In a land of cold and isolation a single believer kept the faith.
World Council of Churches
I enjoyed Roy Adams' report from the eighth assembly of the World Council of Churches (see “Return to God—Rejoice in Hope,” Feb. 11 World Edition). However, I have mixed feelings about his support for the WCC's call for debt cancellation. On one hand, it is a concept I can support, as the jubilee cancellation of debt is biblical. If I understand Scripture, it has to do with individual debt rather than national debt.

On the other hand, could debt cancellation condone financial irresponsibility on the part of debtor nations? Could the call for debt cancellation be the easy way out?

—Vialo Weis, Jr.
YUKON, OKLAHOMA

Single Like Me
To the list of helpful hints in Beverly Chilson’s “Single Like Me” (Feb. 11), I would like to stress how much the men in the church need to make the effort to be a positive male influence in the lives of children in a single-parent home. Our children, girls and boys, need to know that it is OK to be a Christian—even for a man. It breaks my heart when I see a single mother struggling to be in church each week and no fathers or grandfathers offering to be a role model to her children.

—Dolores J. Adams
GENTRY, ARKANSAS

What’s Your Story?
The Adventist Review is open to all Adventist writers—young and old. And though we can accept only 10 percent of the 60 to 80 unsolicited manuscripts we receive each month, we’re always looking for fresh, clear, real voices.

Length: 800 to 2,400 words (725-750 for Reflections).
Payment: $40 to $200.
Unsolicited manuscripts are evaluated the first week of each month. Attach a brief cover letter to a typed, double-spaced manuscript and mail to: Manuscripts, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. No e-mail submissions, please.

Adam’s Sin, and Ours
I feel compelled to respond to Angel M. Rodriguez's “A dam's Sin, and Ours” (Feb. 11). According to Rodriguez, “Through A dam’s trespass sin came into the world as an enslaving power,” but we die because we sinned individually. If that's true, then since Christ “defeated the enslaving power of sin,” we are justified unto life because of our individual obedience. In other words, faith plus works is what saves us.

Not only is this the Galatian problem that has infiltrated our church, robbing millions of the joy of salvation, but such a teaching completely contradicts what Paul teaches in Romans and elsewhere.

Paul points out the universal effect of A dam’s sin (Rom. 5:12-14) in order to use A dam as a “figure” of Christ. Just as A dam’s offense brought the judgment of condemnation of death to the entire human race, likewise, Christ’s obedience brought justification unto life to all mankind (verses 15-18). The only difference in the typology is that we inherit the consequence of A dam’s sin, whereas the justification unto life Christ obtained for all mankind is a “gift.” Like any gift, it has to be received by us individually to be experienced (verse 17).

Further, according to verses 19-21, G o d introduced the law to show humankind that A dam’s disobedience produced a human race sold under sin. Similarly, holy living is the fruit manifested in the lives of those who by faith have received the gift of Christ’s righteousness.

—Jack Sequeira
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND
Sabbath School Discussions
I very much appreciated Bill Knott’s critical review of our current Sabbath school situation (see “Notes From the Wilderness,” Feb. NAD Edition). Unfortunately, he is right—we are sharing our opinions, and the Word of God is seldom the center of discussion. But this isn’t just our members’ fault. The Sabbath school quarterly does not push members to study the text in depth—this is impossible with the quantity of texts presented. All too often we are led to jump around in our Bibles, leaving us exhausted and without a deeper knowledge of the Word.

Before the fall of Communism, some of these countries didn’t have a Sabbath school quarterly. From one Sabbath to another they studied during the week a new chapter of the Bible. Probably this was the best Sabbath school quarterly that ever existed. The Word of God was always the center of the discussion.

—André Ruegg
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Elder Folkenberg
Thank you so much for keeping us informed regarding the problems at the General Conference. (See “World Church Leaders Grapple With Controversy,” Feb. 11; and “World Church President Resigns,” Feb. 18). We need to know the truth.

