MINISTRY

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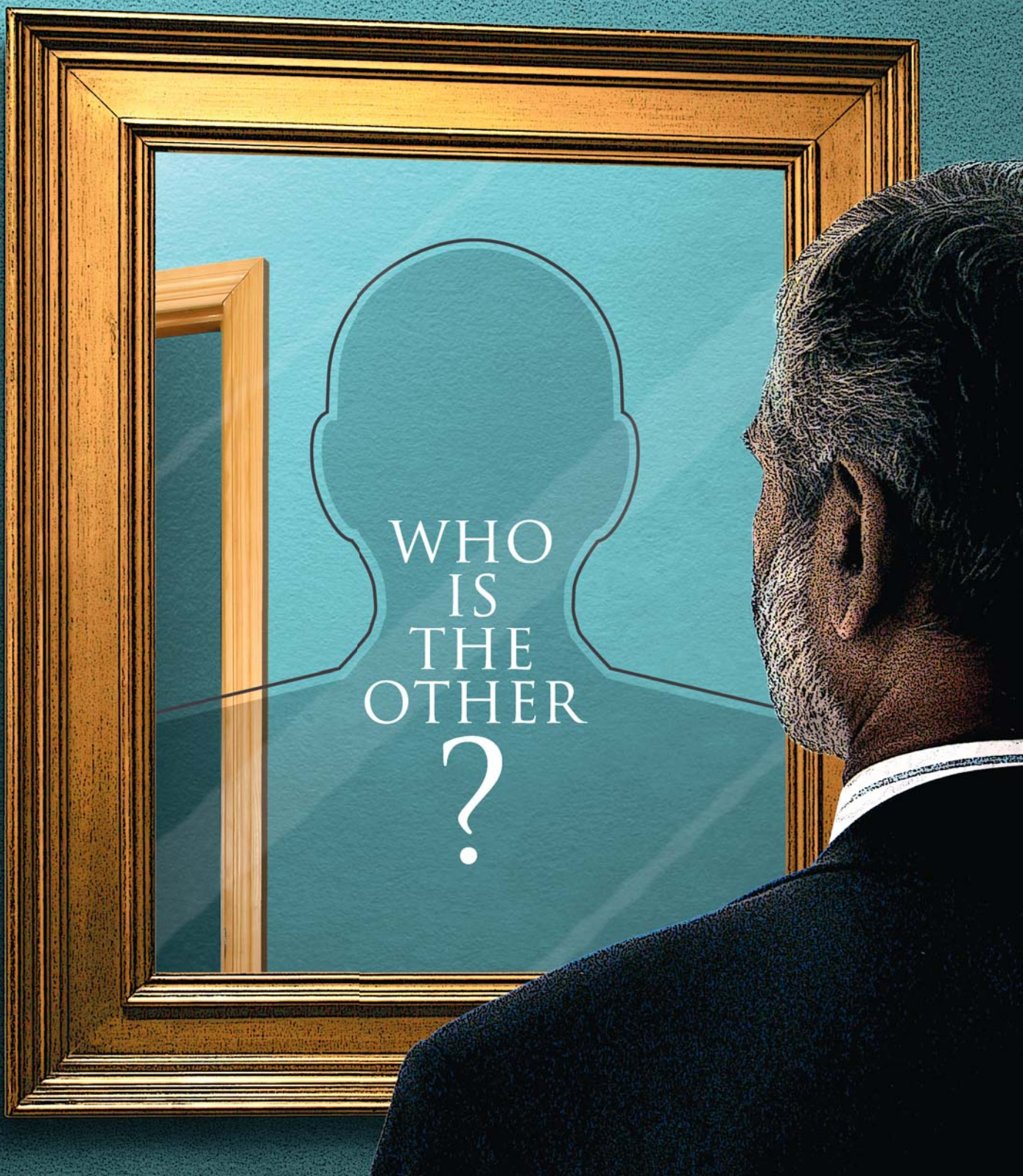

FIRST GLANCE

MINISTRY

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Vol. 79 Number 3

Our readers respond...

Raoul Dederen and appreciation for teachers

I am writing regarding the interview by Nikolaus Satelmajer of Raoul Dederen (November 2006). He is my best friend this side of heaven. I was with the 45th U.S. Army field hospital, and we got bogged down in Belgium just before the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. It was, I believe, my angel (but that is another story) who took me to where a group of Adventists were having worship. Among that group was a young fellow who had just become a Seventh-day Adventist. That young fellow was Raoul Dederen, and we had the pleasure of spending every day together until I moved on to Germany. I could tell you many stories, but my reason for writing this note is to add one fact to Pastor Satelmajer's interview—Dr. Raoul Dederen is a man of prayer.

—W. D. Regester, M.D., Grants Pass, Oregon, United States

I just looked through the November 2006 issue of *Ministry* and read your editorial about teachers along with the Dederen interview. Thanks for your supportive words and for this focus on Adventist education. You continue to be a good partner!

—Gerald N. Kovalski, vice president for education, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States

Hans K. LaRondelle

Just a word to let you know that I enjoyed Hans K. LaRondelle's article "Israel in Biblical Prophecy" (January 2007). Most of my Baptist brothers are dispensational, but my eschatology is quite similar to what I find in this article.

Thank you for the magazine. I have found other interesting and helpful articles in the past.

—Eugene Bragg, retired Baptist minister, Livonia, Michigan, United States

Your article titled "Israel in Biblical Prophecy" (January 2007) was a big disappointment. We knew that Seventh-day Adventists used to teach Replacement Theology, and I could understand that in the past. However, with the rebirth of Israel in 1948 and the literal fulfillment of prophecy before our eyes, I don't see how you can hold to this untenable position.

Our basic rule of interpretation is, if the plain sense of Scripture makes sense, seek no other sense. I'm not saying that there can't be other levels of interpretation. However, the plain sense is the most important level. Apparently, whenever Adventists come across a scripture that disagrees with their theology, the scripture is considered allegory. I am sorry to see that this method is still being used by Adventism.

—Rick Aharon Chaimberlin, Rochester, New York, United States

Studying the Word

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Shuster for "On Spending Time in the Word" (January 2007). Her heart-piercing essay hit the mark. It was timely, chastening, inspirational, and instructional. My reading of Scripture shall, henceforth, unleash for me the joyful, passionate love of which you so eloquently write.

Thanks for reminding me of my grandfather, W. C. White. As he read a psalm for morning or evening family worship, he rejoiced, laughed, or wept with David. His joyful love of Scripture continues to warm and quicken the spirits of his grandchildren. Indeed, "we must read Scripture, not just read about it."

—Oliver Jacques, Fallbrook, California, United States

Messsage from a pastor's spouse

I am writing to tell you of the recent death of my husband, Pastor Kenneth Francis Wright, age 84, who had been a longtime recipient and supporter of *Ministry*. In fact, his relationship with your magazine goes back more than fifty years.

In his early ministry, Ken served in the mission fields across the world, including areas such as western Europe, United Kingdom, and South Pacific.

I thank you for *Ministry* magazine.

—Patricia M. Wright, Drummoyne, New South Wales, Australia

Editor's note: We value all of our readers, but wish to give special recognition to those who have been with us for many years.* Ministry *started in 1928 and many of our former readers are waiting for the resurrection call from the Lord.

Correction: In the article "Silent Sermons" (January 2007), written by Zdravko Stefanovic, on page 26 it was stated that Abel was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve. Of course Cain was Adam's and Eve's firstborn. The wrong name was inserted during the editing process. We apologize for the error.

Leaders with authority

NIKOLAUS SATELMAJER

It was the first time I had met the chaplain of a nation's legislative body. This legislative body possesses significant power because collectively they can impose taxes, propose new laws, declare war, and end war. Their actions impact the lives of many.

What kind of power does the chaplain have? Officially, the primary role of the chaplain is to pray at the opening of each day's session of this legislative body. That's it! That does not seem to be much power—to pray for those who have the *real* power.

But perhaps authority is more than possession of brute power. If true, then the chaplain is rich with authority—spiritual authority. I saw him interact with individuals, expressing interest in their well-being, their families, and their spiritual needs. It was obvious that they saw him as a spiritual leader, a role vastly different from secular leadership, for spiritual leaders *ask*, whereas secular leaders often *demand*. Spiritual leaders focus on the needs of those they lead, whereas secular leaders focus on that which is important to them. Spiritual leaders depend on *example*, whereas secular leaders often depend on *power*. Spiritual leaders give; secular leaders demand—sometimes our lives.

What kind of authority do clergy possess? Or are they powerless? Before I reflect on the theoretical aspect of this question, I want to suggest that we consider at least two areas in which clergy have potential authority but often do not use this authority.

In a provocative article, Miroslav Volf addresses the "other." The "other" person—how we view them and how they view us. The "other" may include those who don't look like we look, who are not as educated as we think we are, whose views are different—an endless list. The question for leaders should not be the length of the list of differences; rather, it should be how we view and treat those whom we (or our congregations) consider different from us, or those whom we view negatively. Jesus explores that question with His story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37).

Several months ago I was holding lectures in a country that has experienced turmoil. One of the individuals attending the lectures invited me to attend the worship service of the majority church in that nation. Following the worship service, we joined several hundred worshipers for a meal, but before we started the meal the religious leader of the church addressed us. He started with the expected welcome but soon moved into a denunciation of the leader of another religious denomination. The denunciation was so brutal that I wondered whether I understood the words—my host assured me that I had. There was no evidence of a willingness to understand the "other."

Brian Bull authoritatively addresses the myth that moderate drinkers of wine are healthier than those who do not drink. I challenge you to read this provocative article and consider its implications for our ministry. The media has flooded us with reports stating that drinking red wine is good for the heart. Rarely are we told of the strange classification they have for nondrinkers or that the substance found in red wine is also found in grape juice. Imagine—it's possible to help your heart without getting drunk! Seldom are we told that some of the studies about wine are financially supported by those who produce wine, nor are we reminded that before a person becomes an alcoholic, that person is most likely a moderate drinker.

What are we spiritual leaders doing? I have mentioned only two issues—how we treat the "other" and the challenge of alcohol. Are we using our spiritual authority, or are we are allowing those with power to usurp our role?

On April 18, 2007 (some parts of the world, April 19), many *Ministry* readers along with thousands of other clergy will participate in the *Ministry* Professional Growth Seminar broadcast live by satellite. (If you wish to sponsor a downlink site or want to know the location of the nearest site, visit http://www.ministerialassociation.com. Or call +1-301-680-6515.) The live broadcast will be coming from the site of the International Congress on Preaching in Cambridge, England. Whether you are in Cambridge, England, or at a site where you live, I urge you to reflect on your role as a spiritual leader. At one time, for example, churches were on the forefront of dealing with the problem of alcoholism. Why have we, for the most part, given over that issue to others? Can we once again give leadership in the fight against this international scourge?

Let us use the authority we have—spiritual authority—an authority that comes from God. Spiritual authority is an invitation to submit ourselves to God and to invite others to acknowledge God's plan for their lives. Invitations may, indeed, prove to be a powerful authority. After all, it was Jesus who said, "Follow Me. . . ." M

Tell us what you think about this editorial. Email us at MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org or write to us at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

Living with the other

Miroslav Volf

Who is the other? Who are we? How should we relate to each other? Addressing these questions becomes essential for us to understand the relationship between the universal reach of Christian love and our particular obligations toward those with whom we have special relations, such as family, ethnic groups, or religious groups.

Miroslav Volf, Th.D., is Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut, United States.

Who is the other?

Some think of others as persons from distant lands with a very different culture. We learn about them through explorers and anthropologists. We travel to see them in their natural habitats because they either fascinate us or repel us. We call them the exotic other, and in our global culture they have increasingly become a rarity. The ease of access to this group has only stripped from them the aura of the exotic. They have become ordinary—but still misunderstood.

Then there is the neighborly other. Such others live next to us, at the boundaries of our communities and within our nations, in culturally and religiously pluralistic social spaces. For Western countries, this means that the pluralism of civil associations existing under the larger framework of liberal democracy has become complex. Formerly "Christian countries" have become religiously diverse nations,[1] but this does not describe a diversity of "anything goes." For the most part, we don't think that all religions and all values are either relative or that a rough parity exists between them. To say that our societies are culturally and religiously pluralistic does not so much prescribe how each culture should be evaluated and how they should relate but does recognize plurality of cultures as a social reality. We live near or with people whose values and interpretations of life differ from ours and who have sufficient social power to make their voices heard in the public square. The history of relations with "the other" has often been fraught with violence. As the Holocaust survivor Primo Levi writes, "Many people—many nations—can find themselves holding, more or less wittingly, that 'every stranger is an enemy.' "[2] Religious, cultural, and racial differences continue as an important source of conflict around the world. We hold ourselves better on account of our color and put down others whose color differs from ours; we oppress them economically and marginalize them politically. Whites are well known for their sense of racial superiority, but racism is not known as a monopoly of Whites.

