find it."

Christian Computing magazine, in a November 1994 comparison of Windows-based Bible research programs, describes BWW as having "the widest range of language resources of the six reviewed here." Besides the usual translations (KJV, NRSV w/apocrypha, NASB, RSV with apocrypha, NKJV, and ASV—no NIV), you have original Bible texts: the Hebrew Old Testament Masoretic Text, BHS, the Greek New Testament (both UBS4/NA27 and Scrivener's TR), plus the Greek Old Testament (Rahlfs' LXX). Beyond that are complete morphological parsing analysis tags and complete lemmatizations (lexical/root forms).

More than \$2,000 worth of reference works packaged with BibleWorks 3.0 include Friberg's 1994 ANLEX GNT Analytical Lexicon, BDB-Gesenius' Hebrew-English Lexicon, Corrected Strong's Englishman's English-Greek-Hebrew KJV linkage numbers and concordances, Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, Wigram's KJV Verbs tense-voice-mood, AT Robertson's NT Word Pictures, Latin Vulgate (UBS 2nd.), Metzger's Bible Outline, Treasury of Scripture Knowledge Notes with 580,474 cross references, Nave's Topical Bible, Easton's Bible Dictionary, and systematic theology data. All of this plus several TrueType and Postscript Greek and Hebrew fonts.

"The morphological tags and helps that are only a mouse click away make this program accessible to pastors with only a modest knowledge of the biblical languages," says reviewer Ralph W. Klein. Many pastors, teachers, and students use BWW to review or learn biblical languages. Meanwhile, scholars report that this comprehensive research tool satisfies their advanced needs.

System requirements: any computer running Windows 3.1 or later, 4MB RAM minimum but 8MB recommended. BWW works best with a 486DX-66 chip. For maximum performance when using the CD-ROM edition, you can install any or all of it onto the hard drive, with 10MB to 102MB of hard drive space required.

BWW retails for US\$349.95 (plus shipping) for the diskette edition or US\$299.95 for CD-ROM, with a 90-day money-back guarantee. This already is an unusual value for performance, but the publishers have agreed to a special discount for *Ministry* readers: \$US329.95 for the diskette edition or \$US279.95 for CD-ROM. You must mention *Ministry* to get the discount when you order direct from Hermeneutika Software, P.O. Box 2200, Big Fork, Montana 59911. For quick response phone (406-837-2244) or fax (406/837-4433) using MasterCard or Visa.

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Academic credit and CEUs are available for those who qualify. Areas to be visited include Rome, Austria, Prague, Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland. For information in the U.S., call 1-800-327-8338, or write: Seminary Dean, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104.

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