—Louise T. Johnson
NORTH PORT, FLORIDA

Thanks for the special report on Elder Folkenberg, which was placed on the General Conference website. I truly appreciated William Johansson’s analysis, “Caught in the Web.” Since we’re presently serving on the other side of the world, it’s not always easy to get accurate information quickly.

—Esther Farley
CENTRAL ASIA
The room is lit by candlelight, sunlight, fluorescent light, or an incandescent bulb. There’s a hot mug of herbal tea perched on the desk.

The artist is hunched in front of a blank canvas, computer screen, tape recorder, or music score. He or she is ready to bring forth the world’s next creative utterance through word, voice, art, or song.

All the tools are in place. The instruments are ready, but there’s one missing ingredient.

I recently heard a series of radio and television commercials promoting the yellow pages. That’s the telephone directory in North America that advertises businesses of all kinds, including car dealerships, furniture marts, and wholesale outlets.

The book includes not only addresses and telephone numbers, but also advertisements to promote products and services.

For me, the absolute brilliance of the ad is revealed through its utter comic stupidity. The commercial is a satire on celebrity interviews seen all over network television. These are often interviews that lack real journalistic substance and are marginally entertaining at best. Just envision a media interview in which the host or reporter is interviewing the “author” of the yellow pages—as if it takes an author to produce it.

The author and the interviewer play their roles to the hilt, making the audience believe that the book was one of the most important literary works of all time. They go on and on commenting about the book’s ingenious alphabetic flow, its thematic topical construction, and dictionary motif. However, one line will be etched in my memory for many years. After the interviewer lavishes praise on the author’s style and asks him where his ideas came from, the author, with an egocentric gloat, retorts, “W here do ideas come from, anyway?”

A writer’s view, I’ve probably asked myself that question more times than I would care to admit, especially when I find myself in situations described at the top of this editorial. Believe it or not, even editors have to combat writer’s block now and then.

However, it’s in these situations that God offers us a fountainhead of inspiration, a rush of creativity, through His written Word—the Bible.

In these divine pages God dialogues with humankind. A noted Ellen White says that the Bible is just as much a divine-human collaboration as Jesus Christ. “The truths revealed are all ‘given by inspiration of God;’ yet they are expressed in the words of men and are adapted to human needs,” she says. “Thus it may be said of the Book of God, as it was of Christ, that ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us’” (Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 747).

Because the Bible was given through divine inspiration, it offers a vast storehouse of knowledge, a limitless treasure of wisdom that we can probe. It contains the infinite truth of God expressed in our finite language.

The very same inspiration that produced the Bible can also inspire us as we journey through life’s pathways. If we would read its pages, reflect on its truths, and apply them to our lives, God will open the storehouse to us. In communicating these truths, the Bible actually empowers us to change our lives. By partaking of God’s inspiration through His Word, our changed lives may also inspire others.

Paul says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

God’s Word is a powerful living instrument that discerns the intents of our heart. It also builds up our faith and strengthens character. His Word sanctifies, setting us apart for service in His kingdom. If we apply God’s Word to our lives, it will never leave us empty or void. It actually grows and multiplies and knows no boundaries.

You may not be a writer or an artist, but God’s Word can make your life a divine portrait or angelic prose. You may not be a preacher or a musician, but God’s Word will make your life a living sermon or a beautiful song.

With God’s Word you’ll never say, “All the tools are in place. The instruments are ready. But there’s one missing ingredient.”
In recent weeks our church has undergone change of a historic nature: a General Conference president has resigned, and another leader has been selected. The new leader will bring his own understanding of the direction of where and how the church ought to proceed in the days to come.

From the General Conference to the local congregation, change is sometimes painful. But all of us need to ask ourselves one crucial question: Which comes first? The interests of the church, or the interests of self?

Even when changes seem unfair or when decisions appear to be drastic, those of us who place the interests of the church at heart must be willing to put self aside and keep the interests of Christ's body at heart. The call to be a Christian is not a call to a particular office, but a call to be a person of the cross—even if that means emotional pain and loss. This is one of the dynamics of the Christian calling.