In recent years, cultural and ethnic clashes have left their marks of blood in the so-called Third World (e.g. Rwanda), in the former Second World (e.g. Chechnya or Bosnia), and in the First World (e.g. the Los Angeles riots). Muslims and Christians, Christians and Jews, Jews and Muslims, Muslims and Hindus, Hindus and Buddhists, are finding it difficult to share the same social space without conflicts, and violence often erupts.

So who are the others? They include people of different races, religions, and cultures who live in our proximity and with whom we are often in tension and sometimes in deadly conflict. But who are we?

Who are we?

To speak of the other without speaking of the self is not possible, for the others are always others to someone else. Just like that someone else, they, too, are to themselves simply us as distinct from them. But how should we think of ourselves? What does it mean to be a bearer of identity?

We often define ourselves by what differentiates us from others. That by which we differ from others can be categorized as properly and exclusively our own, and we sometimes think that our identity resides in what is exclusively our own. If we operate with

such an exclusive notion of identity, we will watch carefully to make sure that no external elements enter our proper space so as to disturb the purity of our identity. Especially in situations of economic and political uncertainty and conflict, we will insist on pure identity. If race matters to us, we will want our "blood" to be pure and untainted by the "blood" of strangers. If land matters to us, we will want our soil to be pure, without the presence of others. This, described as the logic of purity, attends the notion of identity that rests on difference from the other. The consequences of the logic of purity in a pluralistic world are often deadly. We have to keep the other at bay, even by means of extreme violence, so as to avoid contamination.

An alternative way to look at identity would be to think of it as always including the other—an inclusive understanding of identity. As persons or cultural groups, we define ourselves not simply by what distinguishes us from others and what we, therefore, need to keep pure from others. Instead, we define ourselves both by what distinguishes us from others and by what we have in common with them. This notion of identity is consonant with the biblical account of Creation. In Genesis God creates by separating the light from darkness, and binding them together. When God creates a human pair, God both separates Eve from Adam and brings her to him so that they can become one flesh. Distinct-and-bound creatures necessarily have complex identities because they are what they are, not just in and of themselves but also in relation to others.

An example follows: Five years ago I became a father. I have a wonderful little boy, Nathanael. Now, after I became a father I remained the same person in the sense of having permanence and continuity over a period of time. But I did not remain the same person in the sense of my personality remaining unchanged.[3] Nathanael has insinuated himself into my personality. He has changed not only how I see myself and how I act (my private person) but also how others see me and act toward me (my public person). In addition to everything else that I was (such as "Dragutin and Mira's son" or "Professor Volf") I am now "Nathanael's father." When I pick him up at his preschool, a parent of another child might say to me, "Ah, so *you* are Nathanael's father!" and I would not be sure whether this is good or bad. I am not simply other than Nathanael; Nathanael is also part of who I am. My identity is inclusive, not exclusive. The same holds true of our other identities. To be a White American means to be in relation with Black Americans, including the history of slavery and discrimination, and this represents no difference with gender identity. What it means to be male will change over time and differ from place to place, but it will always be correlated with what it means to be female.[4]

For such inclusive identity two things are critically important, and they both concern boundaries. First, in order to have an identity, you must have boundaries. Imagine a world without boundaries. You cannot! For without boundaries you would not have "a world"; everything would be jumbled together and nothing distinct would exist, and that says that just about nothing would exist at all. To have anything except infinite chaos, you must have boundaries. Hence when God creates, God separates. If boundaries are good, then some kind of boundary maintenance must be good, too. Hence when boundaries are threatened, they must be maintained. Second, if to have identity one must have boundaries, then to have inclusive identity one must have permeable and flexible boundaries. With impermeable and inflexible boundaries, a self or a group will ultimately remain alone, without the other. For the other to come in and change the self or a group, the other must be let in (and, likely, after a while also politely let out!).

Our homes provide good examples of complex and dynamic identities circumscribed by permeable and flexible

WE ARE CREATED NOT TO ISOLATE OURSELVES FROM OTHERS BUT TO ENGAGE THEM, INDEED, TO CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR FLOURISHING AS WE NURTURE OUR OWN IDENTITY AND ATTEND TO OUR OWN WELL-BEING.

boundaries. When I go to a foreign land, I like to buy a local work of art. I bring it home and place it in our living room, my office, or wherever. A space identified properly as our own contains a number of "foreign" objects. They are windows into worlds that have become part of me—Cambridge, Chennai, Prague, St. Petersburg, Zagreb. As such, they are also symbols of an identity not self-enclosed but marked by porous boundaries and therefore shaped by the other. Occasionally, I move a work of art to a different room to make space for another, and sometimes it even ends up in the basement. Something analogous happens with our identity. We enter new relationships and they shape us; certain things recede into the background and others receive new importance. We live as ourselves in that things that make up our identity multiply, shift, and change. Some of that change simply happens to us. Others with whom we are in close contact change, and as a consequence we change too. Nathanael came into our family, and I changed, whether I wanted to change or not. Moreover, I changed in ways that I could not fully control. Chance and unpredictability come with having permeable and flexible boundaries. At the same time, we can refuse movement of our identity in certain directions and we can initiate movements in other directions. In encounters with others we can significantly craft our identity, and in the process we can even help shape the identities of others.

Who are we? We are people with inclusive and changing identities; multiple others are part of who we are. We can try to eject them from ourselves in order to craft for ourselves an exclusive identity, but we will then do violence, both to others and to ourselves.

Who is the other? Earlier I argued that others are our neighbors who differ from us by culture and whose very otherness often becomes a factor in our conflicts with them. Now, after the discussion of inclusive identity, we can say that the others are also not just others. They, too, have complex and dynamic identities, of which we are part, if we are their neighbors. Just as we are "inhabited" by others and have a history with them, others are also "inhabited" by us. If persons and groups are attuned to such complex and dynamic identities, they will not relate to each other according to simple binary schemata "I am I and you are you" (in case of persons) or "you are either in or out" (in case of groups). Their relations will be correspondingly complex. How do such complex relations look?

How should we relate to each other?

Persons with inclusive and dynamic identities will now be analyzed under four headings: (1) The will to embrace the other; (2) Inverting perspectives; (3) Engagement with the other; and (4) Embracing the other. The four headings follow a certain order of priority but not simply sequential so that when you complete one step you go to the next.

The will to embrace the other. In a sense, the commitment to live with others is the simplest aspect of our relation with them, yet often the most difficult. Instead of considering others as my own diminishment, I have to imagine them as potential enrichment. Instead of thinking that they disfigure my social landscape, I have to think of them as potentially contributing to its aesthetic improvement. Instead of only suspecting enemies, I have to see them as potential friends.

We have reasons for wanting to keep others at bay. For one, we are afraid for our identity, and above all we fear being overwhelmed by others and their ways. A German word for this fear, *Überfremdung*, describes a guest in your home who would start to bring in their own furniture and rearrange and take out yours, cook foods and play music you don't like, and bang around working when you would like to sleep. So you say to your guest as politely as you can, "This is my home, and this is not how I want to live. Go back to your own place, and there you can live as you please. Here we are going to live as I please." Earlier I mentioned that globalization brings others into our proximity, often with the feeling of *Überfremdung* as the consequence. Smaller cultures are threatened by the huge wave of global monoculture washing over them. While attracted to many of its features, they fear that their centuries-long, rich traditions will be replaced by a culture that is foreign and shallow. Prosperous Western democracies worry that the processes of globalization, which bring to their lands people in search of better living, will undermine the very culture that made possible the freedoms and prosperity that they enjoy.

Second, we fear for our safety. The myth of an innocent other is just that—a myth. Relationships between people are always sites of contested power, and a permanent danger of misuse of power exists, especially between those who are reciprocally "other." Yet we should guard lest we, in refusing to accept the myth of the innocent other, embrace two other myths at the same time: the myths of the innocent self and of the demonic other.

Third, old enmities make us hesitant about living with the other. But, even with our safety reasonably assured, either because we have become more powerful or because both parties have been inserted into a larger network of relations that guarantee our safety, we may still hesitate about living together with the other on moral grounds. Would positive relations with the other not amount to betrayal of our ancestors who have suffered at others' hands? Finally, the brute fact of enmity pushes against the commitment to consociality. Just like sin, enmity has power. Once established, it subsists as a force beyond the individual wills of actors, and it perpetuates itself by holding enemies captive.

Our sense of identity, fear for safety, and old enmities all militate against the will to embrace the other. So why should we want to embrace the other? First, it may be in our interest to do so. The alternatives—either building a wall of separation or perpetuating enmity—are often much worse. As proximate others, we are intertwined by bonds of economy, culture, and family. Severing these bonds can be

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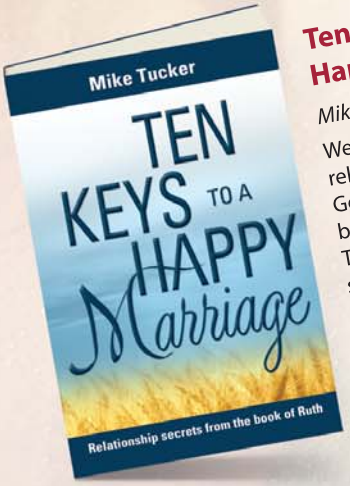

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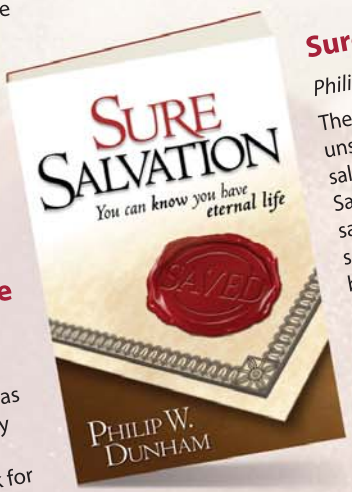

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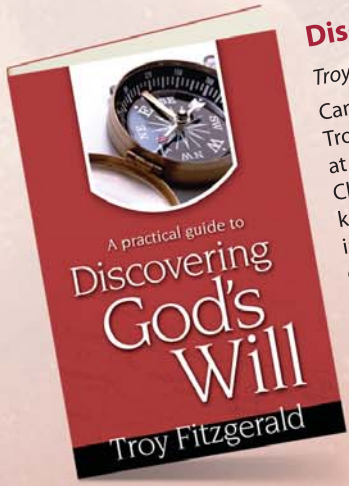

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worse than trying to live together. However, the more important reason is that living with the other in peace expresses our God-given humanity. We are created not to isolate ourselves from others but to engage them, indeed, to contribute to their flourishing as we nurture our own identity and attend to our own well-being. Finally, for Christians, the most important reason for being willing not only to live with others but positively to embrace them is the character of God's love as displayed in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died for all human beings because He loved them all. Through Him we are called to love indiscriminately every human being, including not only the other but also the enemy.[5]

How do we acquire the will to embrace the other? How do we sustain it through difficult times? I'll try to answer with a story. I was in Zagreb, Croatia, speaking at the promotion of the Croatian translation of my book *Exclusion and Embrace*. As I was explaining the idea of "will to embrace," I noticed a person in the audience who was listening intently but restlessly. After I finished my lecture and the crowd had cleared, he almost charged toward me and said, "But where does the will to embrace come from?" He was agitated. "Is it inborn? Can one learn to will in such ways?" We went together through different possibilities. Ultimately, I said, the will to embrace comes from the divine Spirit of embrace that can open up our self-enclosed sense of identity, dispel our fears, and break down the hold of enmity over us.

Inverting perspectives. To live out the will to embrace we need to invert our perspectives. Before the discussion of inverting perspectives, however, one important feature of otherness needs to be noted, called a reciprocal relation: If others are "other" to me, I am an "other" to them. This is especially important to keep in mind in cases when otherness does not remain as just a neutral term to describe difference, but when otherness acquires derogatory connotations—when to be other means to be not as good in some regard as I am myself.

Let me illustrate: When I was a doctoral student in Germany, along with many other Croats (as well as Greeks, Italians, Turks, and others), I felt like a second-class citizen. I was an *Ausländer*, and for many Germans *Ausländers* are deficient in some important ways. Once I was given a ride to Croatia by a porter of my dormitory who was driving there for a vacation. After we crossed the border I made a joking comment, "Now you are an *Ausländer*!" but he did not think this was funny. In his mind, a German was a German and never an *Ausländer.* And yet that cannot be. In a reciprocal relationship, if I am *Ausländer* in his home country, then he becomes an *Ausländer* in mine. The denial of reciprocity includes, in part, what constitutes a prideful and injurious denigration of the other.

Once we understand the reciprocity involved in the relation of otherness, we will have more reasons to be interested not only in what we think about ourselves and about others but also in what others think of themselves and of us. This is what I mean by *inverting perspectives*, and there are pragmatic reasons for this endeavor. As Rowan Williams has written in his comments on the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, "we have to see that we have a life in other people's imagination, quite beyond our control."[6] Not attending to other people's imaginations of us may be dangerous. But there are also moral reasons for inverting perspectives. Commitments to truth, to justice, to life in peace with others all require it. To be unwilling to engage in inverting perspectives means to live, as Immanuel Kant put it, as a self-enclosed one-eyed cyclops in need of another eye that would let him see things from the perspective of other people.