Change can be cathartic, and catharsis is good for both the shaking of the soul and the stabilizing of the body, particularly a body like the church. So how do we react to changes as we relate to the church? One way is to find in them opportunities for introspection, revival, and growth.

Introspection. Whenever there is change, the first question that arises is How will it affect me? Self is almost always the first to cry out either in despair or in exhilaration, depending on how change affects the present and the future of self. Reinhold Niebuhr, the famous American theologian, once remarked that whenever self feels such a threat or such a self-centered joy, there is great danger that self will lose the perspective in which God has created it. Hence the need for introspection. If I don't get that to which I aspired, so what? If I do get what I wanted, so what? If I get what I did not seek, again, so what?

Introspection should lead us to examine the mysterious processes through which God deals with us in various situations. Misfortunes need not mean rejection; reward does not indicate sanctification. We are all still pieces of clay in the Potter's hands. Leave it to Him, and let Him shape us.

Revival. Watch the Pentecost, study the Jerusalem Council. Observe the Wesley brothers. Review Moody. Think of Waggoner and Jones. Identify with Robert Pierson. Every occasion was a moment of change, and the change was utilized by leaders and laity alike to bring about revival. These names are mileposts that shook the church and shaped its future for good, both in structure and in function, in theology and in practice. If these leaders had feared change, the church would not have made the advances it did.

Change should not be seen as victory for some and defeat for others. In God's cause there is neither victory nor defeat for those who are committed to seeing that the cause is more important than self. Change is only a contour of the course of history that God, in His own way, will use, and change again when necessary. We have no role either to pass judgment or to stay aloof, and certainly not to become instruments of disruption.

Growth. Change is a good time to take stock of our growth, stability, and maturity. Have we listened always to the whisper of the Holy Spirit? Or did the spirit of humanity pose itself as the Spirit of God? Change gives us an opportunity to try the new, to challenge the impossible, to work together for the greater good, and, above all, to abandon self for the advancement of the One who gave Himself to transform us all.

Change can be painful, like the pain of childbirth. But the pangs give way to the joy of the newborn. We don't reject or condemn the past. We review the past, learn from it, and keep going. After all, it is the ultimate divine change in us now, in the end-time, that will produce citizens for the new heaven and the new earth.

May that ultimate change be our constant goal.

John M. Fowler is an associate director of the General Conference Education Department.
JOTS & TITTLES

In this feature, Adventists share church-related tips.

BUMPER STICKER EVANGELISM: Several years ago some unknown person dropped off a box of bumper stickers at the locating tent of the Southern New England Conference camp meeting. The bright-blue stickers proclaimed Matthew 19:26: “With God All Things Are Possible.” After 117,000-plus miles, unbumped and unfaded, my sticker is still speaking its message. The other day, while I was parked near a doctor’s office, a rather distraught patient came out, paused to read my bumper, then approached my side window and said, “Thank you—I needed that.” On another occasion I was “honked over” by a driver who asked, “Where can I get one of those?” I couldn’t tell him, of course, but I do feel that the Lord provided a message of hope that many weary, worried drivers can read and reflect upon.

— Paul B. Peterson, New Bedford, Massachusetts

Walking the hallways of the Adventist Church world headquarters, I met a woman walking and reading a book. “What are you reading?” I asked when I caught up with her.

“How a Man Faces Adversity,” she said as she showed me the book by Robert Hicks.

“But why are you reading that?” I asked. “You’re not a man.”

“I know,” she replied with a smile. “But men don’t take advice.”

— Stephen Chavez, Silver Spring, Maryland

LET’S PRAY

Have a prayer need? Have a few free minutes? Each Wednesday morning at 8:00 the Adventist Review staff meets to pray for people—children, parents, friends, coworkers. Send your prayer requests and, if possible, pray with us on Wednesday mornings. Let’s share in each other’s lives.

AN UNINTENDED SNACK

This notice was recently placed in our Laurelwood church bulletin (the banana bread recipient didn’t want this to happen to anyone else):

“A CAUTIONARY TALE FOR SECRET SISTERS, ETC.: A beloved member of our church family conveys her enthusiastic appreciation to the kind anonymous gift-giver who left the delicious banana bread on her doorstep. Unfortunately, her local wildlife friends found it first . . .”

— Margi Dalgleish Roth, Gaston, Oregon

CONTRIBUTE TO GIVE & TAKE

We can especially use submissions to these categories: Adventist Quotes, Readers’ Exchange, Jots & Tittles, and Dream Center. And we can always use top-quality photos/captions, tasteful drawings and cartoons, brief poems, and other fast-paced items. Send submissions (which won’t be acknowledged or returned) to Give & Take, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; fax: 301-680-6638; e-mail: 74617.15@compuserve.com.
One Tree, One Survivor, One Minute Till the Ship Sails

We were determined to touch base with this legendary daughter of the Vikings.
There’s a Seventh-day Adventist church in this town, with a very small attendance—one. Her name is Anne Juliussen. We first heard about her from Drs. Sigve and Serena Tonstad in Oslo. Later we learned more of her story from a minister’s taped interview.

In the Aftermath of War

The first Adventist in Vardø was Hanna Holt. Later there were two others. In 1930 Elmar Stinessen held meetings in the town and organized a church, which prospered for a decade and a half. Hanna Holt’s granddaughter, Anne Juliussen, was baptized in 1940.

In 1944, as World War II neared its end, Russian troops shelled the town as the retreating German army burned down what was left. Some Norwegians were killed, Anne’s husband among them. The younger Adventists headed south and never returned.

The church eventually regrouped, but never regained its former strength or numbers. With conference help the few members managed to build a small wooden church. At last only Anne Juliussen and two elderly women remained. When those two died, there was only Anne. For many years she has been the lone survivor.

But she still believes in her soon-coming Saviour, still witnesses for Him, and still cherishes the privilege of attending His church.

She is widely and favorably known in Vardø. For years she sold 50 copies of the monthly Norwegian Signs of the Times and gathered in nice sums for missions each year—4,000 to 5,000 kroner (US$600 to US$700). She would not accept small change. “I tell people, ‘I will not receive less than 50 kroner,’ ” she says. “The small coins they can keep for themselves. Ten kroner today is nothing. I know the people in this town, and I know they have money enough.”

Now she is 83 and cannot get around town as before. But she still sells a few Signs each month, and she loves to attend church. When Sabbath comes, Anne goes to church by herself, reads her Bible, listens to a taped sermon, prays, and returns to her tiny apartment attached to the church.

Was It Possible?

When my wife and I learned about this woman, we wanted to meet her. We wanted to let her know that fellow Adventists from the other side of the world knew and cared about her—that in a sense she was not alone. Was any such meeting...
The next day we flew from Oslo to Kirkenes, on the northeast tip of Norway, where we would board our coastal cruise ship. The ship’s first stop, we knew, was at Vardø, Mrs. Juliussen’s town. It was scheduled to stop there for 45 minutes, and we wondered if in that brief time we could get off, find Anne, pay her a proper visit, see her church, and get back to the ship—all in a town unknown to us and where we didn’t speak the language.

It was obviously impossible, so we decided to try. Before the ship docked at Vardø, the purser posted a new notice: the ship was running late and would stop only 30 minutes, not 45!

As the ship edged into the dock and put down the gangplank, we were the first ones off. Two local girls, 12 or 13 years old, waited for tourists to get off. They earned spending money showing them the way to the town’s two main attractions—the fort and the lonely tree.

“Do you know where the Adventkirken is?” we asked. The girls said, “Yes. Just follow us and we’ll show you where to go.” But first they had to wait for other tourists to come off the boat.

We looked nervously at our watches. At least the girls can talk English, we thought (just about all Scandinavian young people do). We and the others started walking toward the fort. But those other tourists didn’t walk fast enough!