What does inverting perspectives entail? First, we need to see others through their eyes. Because it is natural for us to see them with our eyes, to see others through their eyes takes a willingness to entertain the possibility that we may be wrong and others right in their assessment of themselves.

Second, we need to see ourselves through the eyes of others. Sometimes we think that if we know anything well, we know ourselves well. But I can fail to see something well not because it is too distant but also because it is too close. Moreover, when it comes to me, I have a vested interest in seeing myself in a certain way—noticing the positive but not the negative, or letting that which is positive overshadow or relativize the negative. Because we often fail to see ourselves adequately, we need to learn how others perceive us. Take as an example the debate on so-called orientalism (the stereotypes that the Christian West has about the Muslim East) and occidentalism (the stereotypes that the Muslim East has about the Christian West). Where the West may see itself as "prosperous," the East may see it as "decadent"; where the West may see itself as "freedom loving," the East may see it as "oppressive"; where the West may see itself as "rational," the East may see it as "calculating."[7] The West should see itself from the perspective of the East and inquire seriously as to the adequacy of its own self-perception in light of the way it is perceived. The same, of course, holds true for the East.

Inverting perspectives is second nature for the weak. In encounters with the strong, they always have to attend to how they and their actions are perceived by the strong. Their success and even survival depend on seeing themselves with the eyes of the other. The strong are not in the habit of taking into account what the weak think of them; they can do without inverting perspective. If the weak don't like what they see, so much the worse for the weak. If the only thing that matters to the strong is power and privilege, they will charge ahead without regard for the perspective of the weak. But if they want to be truthful and just, they will want the weak to free them from their own false judgments of themselves and of their relations with others.

Engagement with the other. To see oneself and the other from the perspective of the other cannot be considered the same as agreeing with the other. As I invert perspective, I bracket my own self-understanding

and the understanding of the other, and I suspend judgment. After I have understood how the other wishes to be understood and how the other understands me, I must exercise judgment and either agree or disagree, wholly or in part. At this point, argumentative engagement comes in.

I could refuse to engage the other with arguments. I could simply insist that I am right. But the result would be an irreconcilable clashing of perspectives. In the absence of arguments, the relative power of social actors would decide the outcome. True, we cannot argue interminably, for life would then have to stop. As we are, in fact, acting even when we are waiting to resolve our own intellectual questions with no exit from acting—as William James has argued in "The Will to Believe" [8]—so we will be acting even as we are waiting to argue through our differences in perspectives. But we can act in our best light, and then return to argument. In fact, citizens in well-functioning democracies do this: They argue, they vote, and then, if some of them don't like the result, they argue and vote again.

Positive engagement with the other is not just a matter of arguments. Even when arguments fail to bring anything like consensus or convergence, we can still cooperate in many ways unless a dispute concerns acts of grave injustice. The belief that we must agree on all essential values in order to live in peace is mistaken. It ultimately presupposes that peace can exist only if cultural sameness reigns. But even if one considered such sameness desirable, it is clearly unachievable. Take major world religions as an example. A consensus between them on overarching interpretations of the world cannot be seen on the horizon in the near future. Must their adherents be therefore at war with one another? Of course not—they can live in peace and cooperate, and they can do so out of their own properly religious resources. Though the practice of Christians sometimes seems to falsify this claim, everything in the Christian faith itself speaks in favor of it, from the simple and explicit injunction to live in peace with all people (Rom. 12:18) to the character of God as triune love.[9]

Embracing the other. A simple willingness to embrace the other does not suffice. A further step of actually embracing them is needed. As we argue with others about issues of truth and justice, we are ensuring that embrace, if it takes place, will not be a sham. As we invert perspectives, we have started embracing others in that we have taken them, even if only in a symbolic form and for a time, into our own selves; we have made their eyes our own. But for embrace to take place, more is needed. We need to make space for them in our own identity and in our social world. We need to let them reshape our identity so as to become part of who we are, yet without in any way threatening or obliterating us but rather helping to establish the rich texture of our identity. Just as after the birth of my second son, Aaron, I let him be inserted, so to speak, into my identity, so also we ought to let our proximate others be a part of who we are (adjusted, of course, for the differences between family and neighbor relations).

Such relation becomes possible on Christian terms because we Christians should not think of ourselves as having a pure national, cultural, racial, or ethnic identity. We, along with Jews and Muslims, believe that all human beings are creatures of one God and therefore the humanity that unites them is more significant than any difference that may divide them. Further, an image of the Christian life that looms large in the Bible can be described as that of a pilgrim. Pilgrims are defined primarily not by the land or culture through which they travel but by the place toward which they are on the way; their primary identity comes from the destination, not from any point along the journey. And the land toward which Christians continue moving is God's new world in which people from "all tribes and languages" will be gathered.

The unsettling of Christians' sense of cultural identity cuts deep. The apostle Paul writes that Christians "are not their own." As a Christian in Paul's sense, I am so much not myself that "'it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' " (Gal. 2:20, NKJV). Christian identity is taken out of our own hands and placed into the hands of the divine Other—God, and by this it is both radically unsettled and unassailably secured. Because Christ defines our identity in the primary way, Christians can confidently set out on a journey with proximate others and engage without fear in the give and take of the relationship with others that marks an inclusive identity. What will be the result of this engagement? Like Abraham's, it will be a journey of faith and hope toward the land that one has not yet seen. M

1 See Diana L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001).

2 Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 9.

3 See Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 2–4.

4 For this notion of gender identity, see Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 174–6.

5 The universal scope of love was historically grounded in the common Adamic descent of all human beings and in Christ's death on the cross for all human beings (see Gene Outka, "Universal Love and Impartiality," *The Love Commandments: Essays in Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy*, eds. Edmund N. Santurri and William Werpehowski (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1992), 9.

6 Rowan Williams, *Writing in the Dust: After September 11* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 55.

7 See Avishai Margalit and Ian Buruma, "Occidentalism," *New York Review of Books* (January 2002). Online at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/15100.

8 William James, "The Will to Believe," *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy and Human Immortality* (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), 1–31.

9 See Miroslav Volf, "Christianity and Violence," *Reflections*, Winter 2004, 16–22.

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Alcohol dependency: what pastors should know

Brian Bull

Editor's note: The companion article will appear in May 2007.

This problem every pastor faces and often cringes at the thought—a member of the congregation has an alcohol problem, and friends and family look to the pastor for help.

What should be done?

We hope that this article (part one) and the one to follow (part two) will help. Part one provides statistics on the prevalence of alcohol dependency. It also addresses the widespread perception that, while alcoholism may well be a national scourge, wine drinking is sophisticated and enhances the health and longevity of wine drinkers. The second part (May 2007 issue) will provide some assistance for those pastors who, at times, are expected to assume the role of counselor.

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Alcohol dependency: the facts

In any congregation with more than 50 members, there will almost certainly be at least one person (and more likely two or three) who is alcohol dependent—for 1 out of 12 Caucasians in the United States has been identified as such.[1] For most other ethnic groups the figure stands at least as high, and for some ethnic groups it is considerably higher. One-third of patients in large urban hospitals were admitted because of illnesses caused or made worse by drinking.[2] Fifty percent of those admitted to a trauma service of a city hospital will find themselves victims of trauma because of alcohol.[3]

More than one possible reason exists, of course, as to why people who are dependent upon alcohol show up with greater frequency in places where illness is common—such as hospital wards and trauma services. Perhaps going to such places drives people to drink! Those who have "cooled their heels" for hours in an emergency room just waiting to be seen by a physician can readily identify with this possibility.

That, however, cannot be considered the explanation. Alcohol abuse counts as the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States,[4] exceeded only by deaths attributable to smoking and obesity. Even in third place, it now accounts for over 85,000 deaths annually and indirectly increases the death rate from other major diseases including breast cancer.[5] Alcohol also figures in 40 percent of highway fatalities.[6]

As already noted, in the general United States population 1 out of 12 Caucasians contends with alcohol dependency on a daily basis, but the risks for certain groups in the population register far higher. Among children of alcoholics, a group well acquainted with the devastation that alcohol brings, 1 out of 3 will become an alcoholic.[7] Two out of every 5 who get drunk before the age of 14—often on alcohol present in the home—will succumb to alcoholism.[8] For these reasons it will be the rare pastor who does not have to interact creatively and redemptively with parishioners who wrestle with alcohol themselves or whose lives are being ruined by someone who does.

The wine assumption

These statistics, however, are just that—statistics. They will be useful for underscoring the extent of the alcohol problem generally and for warning the youth of the church about the hazards of alcohol, but they are useless to those already addicted.

However, statistics may be of use to pastors who are confronting a relatively recent phenomenon—the widespread perception that drinking wine is both enjoyable and good for one's health even though addiction to alcohol has been clearly identified as an unmitigated evil. Essentially all of those who are college educated, as well as the vast majority of those with a high school education, now believe that drinking red wine in moderation will protect from a premature death due to heart disease or stroke.

It proves no such thing because there is an additional, hidden, assumption—an assumption that is known to be false.[9] The assumption

is—*those who drink red wine and those who do not are matched groups; they are similar in all other characteristics that might affect their chances of dying from cardiovascular disease*.

more money, had lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and were more likely to have health insurance than did the nondrinkers. Furthermore, even among those who had no known cardiovascular illnesses, three times as many of the drinkers were in the lowest risk category for developing cardiovascular disease in the future.

To put it simply: *They were healthier in almost every attribute that was measured*.

Yet the attributes of more education, more leisure time, higher incomes, and more health knowledge cannot reasonably be attributed to alcohol consumption. Drinking alcohol in moderation cannot be the cause of such good fortune! It seems simply that those who are health-conscious, well-educated, and relatively wealthy (and hence in a low-risk category for heart disease and stroke) are choosing to drink. They learn about the supposed benefits of moderate alcohol consumption and choose to drink (often red wine) because they believe it will further enhance their already healthy lifestyle. Moderate consumption of alcohol is, in this case, not the cause of their health—and certainly not the cause of their good fortune.

These statistics on confounders (differences other than alcohol consumption between those who drink and those who don't) are a warning against the all-too-easy assumption that alcohol *protects* from cardiovascular disease. Quite likely, moderate alcohol consumption is merely a *marker* of a lifestyle already at a reduced risk for heart disease and stroke.

Another flaw

The studies linking alcohol to protection from cardiovascular disease suffer from another major flaw—a flaw that erroneously increases the apparent healthiness of the moderate drinkers by making the nondrinkers appear sicker than they really are. Almost all of these studies have placed former drinkers, including those who have had to stop drinking for health reasons, into the category of nondrinkers.

All studies on the health benefits of drinking come from studies on the health benefits of *moderate* drinking. No one would think of claiming that alcoholics, still drinking heavily and slowly dying from fibrosis of the liver, have enhanced their health by drinking! Reasonably enough, such people are excluded from analysis because they no longer qualify as *moderate drinkers*. These study subjects are not a problem to the statisticians because they can easily be identified and excluded.

If, however, heavy drinkers become so ill from alcohol consumption that they have to stop drinking, where in the statistical groupings do they go? Unfortunately, in most studies of the risks and benefits of moderate alcohol consumption, these former heavy drinkers get lumped in with the nondrinkers because at the time of the study they are, in fact, nondrinkers!

Former drinkers are former drinkers for a variety of reasons. Some have stopped on doctor's orders. Others have damaged their health to the point where further drinking would likely be lethal. Still others have with age lost their taste

AMONG CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS, A GROUP WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE DEVASTATION THAT ALCOHOL BRINGS, 1 OUT OF 3 WILL BECOME AN ALCOHOLIC. TWO OUT OF EVERY 5 WHO GET DRUNK BEFORE THE AGE OF 14—OFTEN ON ALCOHOL PRESENT IN THE HOME—WILL SUCCUMB TO ALCOHOLISM.

In what ways are the groups not matched? What are the differences between the group that drinks and the group that does not?

Education—those who drink in moderation are, on average, better educated than are teetotalers.

Income—moderate drinkers, on average, earn more than those who abstain.

Health knowledge—those who drink in moderation are more knowledgeable about health matters (including, one can assume, that red wine is supposed to be good for the health!).

Diet—drinkers, particularly wine drinkers, eat more healthful foods.[10]

Hobbies—those who drink have more leisure time.

The list of differences between those who drink alcohol in moderation and those who abstain completely goes on. In 2004, in a massive study involving almost a quarter of a million people, these characteristics (education, income, health knowledge, diet, and leisure time—as well as 22 additional characteristics) were measured in a large group of moderate drinkers and a similar-sized group of nondrinkers. The two groups differed significantly in 29 out of 31 of the measured characteristics.[11] It is likely that they differed in many more ways that were not measured.

The moderate drinkers were better educated, had more leisure time, earned

for alcohol. Whatever the reason, in most of the studies on the effects of moderate alcohol consumption, these former drinkers with ruined health have been categorized as teetotalers. They were so categorized because, when the study was performed, they were "on the wagon."

The result? The illnesses of those whose health has been ruined by excessive alcohol consumption—ruined to the point that they can no longer drink—are considered to be health problems of nondrinkers! Not surprisingly, this makes the teetotalers look unhealthy simply because the study authors fail to exclude former drinkers entirely. They eliminate them from the category of the moderate drinkers but, typically (and inadvertently), allow them to contaminate the category of the nondrinkers.

'abstainers' will appear to be less healthy than light drinkers and at increased risk of premature death. In other words, regular light drinking may be a marker for good health among middle aged and older people, not a cause of it. As a consequence, estimates of the extent of the impact of cardiac benefits from light alcohol consumption on mortality risk may have been greatly over-estimated."[7]

Conclusion

In summary, it is likely that drinking in moderation carries with it no health benefits whatsoever in light of the following two facts:

1. The drinking populations that have been studied are healthier to start with (are wealthier, are better educated, have more access to medical care, and are better insured) than the nondrinking populations with whom they have been compared.

2. In addition, persons who have quit drinking or drink only occasionally due to disability or frailty or for health reasons have been included in the category of nondrinkers in the vast majority (47 out of 54) of the studies done to date. Of the seven correctly performed studies, none showed moderate drinking to be beneficial.

Statistics such as these may be helpful to pastors as they deal with those in the congregation who have not yet begun to drink. The statistics are inexorable. One out of every 12 of those who start to drink in moderation will become addicted, with Christians as no exception to the rule.

> IT WILL BE THE RARE PASTOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE TO INTERACT CREATIVELY AND REDEMPTIVELY WITH PARISHIONERS WHO WRESTLE WITH ALCOHOL THEMSELVES OR WHOSE LIVES ARE BEING RUINED BY SOMEONE WHO DOES.

How often has this happened? Out of 54 studies analyzed by Fillmore et al., 47 of those studies had failed to exclude former drinkers.[12] And here's the important point: *None of the remaining seven studies confirmed the widely held opinion that drinking alcohol in moderation benefits one's health.*

Not surprisingly, nondrinkers can be made to look unhealthy if all of the illnesses of former heavy drinkers (now too sick or too old to continue abusing alcohol) are added into health statistics of the nondrinkers.

"As people age they both abstain and cut down to very occasional drinking for health reasons, disability, frailty and/or medication use. If they are included as 'abstainers' in these studies then these

What should the pastor do then? The second of this two-part series will address this very challenging question. M

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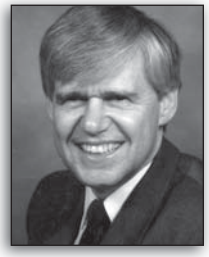
Hope for a lost world: a study of Romans 5:12–21

Rollin Shoemaker



Rollin Shoemaker, D.Min., S.T.M., is a pastor with the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (United States).

Translation[1]

[12] For this reason, just as sin by means of one person entered into the world, and death through sin, and thus death passed unto all men, because all have sinned. [13] For until the coming of the law (Torah), sin was in the world. But sin was not registered to anyone's account since there was no law. [14] Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin in the same way as the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the One who was to come.

[15] But not as the transgression thus also the gift. For if, by one person's transgression, the many died, how much more the grace of God, that is, the gift by means of the one Person Jesus Christ, increased unto the many. [16] And the gift is not as through one person's sin. For indeed, judgment which came from one person's sinning ended in condemnation. And the gift which came after many transgressions ended in justification. [17] For if, by one person's transgression, death reigned through that one person, how much more those who are receiving the abundance of grace, that is, the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life's sphere through that one Person Jesus Christ.

[18] In summary then, just as through one transgression, condemnation came unto all humanity, thus also, through one righteous deed, righteousness, which is life, shall be for all humanity. [19] For just as by means of one person's disobedience, the many were made sinners, thus also by one person's obedience, the many shall be made righteous.

[20] Now the law slipped in so that the transgression might spread: where sin spread, grace was overwhelming, [21] and so that just as sin reigned because of death, thus also so that grace might reign through righteousness unto life eternal by means of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul's goal in writing Romans 1–11

The goal of Paul's argument from Romans 1:18 onwards is articulated in Romans 11:32—*God has consigned all people unto disobedience so that He might have mercy on all*. Paul also uses the very same Greek word that I have translated *consigned* in Galatians 3:22: *Nevertheless Scripture has consigned all things to be under the power of sin so that the promise which flows from faith of Jesus Christ should be given to those that believe*. Taking these two scriptures together, one could conclude that what Paul has written in Romans 3:9 about all being under the power of sin he restates in both Galatians 3:22 and Romans 11:32 in slightly different forms. Hence in Romans 7:14 the "I" who is sold under the power of sin is all humanity, and all humanity, whether Jew or Gentile, is under the control of the power of sin (Rom. 3:9). As a power that pervades all humanity, sin cannot be described as a lapse or even a series of lapses in a person's life. Sin is a power that "underlies every human event and conditions every human status. [It] . . . is the characteristic mark of human nature."[2] The second part of Romans 11:32 stresses the idea that God's judgment of disobedience on the entire world was so that He might have mercy[3] on all. The bulk of Romans, as well as Galatians, tells us how God had or has mercy on all—through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe (Rom. 3:21–26; Gal. 2:16[4]).

This brings us to Paul's thesis: For *just as in Adam all die thus also in Christ all shall be made to live* (1 Cor. 15:22). This comparison between the effect of Adam's transgression and the benefits of Christ's deed is worked out in Romans 5:12–21. We see the devastating effect of Adam's transgression on the one hand and the benefits of the gift through Jesus Christ that are beyond any kind of comparison with the transgression on the other. We also note the law's inability to right what has gone wrong; therefore, we live in the realm of two lordships.

Two powers or lords

We have here the existence of two powers or lords that are in mortal combat with each other for humanity. We are all under one of the two powers or lords: sin[5] or God's righteous-

THE LAW HAD NO POWER TO RIGHT WHAT HAD GONE WRONG WITH HUMANITY (ROM. 8:3a). THE ONLY WAY THAT GOD COULD RIGHT WHAT HAD GONE WRONG WITH HUMANITY WAS TO SEND HIS SON TO CONDEMN SIN IN HUMANITY, WHICH GOD DID (ROM. 8:3).

ness. God seeks a person who has been gripped by the power of sin and invades that person with His prevenient grace.[6] The power of God's prevenient grace is present because no one can seek after God or find Him without God's help (Rom. 3:10, 11).[7] Prevenient grace is needed for individuals so that they can have the possibility of making a decision for Christ (Rom. 5:17). All people are considered to be ungodly since all, both Jew and Gentile, are under the power of sin (Rom. 3:9). Since God justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5), individuals, through God's prevenient grace, can make a decision that would place them under the lordship of Christ. If they do make such a decision, God, through the power of His grace, rescues the person from sin's grasp and places the individual under the power of righteousness. In fact, the sinner becomes God's righteousness in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Although individuals live in a world controlled by sin, they have been rescued out of the present evil age (Gal. 1:4) and now live under the power of God's righteousness. Everyone has the promise of living eternally by participating in the eschatological life (cf. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22). So the decision, proffered through God's righteousness, revealed in God's Son: Will sin or Jesus Christ be lord of my life?

The devastating effect of Adam's transgression

Adam's transgression has sentenced "the many" to death. In fact, Romans 5:15 states that "all" have already died. It's not a pretty picture, with no hope for those in Adam.

In Romans 5:16, Adam's transgression moves from judgment to condemnation—thus reiterating exactly what was articulated in Romans 5:15. Death results because of Adam's transgression, and not just for Adam but for all his descendents.

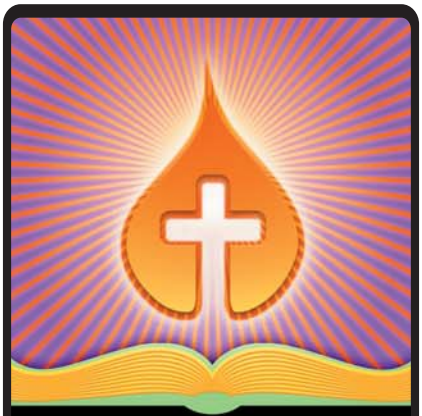
In Romans 5:17, the apostle states that this death that passed over all humanity (cf. Rom. 5:12) rules because of the one transgression of the man Adam.

In Romans 8:2, the apostle articulates the power of sin and death as ruling together. They form a partnership, wreaking havoc on all humanity. In 1 Corinthians 15:56, Paul describes death's sting as sin, and sin has infected all humanity. The *law* gives sin its power since, where no law exists, sin is dead (Rom. 4:15; 7:8). And as Romans 8:3 says, the *law* cannot reverse what Adam's transgression has caused—in fact, it exacerbates the situation (Rom. 7:7–11). A change of lordship must take place for the *law* to be an effective power for good (Rom. 8:3, 4).

The coming of the law

According to Romans 5:13, sin ruled in spite of the fact that there was no written law. This indicates that there was no means to register an offense against anyone because there was no codified law. But in spite of this inability to register an offense, death still reigned (Rom. 5:14), and, as a result, sin and death ruled over humanity during the time between Adam and Moses. The apostle writes in Romans 2:14–16 that those who sin without a law will perish without the law because they have a law within themselves. In the day of judgment their conscience will testify either for or against them. Paul says that God will judge the world in accordance with "my gospel," or the apostle's gospel (Rom. 2:16; cf. Rom. 1:2–5). Because the law is not needed in a codified form, justice can be exacted based on the law within. The law within, to be sure, is at least in part in agreement with the codified Torah (cf. Rom 2:15). On the basis of law all are condemned.

In Romans 5:20, 21, the apostle articulates that the law "slipped in" by stealth. This word, translated *slipped in,* Paul also used to describe the false brethren who slipped in to spy out the freedom one has in Christ Jesus (Gal. 2:4). The false brethren wanted to enslave the believers. Perhaps the law does the same thing by enslaving one to sin, since sin uses the law to cause more sin. Because of what is wrong with humanity, humans try to exert effort to obtain what the law promises by faith. Thus the law's coming, according to the apostle, turns out to be not good for righting what has gone wrong with humanity (Rom. 8:3). The law's function, which was believed to be a fence or force against sin, actually turned out to be a force that caused sin to spread—for it formed a nexus with sin. Where sin spreads, death rules. So instead of curbing sin, the coming of the law caused sin to spread; therefore, sin continued to rule by means of death. The questions to ask, then, are, Did God make a mistake when He gave the law? Does the law give a false hope when it says, "You shall keep my statues and my ordinances: by doing so one shall live: I am the LORD" (NRSV of Lev. 18:5; cf. Gal. 3:11, 12; and Rom. 10:5ff.)? The law does not



acknowledgment • communion • training • service

Discouragement prevention principles

1. Keep talking to God, no matter how angry or discouraged you are. He is able to bear all your burdens.

2. Keep reading your Bible, even if it is hard to concentrate, even if it is just five minutes a day. God speaks to you through His Word.

3. Keep asking God if there anything in you that is preventing Him from answering your prayers or that is causing this trial. As needed, He will lead you to repent and confess.

4. Find five things every day for which you can praise God. Praise changes your attitude.

5. Keep a journal. Write down your requests and answers, your blessings and surprises from God. Pour out your heart to Him when you are burdened and keep a record so you don't forget what God has done for you.

6. Ask God to lead you to someone whom He wants you to love for Him.

7. Get involved in a small group to study and pray together. This is extremely important, because it provides an environment for growth, bonding, support, and accountability. If that is impossible, at least find a prayer partner.

8. Have family worship every day. You'll discover the difference it makes in your marriage and home.

—Jane Page, Central California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

give a false hope, for Paul has been using the law as proof for God's way of righting what has gone wrong (cf. Rom. 3:31; 4). By misunderstanding the law as an invitation to exert human effort to accomplish its fulfillment in order to live, one accomplishes the very opposite of what the law promises (cf. Rom. 7:15, 25).

The law, which cannot right what has gone wrong with humanity, does not at first glance appear to be of benefit for humanity, for it does seem to be used by sin to cause more sin and death. Nevertheless the law, which defines what a right relationship with God is, has as its goal, Christ. In Romans 9:30–10:4, Paul makes a rather harsh statement: *30 Therefore what shall we say, that the Gentiles, those who were not pursuing righteousness (i.e., a right relationship with God), received righteousness (a right relationship with God), namely the righteousness which flows from faith. 31 And Israel pursuing a law of righteousness did not obtain unto the law. 32 Why? It was because [their righteousness] did not flow from faith but it flowed as from works [human effort]. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling. 33 Just like it is written: Look I place in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. The one who believes on it will not be put to shame. . . . 10:3 For they [Israel], being ignorant of the righteousness of God, sought [through human effort] to establish their own righteousness. They thus did not submit to the righteousness of God [which is revealed in the gospel, Rom. 1:16]. 4 For the goal of the law is Christ in regard to righteousness (i.e., a right relationship with God) for everyone who believes.* In effect he says human effort to keep the law ends in disobedience,[8] for obedience is only obtained by faith (cf. Rom. 1:5; 4:5). Without faith it is impossible to please God (cf. Heb. 11:6). The Israelites were to express faith or belief in Christ, and that they did not do. Hence they stumbled over Christ, the rock of offense. God's righteousness as revealed in the gospel is God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The entire law has as its object or goal, Christ. Thus that which rights what has gone wrong with humanity is Christ, and those in Christ are in a right relationship with God.