After a few minutes one of the girls pointed down a street. “It’s three blocks, a little brown building on the corner.”

To Meet a Legend

We ran and walked, arriving breath-

Vardø Update:

BY ROY ADAMS, WITH RESEARCH BY JEAN SEQUEIRA

Vardø comes within the territory of the North Norway Conference (comprised of 18 churches and 659 members, in a population of 389,000). As fishing, the town’s only industry, falls into decline (what with government-imposed regulations resulting from limited fish supplies in the surrounding ocean), many of the population are moving away.

The little church where Anne worshiped is still owned by the conference, but its doors are closed now. And with the population declining rapidly, it shows little prospect of coming into its own again. Besides, the conference is ready to sell. Even so, we left intact the appeal at the end of the main article, hoping that some reader, somewhere, might apply it—not necessarily to Vardø, but to some other isolated little place that God might choose to show them.

As we spoke to Adventists on the ground in Norway, we discovered an interesting tidbit. During the time that Anne worshiped alone, she did have company at one time—a young man living in the town (whose parents were Adventists elsewhere) had attended. He eventually joined the church, and married the sister of the current conference president.

Are you a member of a church like the one in Vardø? Or do you know of someone? Is there a story you think could benefit others? Is there a challenge you believe someone might be willing to take up? Tell us about it. We’d like to spread the word.

Roy Adams is an associate editor of the Adventist Review; Jean Sequeira is an editorial secretary at the Adventist Review.
Others Share Their Experience

The *Adventist Review* put out a notice on the Adventists Online Forum requesting others to tell us about their own small-church experiences. Here are some responses.—Editors.

Greetings from north Sweden. We have many small churches here. Those with their own church buildings are Umeå, Vännäs, Örnsköldsvik, and Östersund. The church members and other interested people come together as often as possible, almost every Sabbath, for Bible study (and a sermon when I am there). Sometimes they watch a video or just have a song service.

Groups without their own church building are Gällivare-Malmbäcken, Luleå, Skellefteå, Dorotea, and Sundsvall. We don't have meetings every Sabbath, but when we come together we have Bible seminars for the whole day.

Pastor Rudolf Pohl, Umeå, Sweden

There are innumerable small churches in Wyoming, but I can tell you about one in particular that would be of interest. It is in the town of Ten Sleep. My husband, Dick, pastored it years ago. We moved a church building there from Big Trails. (Just the names are interesting, right?) At most it has about 20 to 30 in attendance, but that is about 10 percent of the population.

Ardis Stenbakken, Columbia, Maryland

I have served in the past as pastor of a few middle-sized churches, 200-500 members. I have also served as a conference and union evangelist for many years. Now in active retirement at the age of 70, I asked for a small church and am currently pastoring one with an attendance of 15 to 25, mostly very elderly people. (I will also be holding two or three crusades each year.) The challenge to bring this church back to viability is tremendous. There is a lack of talent and a dearth of youth. No children's or youth Sabbath school departments. So I will be interested in hearing about and contributing to any discussion on the subject of reviving small churches.

Pastor Elden Walter, Oregon

One of the most memorable Sabbath worship services in my life was at the church at Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. It used to be that there might be only three or four in the winter. (In the summer they tend to have visitors.) That particular Sabbath a retired fisherman played the piano, led the Sabbath school, organized the church service, and would have preached if they hadn't had a guest speaker. There was a wonderful spirit in the church.

Marilyn Beach, (address unavailable)

My church has a membership of 28, with about a dozen meeting on Sabbath. I guess we are too “big” for your study.

Gary M. Piekarik, Harrington SDA Church, Harrington, Delaware

Our daughter, Rachel, lives in Montana within a stone’s throw of a little two-room church. They maintain it and have recently been very blessed.

One Sabbath morning she was running late, and as no one was expected, she and her family decided to go to a larger church (Sandpoint, Idaho, I think). Just as they were about to get into their car, however, another car drove up, and the occupants said, “More are coming.”