The law had no power to right what had gone wrong with humanity (Rom. 8:3a). The only way that God could right what had gone wrong with humanity was to send His Son to condemn sin in humanity, which God did (Rom. 8:3). In fact, the apostle states that no one outside of Christ is able to even submit to the law (Rom. 8:7, 8) for only those who are living by or in the Spirit can fulfill the requirement of the law (Rom. 8:4).

In the Qumran community the law was considered to be the place where God's righteousness could operate and operated only for those who accepted God's commands and tried to obey them. If someone had difficulty keeping the commands, one could expect God's grace to help out.[9] Nevertheless, it was taught that one can find victory over sin only in observing the law,[10] with this obviously leading to a radicalized life in the law.[11] Since one never had assurance, it was only a future hope that God would justify and pardon,[12] for outside of Christ no assurance exists.

What the law demanded was met by Jesus Christ. Thus the goal *(telos)*[13] of the law was fulfilled in Jesus Christ in regard to righteousness for all believers (Rom. 10:4). A person in Christ had the assurance of eschatological life, and that life begins when one is in Christ and comes to fruition on the day of judgment.

The gift through Jesus Christ our Lord

In contradistinction to the transgression, the gift is presented.[14] Romans 5:15 says that the gift cannot be compared on the same basis with the transgression. In fact, it says that the gift is "much more." The "much more" not only implies that the gift has reversed the effect of the transgression; it implies that the gift has increased for "the many." The gift, an articulation of the power of God's grace, is said to be by means of the grace of the one Person, Jesus Christ. In Romans 5:16 Paul says that the gift is not like the one person's sinning, but the gift flowing *after* many transgressions ends in rectification, justification, or acquittal. In Romans 5:17 the phrase "much more" is used again. It could probably be translated "It is even more certain," but it certainly means more than even this. Perhaps one could describe this

promise as "incomprehensible." The text could then be read to say, *It is even more certain or much more [in other words it is simply not within the ability of human beings to understand the full impact of what it means] that those who are receiving the abundance of grace—the gift of righteousness—shall reign in life through the One Person Jesus Christ.*

Righteousness, as a relational term, is the gift of a right relationship with God through the power of God's grace. The gift of righteousness certainly involves more than a relationship. It involves ethics as well since one reigns. Overcoming the effect of Adam's transgression involves both ethics and one's legal standing before God.[15] Hence the believer who appropriates the abundance of grace is being transformed and truly being made righteous.[16] The text goes on to say that the one who receives will reign in life. This life for the Christian, described as an eschatological life, has more power than death and has come about as a result of justification. Thus begins the eternal life, and even though not fully realized now, it will be fully realized on the last day. This all comes about through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:11, 15, 17, 21). The gift cannot be separated from the One who gives it, our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23). Hence justification, rectification (or righteousness), and sanctification can be understood only when "seen as *what happens in Jesus Christ*"[17] (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30).

Christ's righteous deed reverses and nullifies the effect of Adam's transgression

Thus, in Adam, the world is lost. But because of Christ's righteous deed, the world has hope; the world has the certainty that what has gone wrong with humanity will one day be completely righted (Rom. 5:18, 19). Ⓜ

1 All translations are the author's except where noted.

2 Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns, 6th ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 173.

3 Martyn writes, "God is also the one whose capacity to show mercy is more powerful than the capacity of human beings to be disobedient." J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 45.

4 See Martyn's chapter titled "God's Way of Making Right What Is Wrong." This chapter is essentially an exegesis of Galatians 2:16; ibid., 141–56. See also Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, ed. Astrid B. Beck and David Noel Freedman, 2nd ed., The Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), and Morna D. Hooker, "Πιστις Χριστου," *New Testament Studies* vol. 35, no. 3 (1989).

5 Take note of Wisdom 2:24: "But through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his company experience it" (NRSV). The devil here is the power of sin.

6 Prevenient grace is best defined as God's first movement toward us—making us aware of how we have violated His will, and sparking within us a desire for freedom from sin.

7 Ellen G. White describes this encounter in *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), 26–7.

8 White writes that in the time of Christ "the principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), 35, 36. It is no different now. The basis or foundation of every false religion is human effort.

9 Morna D. Hooker, *A Preface to Paul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 39.

10 Herman N. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard De Witt (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), 95.

11 Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 26.

12 Hooker, *Preface*, 41.

13 Badenas writes, "Luther explains Rom 10.4 by saying that the whole Bible every where speaks alone of Christ when we regard its real meaning, even outwardly considered as a picture and image, may sound differently. For this reason we also read, 'Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness . . . that is everything (in Scripture) *points to Christ.*' "Robert Badenas, *Christ The End of The Law: Romans 10.4 in Pauline Perspective*, ed. David Hill, Supplement Series 10, vol. 10 (Sheffield S10 2TN, England: JSOT, 1985), 20. On the same page he further states, "Notice that Luther's interpretation of Rom 10.4 is essentially teleological. Even though he translated *telos* as *Ende* in his German of the Bible, he did not use Rom 10.4 as a statement of law, but as a statement of the teleological and Christological character of the OT as announcing and prophesying Christ." For another view see Wilhelm C. Linss, "Exegesis of Telos in Romans 10:4," *Biblical Research* XXXIII (1988).

14 Reumann notes after articulating the contrast between Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12–21 the "absolutely clear . . . association of justification/righteousness with Christ, by grace, as a free gift, for acquittal from trespasses, with eternal life as the result." John Reumann, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Jerome D. Quinn, *"Righteousness" in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran–Roman Catholic Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 80.

15 John Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry* (Cambridge [Eng]: University Press, 1972), 197, 198.

16 Käsemann, 96, Reumann, Fitzmyer, and Quinn, 76, 77, 90.

17 Hans Küng, *Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 59.

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Old and new: continuity and discontinuity in God's everlasting covenant

Michael G. Hasel

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Many Christians distinguish the old and new covenants as "covenant of works" and "covenant of grace."[1] The words *grace* and *works* indicate for a lot of people the radical distinction between two ways of salvation—one way whereby sinners are saved supposedly through meritorious works and the law; the other way salvation comes through the grace of God bestowed in Jesus Christ. Those who make this distinction use the "covenant of works" to refer to the period that began at Mount Sinai and was God's designed way of salvation for Israel. In other words, Israel was saved by works and obedience. The "covenant of grace" is salvation by grace, a salvation in which works do not have any saving role. This article focuses on one narrow aspect of the covenants—namely, the issues of continuity in the biblical covenants as an attempt to answer what some of the critics have described as a radical distinction.

Announcement of the new covenant

The only designation of the "new covenant" in the Old Testament is found in the writings of Jeremiah, who prophesied during the last days of the kingdom of Judah on the eve of Babylonian captivity. Let us look at this passage, Jeremiah 31:31–34: " 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,' says the LORD. 'But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the LORD, I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,' says the LORD. 'For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more' " (NKJV).

Key elements of the passage

Although designated as "new" for the first time in Jeremiah 31:31, other prophets had already spoken about this new covenant. About 150 years before Jeremiah, Hosea, in the northern kingdom of Israel, predicted a new covenant:

"In that day I will also make a covenant for them
With the beasts of the fields,
The birds of the sky,
And the creeping things of the ground.
And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land,
And will make them lie down in safety.
"And I will betroth you to Me forever;
Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice,
In loving kindness and in compassion,
And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness.
Then you will know the LORD" (Hosea 2:18–20, NASB).

The introductory words, "In that day," introduced the prophet's prediction as an expression that points to the future. The prediction does not indicate when this future day would come but does communicate that such a day is decisively fixed in God's plan. "In that day" denotes the end of an old order of things and the beginning of the new age with a new order of things. The picture of a future covenant in Hosea 2:18, involving the animal kingdom as well as people and promising abolition of weapons of war and the introduction of peace, certainly pictures the future Messianic reign of peace.

Mention of the new covenant also brings to mind the rich statements found in various parts of the Old Testament about the new heart. For example, the Lord will provide " 'a heart to know that I am the LORD' " (Jer. 24:7, RSV) and " 'one heart and one way' " (Jer. 32:39, RSV). Also God will " 'take the stony heart out

of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh' " (Ezek. 11:19, RSV) and will give " 'a new heart' " and " 'a new spirit' " (Ezek. 36:26).

These statements remind us of the change that will take place when the new covenant comes into effect in the lives of human beings. So the Lord says, " 'I will put My Spirit within you' " (Ezek. 36:27, NASB). This work of God within the hearts of men and women becomes the foundation for the activity, receptiveness, and significance of the "new covenant" in human lives. Hosea and Isaiah, the great prophets in the eighth century B.C., and the great prophets who followed them later, namely, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, prophesy each in his own way about the new covenant experience though only one actually uses the designation "new."

THE CHOICE TO HAVE GOD'S LAW WRITTEN UPON ONE'S HEART IS AN INDIVIDUAL CHOICE MADE SOLELY BY EACH PERSON.

Continuity in the covenants

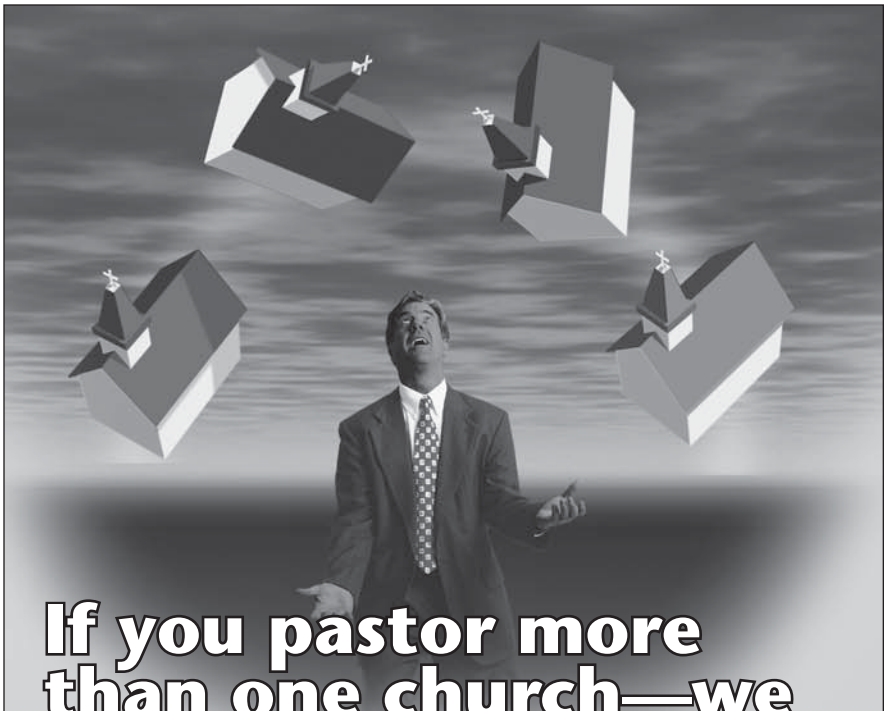
Comparison of the "old covenant," which God made with ancient Israel on Mount Sinai, with the "new covenant" indicates several lines of continuity.

God is the same in both. The covenant-making LORD (YHWH) with Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Israel at Sinai (Gen. 15:2; Exod. 6:2) is the same God who speaks of the "new" covenant in the prophecy of Jeremiah. It is always the saving God who initiates that which is new and seeks to bring salvation to those who distort His plan or who reject His great gift. For this reason we can speak of the biblical God as the covenant-making God. We can also speak of the biblical God as the Initiator of salvation in covenant making.

The partners are the same in both. The prophet explicitly announced the new covenant as being made with " 'the house of Israel and the house of Judah' " or simply with " 'the house of Israel' " (see Jer. 31:31, 33). Although some take this to mean that the new covenant is only for the ancient nation of Israel, such is not the case nor was it the case in the past. In the days of Noah, the antediluvian covenant God established with Noah was to save not only Noah and his family but all life through Noah. In the days of Abraham, God's salvation was offered to Abraham and his seed. True, the Lord offered the "new covenant" first to His people whom He had elected and with whom He had made a covenant on Mount Sinai in the time of Moses. But remember that this Israel was a mixed multitude and was encouraged to be a light to the nations. We will speak more about this later. The Israelites, tragically, had turned that Sinai covenant into a law method of salvation, or justification by works; they endeavored to be righteous through their own futile strivings, not availing themselves of the method of faith that issues unto obedience. (In faith-obedience the works and good deeds of the obedient person are not a means of salvation but the result of salvation granted and given by God.) God has always worked through a remnant faithfully spreading His covenant message of grace to humans. He eventually had to turn from ethnic Israel, who chose to reject that privileged position, to spiritual Israel in order to find the cooperation He needed in putting into operation the provisions and benefits of His everlasting covenant, now being called the new covenant.

The law in both covenants is the same. Ellen White writes that "Under the new covenant, the conditions by which eternal life may be gained are the same as under the old—perfect obedience."[2] The statement in the new-covenant promise about God's law is of pivotal significance. A common element in the prior covenants made with Adam and Abraham and particularly with ancient Israel on Mount Sinai is the law of God. God's law, appropriately called here in Jeremiah " 'My law' " (Jer. 31:33), was at Sinai God's law written on tablets of stone (Exod. 24:12; 31:18; 34:1, 28). The tablets of stone were actually sometimes called "the covenant" (see 1 Kings 8:21). This law of God stands immutable and eternal and given by God through grace to His people that they might live in covenant relationship with Him and one another.

"Law within; written on hearts." Furthermore, this immutable expression of God's will in the law is not to remain external to humans. For this reason this new-covenant passage emphasizes that the law will be written by God "upon their hearts." This internalizing of the law was always God's intent and clearly indicated within the Sinai covenant. When Moses repeats the law to the second generation of Israelites, the same law He proclaimed on Sinai, he says, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when



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thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:4–7).

Again just before Israel entered into the land of promise: " 'And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. . . . For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" But the word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.' " (Deut. 30:6, 11–14, NKJV).

Other passages also indicate that in the new covenant experience there is a complete internalizing of God's law. Repeatedly we find the expression "with all your heart and soul" (Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 11:18; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2; 30:6; 30:10). The Israelites were told to "circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer" (Deut. 10:16, NKJV).

This activity of God, in writing His law upon the human heart, is His marvelous work of grace within us. It is His work to write the law inwardly through His Holy Spirit. Thus the law becomes internalized within the believer, an integral part of the believer's will, permeating it so as to make the human will and the divine law conform perfectly with each other (see 2 Cor. 3:5, 6).

The resultant obedience is not a human achievement; it is not meritorious obedience; it is not obedience aimed at achieving justification and salvation by one's own efforts; but it is faith-obedience, an obedience made possible by faith in the enabling power of Jesus Christ.

The internalizing of God's law within human hearts does not mean that God forces His will upon His people. The fact that God will write the law inwardly, making it a part of the total

person and their will, demonstrates the principle of choice on the part of the person. God will not now, and has never in the past, forced His law into the heart of anyone. The choice to have God's law written upon one's heart is an individual choice made solely by each person. This choice, however, remains crucial for an understanding of the human partners with whom the new covenant is made and who will experience and stand within the new covenant relationship.

Thus the continuity between the members of the "old" and "new" covenant community is not every physical or blood descendant of Abraham but every person who allows God to write His law inwardly, making it part of the total will of the believer so that the believer may obey God by faith. Thus the experience of the law written upon the heart in the "new covenant" identifies that person to be a member of God's spiritual Israel, where physical lineage is irrelevant. Persons who allow God to do His work within them become members of God's Israel, His true, spiritual Israel. The true, spiritual Israel who have experienced God writing His law upon their hearts become partners with God in the "new covenant."

In the New Testament, Jews who received Jesus Christ and His gospel made up the kernel of the church (see Matt. 18:17). Thus the continuity between Israel and God's people, "a remnant chosen by grace" (Rom. 11:5, NIV), is clearly indicated in the New Testament. Faithless Jews, on the other hand, are depicted as "hardened" (Rom. 11:7), not constituting true Israel.

Gentiles who formerly did not believe accepted the gospel and were grafted into God's true people, a community made up of believers irrespective of their ethnic origin (see Rom. 11:13–24). So the Gentiles, "at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise" (Eph. 2:12, RSV), were brought near in the blood of Christ and are now "no longer strangers and sojourners, but . . . fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (v. 19, RSV). Christ mediates the "new covenant" (Heb. 9:15, RSV) for all believers irrespective of whether they are Jew or Gentile, black or white, yellow or brown, male or female.

"I will be their God, and they will be my people." The purpose of covenanting is clearly outlined in Jeremiah 31:31–34. God does not speak of a new law but of a new covenant. The law as the way of life gives expression to this new covenant relationship that is actually expressed by a formula: " 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people' " (Jer. 31:33; cf. 7:23; 32:38). The Sinai covenant was described by the same formula (see Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 26:16–19; etc.). God's purpose for His people is that this promised relationship, so short-lived for ancient Israel, shall be renewed and restored and made permanent.

The results of covenanting are of utmost significance. Chief among these is the ensuing experience of the new-covenant community to be a spiritual Israel made up of those who allow God to internalize His law within them, and who thereby become sanctified channels to enlighten and bless their fellow humans. The new covenant would also establish a lasting, profound, and deep relationship and communion between the human partners and their covenanting Lord, the God of their salvation, and bring the gratifying blessing of forgiveness, which brings peace to mind and soul (see Jer. 31:34). It would be a forgiveness that would be secured and anchored in the sacrifice of God's own Son, Jesus Christ.

THIS CHOICE, HOWEVER, REMAINS CRUCIAL FOR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN PARTNERS WITH WHOM THE NEW COVENANT IS MADE AND WHO WILL EXPERIENCE AND STAND WITHIN THE NEW COVENANT RELATIONSHIP.

Newness of the new covenant

In English, the opposite of "new" is "old." The word *old* implies prior existence or continued usage for a long time. It also frequently designates something antiquated in the sense that something has fallen into disuse or is out-of-date. We should be careful not to superimpose modern-day meanings upon biblical usage when it comes to understanding the intent, purpose, and design of biblical language.

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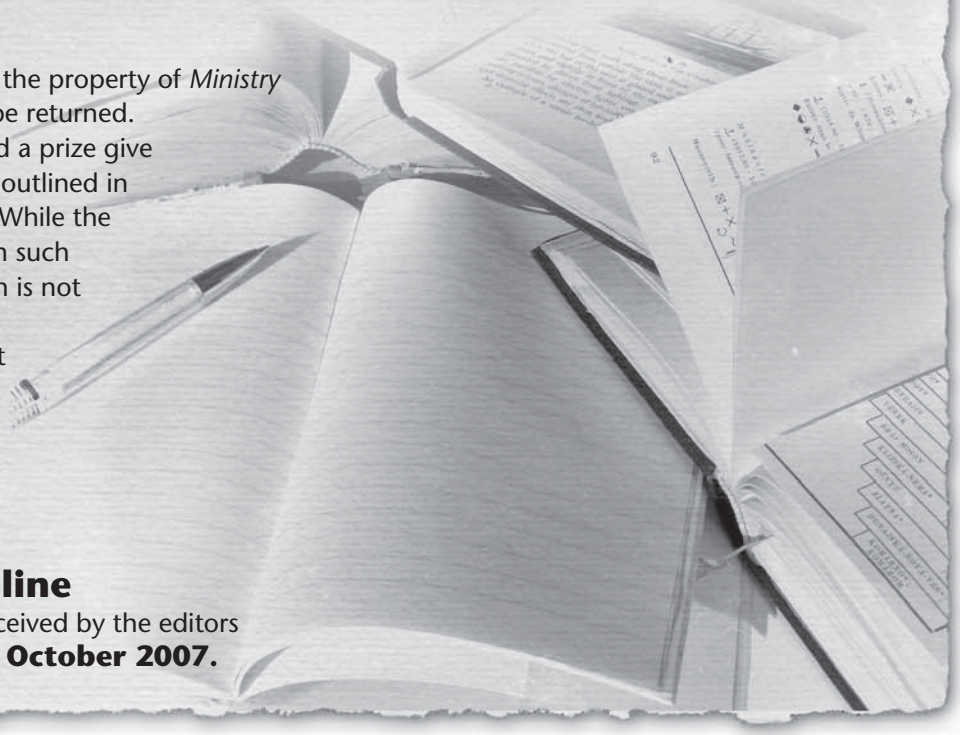

Submission deadline

All submissions must be received by the editors no later than **Monday, 1 October 2007.**

The term *new* with regard to the "new covenant" in Jeremiah 31:31 is the Hebrew term *chādāš.* This Hebrew term means frequently (1) "to renew" or "to restore," and (2) something "new" that was not yet present in the same quality or way before. Reflecting both senses, the "new covenant" is simply a "renewed" or "restored" covenant, plus one now having characteristics not present in the same way or quality as before.

The apostle Paul suggests in 2 Corinthians 3:6 that the "new covenant" is a covenant of the Spirit in contrast to the "old covenant," which was a written code: "We serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6, NASB). Paul seems to be emphasizing here that the "written code" (2 Cor. 3:5, 6, RSV) is the letter of the law in the sense of that which is outside of the human and not yet written within them. As long as the "written code" remains outside of us and not written by the Spirit within us, it can bring only condemnation. The written law within us is a sign of a changed, saved heart.

Here the Spirit, who characterizes the new covenant, gives life; He writes the law upon the heart and thus internalizes the law within. Therefore the newness of the covenant is characterized most effectively by the word *better* in Hebrews 8:6. God's covenant remains or becomes obsolete when it remains outside of the human heart, when it is merely a method of law-keeping in order to gain salvation by human merit. In contrast, Paul stresses the new-covenant approach to salvation, and here he is in complete harmony with a total scriptural emphasis. According to Paul, the new covenant is a covenant of the Spirit, the believer now serving in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter (Rom. 7:6).

In closing we should emphasize that the New Testament does not preach a new gospel. Galatians 1:6–9 and Hebrews 4:2 make it abundantly clear that there is only one gospel. To make a radical distinction between the "old" and "new" covenants would be to create two separate methods of salvation—one through the law and the other through grace. Paul forcefully argues in 2 Timothy 3:14, 15, "Continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (NKJV). The Scriptures to which Paul refers include the Old Testament. Thus the Old Testament is the basis for salvation—and "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (v. 16).

The covenant that God offered to His people throughout history is the same everlasting covenant. But just as each person experiences that covenant individually, internalizing it into one's heart and soul, that covenant becomes new with each new person and generation. Thus in the great faith chapter of Hebrews 11, which comes after the description of the new covenant in Hebrews 8, we find listed those men and women who experienced that covenant grace of God by faith: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab—even Rahab who was not then a descendant of Abraham—and others became heir to the promise through faith, each discovering anew the wonderful, experiential, everlasting covenant in the history of God's faithful initiation of love and grace among His people. M

1 This article is based in part on excerpts from Gerhard F. Hasel and Michael G. Hasel, *The Promise: God's Everlasting Covenant* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2002).

2 Ellen G. White Comments, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1956), 931.

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Should the Christian mission focus on salvation or society?

Bert B. Beach

Bert B. Beach, Ph.D., is former director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

Here we will discuss a basic, though somewhat misleading, question. Some interpret the question as asking, in essence, whether Christian mission should focus on evangelization and salvation or on dealing with the problems of society here and now. Stating the question in this form, we can give only one answer: The Christian mission must focus on salvation, not society.

However, a scent of fallacy exists in putting the question this way, in putting *salvation and society in opposition*. They should be placed in juxtaposition, because the Christian mission—what Christ does in the world—must deal with both salvation and society. "The only remedy for the sins and sorrows of men is Christ. The gospel of His grace alone can cure the evils that curse society."[1] So the focus must be on both salvation and society.

There are two popular misconceptions. The first: Morality is limited to private, personal behavioral matters. The second: The development of public policy, purely a secular, political matter, or an economic, technological issue, does not need to seriously concern Christians.

Christians believe in religious moral values, with the dignity and value of each human being created in the image of God as the most important. Doesn't some kind of social morality and responsibility flow from this basic belief? Thus, do not policy choices in government have at least a link to—some would say a basis in—moral principles? Furthermore, do we not live in a world where its components have become increasingly interdependent in their current nature, and doesn't interdependence involve a moral dynamic?

Christ's prototypical example

Christ's example is of prototypical importance. On the one hand, He formulated no sociopolitical platform on which His church could stand and conduct its program. The temptations in the wilderness were, to some extent, political in nature. He had at least three opportunities to take over society by a *coup d'etat* of sorts: (1) the feeding of the multitude in Galilee (Luke 9:13–17),[2] (2) His triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19:30–44), and (3) the experience with Peter's sword in the Garden of Gethsemane and the available twelve divine legions (Matt. 26:51–53).

Yet Jesus rejected crusaderism and zealotlike kingship. On the other hand, the teachings of Jesus have a significant societal fallout. In what some have called His "inaugural address" (Luke 4:16–21), Jesus, quoting from Isaiah 61, presents the Messianic task as a social one (after all, good news must have a social dimension): good news for the poor; freedom for the captives, sight for the blind, liberty for the oppressed. Christ's ministry makes it clear that He was not talking exclusively about *spiritual* poverty, blindness, and oppression.

No wonder, then, that the Adventist pioneers did have a societal agenda, albeit a somewhat limited one. This small scale was almost inevitable due to the size of the church and its limited resources. They opposed slavery, called for health and educational reform, and promoted temperance and antialcohol and antismoking causes. They were interested also in the needs of children and women.

Today, the church is much larger and the financial and institutional resources much bigger. In some countries Adventists have become a significant segment of the population. Adventists have even been heads of state. Opting out of social responsibility would be irresponsible. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has become a major player on the world stage of society.

Poverty and hunger are daily problems with several thousand children dying every day from malnutrition. Every 30 seconds someone dies of malaria in Africa. Global warming and global pollution are problems along with the destruction of nonrenewable energy sources. Adventists have long advocated a simple

lifestyle to help reduce some of these problems. We must vigorously come to grips with the AIDS pandemic and play a significant role in promoting human rights and the nondiscrimination of various groups, including women and the handicapped.

With peacemaking as another essential cause, Adventist schools have been asked to set aside one week each school year to emphasize, through various programs, peacemaking, respect, conflict resolution, and reconciliation as an Adventist contribution to a culture of social harmony and peace.

You cannot deal effectively with poverty, hunger, and discrimination by simply offering relief and helping those who suffer; it is also necessary to work on *changing the causes*. ADRA has understood this point. Such a position, however, inevitably brings contact with the political sphere.

Doctrine of Creation and doctrine of man

First of all, social responsibility has, as its basis, the doctrine of Creation. God willed to create, *ex nihilo*, a universe distinct from Himself and established humans as the stewards of this world.

We also find social responsibility inherent in the doctrine of man. The parameters of the church's social service lie within the nature of humans. With human beings created in the image of God and marred by sin, the dignity of the child of God becomes restored through the process of salvation. Such an appreciation entails concrete ethical and social responsibility. The Christian concept that humans are not flotsam on the sea of time but people with a potential for a radiant future gives purpose and energy to the Christian mission. Like his Lord, the Christian disciple of Christ must discern in every human being "infinite possibilities."[3]

While Christian social responsibility rests on the doctrines of Creation and man, the soteriological principle provides its teleology. When the church and its members relate to society, salvation as the ultimate purpose must dominate. Christian social responsibility does not simply result from humanitarian impulses, though of course that is also there, but it springs from a much deeper level, the desire that "they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). This fullness of life involves conversion, reconciliation, and faith, or in one word, *salvation*, but also a healthier and happier life. Christian virtues have social implications, and thus Christianity can be identified as a social religion. Religious beliefs inevitably shape socioeconomic views and political actions. Religious values must be allowed to have, and will have, a societal fallout.

Evangelism and social responsibility

In view of the current tendency toward church political involvement, one may ask, What is the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility? One traditional view *equates mission with evangelism*. Another view puts evangelism on the back burner or gives it the pejorative connotation of proselytism, and it *concentrates on the social gospel* instead.

The biblical view of mission sees it as *service* in word and action. In this service concept, a synthesis between evangelism and social activity exists. John Stott has presented three ways of relating evangelism and social outreach:[4]

1. Social action as "a means to evangelism" (preparatory to evangelism)

2. Social action as a "manifestation," aspect or part, "of evangelism"

power of the gospel to society. The metaphors that Jesus uses in Matthew 5 regarding this change brought about by the Christian mission include salt and light. This means that Christians must penetrate and permeate secular, that is, non-Christian, society. After all, if Christians stay in the saltshaker or hide in the security of the church fortress, they are of little good.

selfishness—the root of probably the most evil in society—be eradicated by bills, laws, and votes, but "only through submission to Christ."[6] Nevertheless, in regard to intemperance, Ellen G. White, a leader in the temperance and prohibition movement in the late nineteenth century, pointed out that "there is a cause for the moral paralysis" afflicting society when laws sustain evils

NO WONDER, THEN, THAT THE ADVENTIST PIONEERS DID HAVE A SOCIETAL AGENDA, ALBEIT A SOMEWHAT LIMITED ONE. THIS SMALL SCALE WAS ALMOST INEVITABLE DUE TO THE SIZE OF THE CHURCH AND ITS LIMITED RESOURCES.

3. Social action as a "partner" or a parallel activity "of evangelism"

The third view seems the more correct and the one supported by Stott with both evangelism and social service needed. Though supporting each other, they become separate aspects of mission. With evangelism as the overarching responsibility, the immediate priority may differ. Think for example of the wounded man on the Jericho road. What was his priority need that day—medical care or a Bible study about the state of the dead?

A part of either salvation or service is to provide fellow human beings with a sense of meaning and purpose, with an awareness that they are not destined to travel down life's short or long road toward meaninglessness and therefore nothingness. We need to provide men and women with a raison d'être, what Senator Barack Obama has called "a narrative act to their lives."[5]

We must reach beyond evangelism of the individual—though this is central—and apply the transforming

Do not the metaphors of salt and light imply that Christians can change the stale, decaying, and dark environment and improve society? We are not talking of the social gospel, for its weakness and wrongness is that it claims the power to *perfect* society here and now. We can, however, *improve* society and its corrupt composition.

Christians and politics

With such questions before us, we cannot avoid the thorny issue of the Christian and politics. The danger of politics is that it tends, if we are not careful, to make the world our all. Political domains can rarely, perhaps never, be made truly Christian. To imagine that Christian standards, which are higher than those accepted by society, can be successfully applied to government and society in general is quite unrealistic.

Is it possible to apply the principles of the Sermon on the Mount in the general political arena? Love cannot be legislated or institutionalized, nor can

that undermine the very foundation of the country's legal system. It is thus irresponsible for Christians to simply "deplore the wrongs which they know exist, but consider themselves free from all responsibility in the matter. This cannot be. Every individual exerts an influence in society."[7] Logic allows us to extrapolate Ellen White's thinking and apply it through parallelism to other corresponding and current situations.

In politics, at least three problems and two dangers exist. Among the problems: (1) compromise, (2) expediency, and (3) Christian standards seen as unrealistic. The two dangers: (1) the church trying to "churchify" society and the state, and (2) society "politicizing" the church in such a way that Christian faith becomes interpreted in terms of political values. You have then, secular, socialist right-wing, radical left-wing, or whatever values penetrating the church. Hardly the best witness, to be sure.

Here the separation of church and state enters into the picture. Its

purpose is not to exclude the voice of morality—Christianity (if you wish)—from public debate and influence. It provides the context of religious liberty so that moral insights of religion can be freely expressed and tested without discrimination, hindrance, or favoritism.

Christians should participate in the public forum, offering a significant ethical vision. Yes, the church must be separate from the state but not alienated from or indifferent to society. Religious leaders must, though, walk carefully and circumspectly when in the public arena. Politics cannot be identified as gospel, nor the gospel as politics. Politics is often tainted, even corrupt; at best, it is ambivalent. Christians can easily be contaminated, and churches risk losing the respect and aura of virtue when they get too politically involved. The church can be seen as, or become in reality, a faction or handmaiden of secular interests.

At the same time Christians can play a positive, though difficult, role in public affairs. When should they speak out and act in society? I suggest tentatively seven "when's," perhaps erring a little on the conservative side. The temptation will always be there to open the doors wider to intervention.

1. When questions have clear moral answers (not as frequently as it may seem)

2. When questions are incapable of alternative moral characterizations

3. When basic personal rights are at stake

4. When religious liberty is at stake

5. When salvation of individuals is involved

6. When the Christian view reflects a united, well thought-out opinion

7. When there is a reasonable expectation of a positive outcome of the intervention, or at least that some improvement would likely result

Eschatological hope should increase service

Having affirmed the all-importance of the otherworldly, salvific dimension, we need to confess that as Christians we have at times turned a blind service eye to the earthly realities of oppression, exploitation of workers, women, the weak, racism, and other discriminatory practices. On the contrary, the eschatological hope of Adventists should and must increase both service to society and sensitivity to the crying needs of fellow human beings. As Jan Paulsen, president of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, has said, "We are not just creatures of a spiritual environment. We are actively interested in everything that shapes the way we live, and we are concerned about the well-being of our planet."[8]

In essence, the church's responsibility for the world means to prepare men and women to meet their God and soon-coming Lord. This does not mean that Second Advent–oriented Christians dream a utopian vision of millennial pie in the apocalyptic sky. Christians will be active seed planters, not just *sin plaintiffs*. The followers of Jesus need today, perhaps more than ever, to concentrate upon "doing what is good . . . and profitable for everyone" (Titus 3:8, NIV), and "everyone" means society. Living out such a life of blessing includes dealing with both salvation and society. M

1 Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1941), 254.

2 All referenced scripture is from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.

3 White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1952), 80.

4 See John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (London: Falcon Books, 1975), 26–8.

5 Garret M. Graff, "The Legend of Barack Obama," *Washingtonian* (November 2006), 122, 3.

6 White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1941), 254.

7 ———, "Temperance and the License Law," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 8, 1881, par. 9.

8 Ray Dabrowski, ed., "A Seventh-day Adventist Call for Peace," *Statements, Guidelines, and other Documents* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., April 18, 2002), 78.

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RESOURCES

Church management software

Software for Ministry, which has made church ministry/management software since 1984, is giving away its full-featured church ministry and management software, The Church Membership Directory, FREE in 2007.

Mic Thurber, the software's author and a full-time working pastor himself, tells why he's doing this: "Every year I discover that there are many pastors and churches that have not yet started to use good church ministry–focused software. The reasons why this is so are varied: the cost seems too high, the programs too complex, or unfamiliarity with just how important good church ministry software can be to a ministry.

"By giving away our software free for this year, churches can have an extended period of time in which to use and become familiar with good ministry-focused software and its benefits without any expense at all."

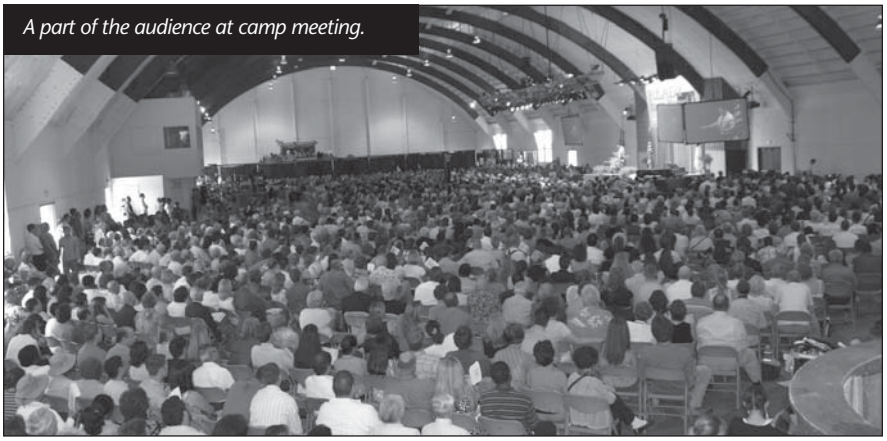
Others have, over the years, benefited from this software. "I have used the CMD for many years, in three congregations. It is very useful and keeps getting better all the time," said John Blewitt of Faith Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Danny Lemons, pastor of discipleship ministries for the Messiah United Methodist Church in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, said, "I first purchased CMD about fifteen years ago when I saw it advertised in *Ministry* and have used it ever since. Office staff personnel who have used other programs have high praise for its ease of use and practicality."

The free software is available for download from the Web site http://www.softwareforministry.com. M

Dateline

Evangelism offering tops US$2 million

Clovis, California, United States—The announcement came on the closing night of Central California Conference's camp meeting in Soquel, California. With a goal of $850,000, the Camp Meeting Evangelism Offering had just reached $2 million. Central California, with more than 125 churches, is one of the Seventh-day Adventist conferences in California.



A part of the audience at camp meeting.

As the audience spontaneously praised God, one thing was for certain: "People knew this was God showing up!" says **Jerry Page**, conference president. "I have never seen God's people so energized as that night. You can't plan this!"

This annual offering of gifts and pledges comes from hundreds of people. For the past two years, it has surpassed $1 million. The goals were $600,000 and $750,000 respectively.

Nine years ago, a small group of members began asking God to give His people in Central a prayer miracle—something that would convince people of the power of united prayer. Surprisingly, God chose the Camp Meeting Evangelism Offering, and the group began to pray for it to go higher than anyone could dream possible.

"We ask God what is on His heart, what He wants," explains **Janet Page**, conference prayer ministries director. "For the past several years, we were led to pray for a million dollar offering. This year God impressed one member to begin to privately pray for two million dollars. Then another person was led to pray for that same amount. In time, others were united in that prayer."

Jerry Page does not see this offering as fund-raising undertaking, but rather, he sees it as an answer to prayer. "It's a highlight in my life to see this happen," states the grateful leader. The funds will be used for a variety of evangelistic projects throughout the conference.

[Caron Oswald, Central California Conference, and Nikolaus Satelmajer, editor, *Ministry* Magazine]

New member of editorial staff

Silver Spring, Maryland, United States—John Feezer IV, database assistant, is the newest member of the editorial staff. He is responsible for maintaining the subscription lists, billing, and working with the mailing service.

John Feezer IV

Feezer is a graduate of American University and of Catholic University, from where he received degrees in international affairs.

"His commitment to the journal and his computer skills make him a valuable member of the team," states Nikolaus Satelmajer, editor. Willie E. Hucks II, assistant editor, states, "John stepped in and made an immediate impact. It's like he has been with us for years."

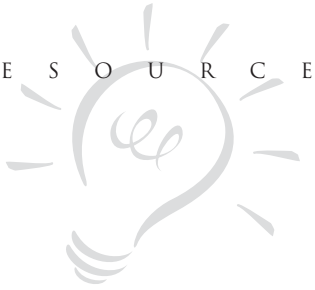
Ministerial student writing contest

The editors of *Ministry* have announced a ministerial student writing contest. Full-time ministerial students throughout the world from all colleges, seminaries, or universities may enter. Details of this contest are found on page 22 of this issue. We encourage our readers to share this information with ministerial students whom they know.

Willie E. Hucks II, assistant editor of Ministry, *presents guidelines for student writing contest to Desta Zabolotney, Andrews seminary student forum president, as Nikolaus Satelmajer and Denis Fortin look on.*

The contest was officially introduced during an assembly at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States on February 8, 2007. Nikolaus Satelmajer, editor, and Willie E. Hucks II, assistant editor, introduced the project to the students and faculty. Denis Fortin, seminary dean, and Desta Zabolotney, seminary student forum president, participated in the introduction. The contest ends October 31, 2007.

To request additional copies of the contest information, contact *Ministry* at MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org.



BOOK REVIEW

What We Believe: Helping Children Understand the Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church *by Jerry D. Thomas. Pacific Press Pub. Assn., Nampa, Idaho, 2006, 76 pages.*

Throughout the years, many different denominations have emerged, and each follows a set of doctrines that distinguishes it from the others. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of such groups, and they base their doctrines on the church's understanding and expression of what the Bible teaches.

It is important to know and understand what you believe and what your church professes to believe—not only for your own personal growth but so you can share those beliefs with others as well. The Adventist Church has an important message to share with the world, and that message is based on the teachings of the Bible. How much more valuable that message would be if everyone really knew and understood those teachings—especially our children

The book *What We Believe: Helping Children Understand the Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,* by Jerry D. Thomas, does this well. The author cleverly begins each fundamental belief with a story that explains the main concept. The book also includes interactive teaching tips to enforce what was taught in each lesson, and it contains supporting Bible verses and short summaries that decorate the beginning and ending of each belief. In addition, at the end of the book is a list of the original fundamental beliefs to compare to the children's version.

My family personally enjoyed reading this book each morning. Not only did my children look forward to the readings each day, they were able to go back and recite each belief we had already studied. Along with its colorful illustrations, this children's book is easy reading for children of all ages. Both parents and children will benefit greatly from it.

—Reviewed by Larie S. Gray, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

BOOK REVIEW

Baptism on Account of the Dead (1 Cor. 15:29): An Act of Faith in the Resurrection, *by Michael F. Hull. Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, 2005, 327 pages.*

This fascinating book addresses one of the problems in the New Testament that has captured the interests of New Testament readers for centuries. The thesis of the book "is simple: First Corinthians 15:29 records a dual rhetorical question in which Paul holds up one group within the Corinthian community as a laudable example for the entire community" (3). The author establishes the key to understanding this text in a positive vein by opting for the translation of *huper* as "on account of." Thus Hull's translation of the Greek phrase *huper tōn nekrōn* with the implied meaning in parenthesis is "on account of [the resurrection of the] dead" (253). So that if we, according to Hull, translate the text, 1 Corinthians 15:29, correctly, we would translate it as "Otherwise what are they to do, who have themselves baptized on account of [the resurrection of] the dead? If the dead are not really raised, why are they baptized on account of them?" (255).

Hull defends his thesis in four chapters. In chapter 1 he outlines the readings of 1 Corinthians 15:29 in modern scholarship. In chapter 2 he examines the literary context of 1 Corinthians 15:29 and also the key terms in the text (*baptism: baptizomenoi, baptizontai; dead: nekrōn;* and the preposition *huper*). He concludes that the pericope 1 Corinthians 15:29–34 is central to Paul's proof in 1 Corinthians 15 for the resurrection of the dead, which some Corinthians apparently did not believe would take place. He also articulates the morphology and syntax of the text. He views the text as a question.

Key to his understanding of the preposition *huper* is his view that it would be "foolhardy to presume that Paul would use, in such an important place and on such an important point, an example of a practice that he disapproved" (109). Hull, in his analysis of the preposition *huper*, takes its meaning in its final sense, "on account of," and not in its most common sense, "for." By doing this, the text becomes an affirmation for the resurrection on the part of those people who are being baptized.

Thus Hull writes that there was a group of people "who were baptized on account of (faith in the resurrection of) the dead," not *for* the dead (111). In chapter 3 Hull looks at the historical context. He concludes that *vicarious* baptism was not practiced, and notes that nothing in extrabiblical literature exists, Christian or non-Christian, that even hints at vicarious baptism. In the last chapter, chapter 4, he articulates a rereading of the text as a reference to an ordinary baptism and that this baptism is "on account of the dead" and a baptism into eternal life.

In my opinion this book is a must read for anyone interested in properly exegeting 1 Corinthians 15.

—Rollin Shoemaker, D.Min., S.T.M., is a pastor with the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (United States). Ⓜ

Defeating the spiritual axis of evil, part 2

JAMES A. CRESS

In January we discussed a spiritual axis of evil that many churches eagerly embrace despite the deadly consequences of allowing this unholy troika of racism, social distinction, and gender discrimination to dominate.

The evils of racism and social distinction. Whatever our excuse, racism and worship segregation plus overpopulation of judicatory boards and committees with those of enhanced socioeconomic status—while excluding those of whom God's Word declares, He chooses the poorer of this world to be rich in faith (see James 2:5)—remain as much evil today as they were when Paul admonished the church against these divisive sins (Gal. 3:27–29).

The evil of gender discrimination. Like these other sins, preventing deployment in ministry on the basis of gender hampers the proclamation of the gospel and denies a basic biblical doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.

The New Testament records how women have been utilized in many functions and offices since the very inception of the church. While the Seventh-day Adventist Church today does not ordain women to ministry, this decision appears to have been driven far more by ecclesiological policy of all denominational entities remaining unified in practics than by nonnegotiable theological imperatives.

Scripturally, the roles of prophet, elder, deacon, teacher, evangelist, pastor, bishop/administrator, and even apostle appear to be open for both genders as affirmed by church practice, apostolic declaration, and biblical affirmation. Prejudicial reasoning to the contrary, you will not find biblical support for excluding women from church leadership. On this, both Paul and Jesus are in complete accord. Jesus' own example—His personal ministry—thoroughly demonstrates this fact by one consequential episode (John 4) in which He destroyed all three man-made barriers.

"But He needed to go through Samaria" (v. 4, NKJV). Jesus actually went against the normal travel route from Jerusalem to Galilee in order to go through Samaria. Jews typically headed east, crossing over Jordan near Jericho in order to journey along the East Bank until well north of Samaria. Then, recrossing the river into Galilee, they avoided even the soil of the despised Samaritans. But Scripture declares the Lord had a purpose in mind. Jesus *needed* to go to Samaria.

The Gospel says, "Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. . . . A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give Me a drink' " (vv. 6, 7).

Jesus eradicates racial boundaries. "Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, 'How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?' For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans" (v. 9).

By instigating this one conversation, Jesus intentionally breached the taboo against Jews engaging Samaritans. He exemplified the theology of the apostle Paul, who declared that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile (see Gal. 3:28).

Jesus eradicates social distinction boundaries. After discussing the availability of living water, the woman responded, " 'Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.' Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come here.' The woman answered and said, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You have well said, "I have no husband," for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.' The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet' " (vv. 15–19).

For an individual of Jesus' perfect, unsullied nature to offer such a sinner both conversation and conversion demonstrates that no individual is beyond heaven's redemptive love and plan for discipleship. Despite her past and despite her present ongoing involvement with another's spouse, Jesus offered her the same acceptance He extends to every disciple. New life for a low life!

Jesus eradicates gender boundaries. The Lord called this new convert to proclaim the message of spiritual liberty for the captives. In utilizing this woman as the first-recorded public evangelist, Jesus clearly demonstrated that every believer possesses capacity and calling for ministry.

She was used by God just as Mary was used as the first preacher of the resurrected Lord. These women ministered, not just in prophetic roles, but in a proclamation. Clearly, God calls and uses women in ministry. The church should do no less.

And she was successful! The whole town was eager to hear her. What an evangelistic strategy for gathering a crowd! She advertised her message by saying, "He told me everything I've ever done!" "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, 'He told me all that I ever did' " (v. 39).

In my opinion, Jesus needed to go through Samaria in order to eradicate false concepts about who qualifies to minister. The Bible is clear. We are all one in Christ Jesus. M

Tell us what you think about this article. Email us at MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org or write to us at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

PLANNING FOR THE

Cycle of Life

"Be prepared. Have your house in order."

Pastor Jimmy and Shereen Ferguson / Baltimore, Maryland

We learn by example. Shereen's two elderly aunts lived together and shared everything. Worried about what might happen if one or the other of them died, the aunts prepaid their funerals; wrote out all their wishes for their belongings; and had an attorney prepare their wills. When they died, there were no unanswered questions. Their testimony, in death as in life, was: "Be prepared. Have your house in order." Ellen White wrote, "Death will not come one day sooner…because you have made your will." By welcoming Trust Services into our life and into our church, we can truly live Ellen White's teaching. Making wills is part of ordering your life – like doing a family budget or planning for education and careers. We're preparing wills and guardianship documents for our children – so that our family can lead our church by example.

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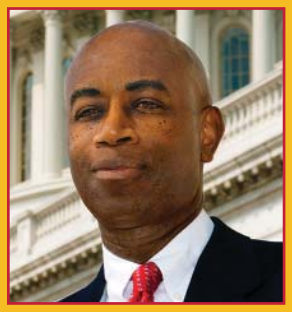
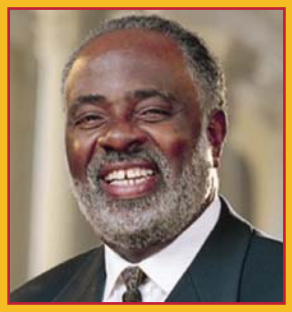


Barry C. Black is the 62nd Chaplain of the U.S. Senate. The Senate elected its first chaplain in 1789. Prior to Capitol Hill, Chaplain Black served in the U.S. Navy for over twenty-seven years, ending his distinguished career as Rear Admiral and Chief of Navy Chaplains. Chaplain Black opens the Senate each day in prayer and provides counselling and spiritual care for senators, their families, and staff—a combined constituency of over seven thousand people. Chaplain Black has been selected for many outstanding achievements. He and his wife, Brenda, have three sons: Barry II, Brendan, and Bradford.

Randy Roberts was born in South America of missionary parents. Until college age, the majority of his life was spent in Latin American countries. Dr. Roberts has extensive experience as a church pastor, hospital chaplain, marriage and family therapist, and lecturer in religious studies. Randy has fulfilled speaking invitations to many varied audiences, both nationally and internationally. He has written articles for various publications and has authored the book *The End Is Near (Again)*. Currently Dr. Roberts serves as senior pastor of the Loma Linda University Church of Seventh-day Adventists in Loma Linda, California. Dr. Roberts and his wife, Anita, have a son, Austin, and a daughter, Miranda.

Dr. Gordon Moyes recently retired after 50 years of preaching, the last 27 at Wesley Mission in Sydney, Australia. During this ministry, his church grew to be the largest in Australia with 4,200 paid staff ministering in 500 buildings. Moyes became the first minister in the world to raise and spend over one billion dollars in one church. He also served as a national television and radio minister for over forty years. Since retirement, Moyes has been elected as a state senator and is an advisor to the Australian prime minister, who describes him as "the epitome of Christian leadership." Moyes, who has authored fifty-six books, has also received highest national honors including Companion of the Order of Australia (2002) and the New South Wales Father of the Year (1986).



Robert Smith Jr. serves as professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Alabama. Previously he served as Carl E. Bates Associate Professor of Christian Preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he received the 1996 Findley B. Edge Award for Teaching Excellence. An ordained Baptist minister, Smith served as pastor of the New Mission Missionary Baptist Church for twenty years before returning to complete his Ph.D. He has also authored a study of ministry in the African American church, *Preparing for Christian Ministry*, and co-edited *A Mighty Long Journey*. His research interests include the place of passion in preaching, the literary history of African American preaching, Christological preaching, and theologies of preaching. He received Beeson's Teacher of the Year Award in 2005. Dr. Smith and his wife, Wanda, are the parents of four adult children.

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