It seems that several Sabbatarians were living in the area and were thrilled to find a church. They start with a felt story for the children, then a lesson from the Sabbath school quarterly, then for church a tape or study from a series on Revelation. And she thought she was out in the sticks with no ability to witness!

A woman recently was lost and was turning around in Rachel’s church’s driveway. She asked how to get to Libby. As a result of that chance meeting, they are now having regular Revelation Bible studies.

Carl F. Friday, Silver Spring, Maryland

I know one church in Sweden where all the members have passed the age of 70 and some are much older. And they all must travel some distance to get to church. Their number is about 10 to 15, and they meet every Sabbath.

As early as last summer they had booked the city hall for seminars they plan to run this year. And they are only laypeople! It’s amazing. The church had been destined to die. But some new people moved into the area and developed plans and goals for the group.

In Sweden it seems that in some places the refugees from different parts of the world are the ones who keep some churches from dying. We have a country with big distances, few pastors, Swedes who are not interested in Christianity, and small dying churches with faithful members. Moreover, since these members are not financially rich, the union budget is worse every year, and we have to start selling churches just in order to balance it. Many churches are fighting for their survival—and several have to do it without a pastor.

Anne-Maj Sandström, Sweden
less at the Adventkirken. I knocked loudly on the door, but nothing happened. We inquired next door. A man answered, but said he was from out of town and didn’t know anyone. We were walking across the street to ask at another house when, looking back, I saw movement at the window of the apartment attached to the church. I knocked on the window-pane, and an elderly lady opened it a few inches. We told her—in English, of course—that we were from the cruise boat and said “Adventist” several times. We hoped she understood.

She did. Following her signals, we went around to the side of the apartment, where she opened the door, welcomed us with a broad smile, and motioned to us to sit down in her kitchen.

This was wonderful. Here we were, actually meeting this legendary daughter of the Vikings, this faith-filled, solitary Adventist woman. How we wished we could have spoken Norwegian just then!

In sign language we asked to see her church. She led us into the tiny sanctuary, where we saw a pulpit with a picture of Christ on the wall behind it. On a little table in front of the pulpit was an open Bible flanked by two candles. There were 15 chairs to seat worshippers, and on one of them lay a copy of The Desire of Ages in Norwegian—or was it Christ’s Object Lessons? Anyway, the author was Ellen G. White. Here in this tiny chapel was the hallowed place where Sister Anne Juliussen worshiped as a congregation of one.

Now, what more could we do? We pointed to our watches and pointed in the direction of the ship. We also pointed to our camera, and she quickly agreed to pose with us for pictures. We wondered if Scandinavians are huggers, as some of us Americans have become. We didn’t have to worry. A nna hugged us warmly. We took pictures, breathed a very brief prayer, and pointed upward, where we three expected to meet each other again. Then the two of us galloped off, hoping we had remembered the way to the ship.

Rounding the corner, we saw the ship still there, and we had maybe 70 seconds to go. Our tour guide was standing beside the gangplank counting his sheep and chewing his fingernails. He didn’t like to lose tour members, he said. Later he told us he could have delayed departure by perhaps a minute if the straying passengers were within view, not more than a block away, and running.

On Reflection
Two very grateful people staggered onto the boat, thankful to be there and thankful for a mission accomplished. Thinking back, we wonder who really had made the missionary visit. A nne Juliussen was a greater inspiration to us than we could possibly have been to her.

We also wondered if somewhere the Lord does not have a few good men and women who could live and work in Vardø for a year or two and win some new members for Christ and His church. There are 15 chairs in the chapel, and room to bring in more. Our faithful Sister A nne has been sowing seed for years, and does not the Lord see to it that some seed would fall on good ground and spring up?

Postscript
We let stand the author’s description of circumstances and events as they were when he sent us this piece in early 1997. The situation has since changed, however. N ow 85, A nne is not in the best of health, and has moved to her daughter’s home in Fredrikstad. The church, though we still own the building, is now closed. —Editors.

Richard H. Utt is an editor, author, and retired missionary to Central America. He writes from Loma Linda, California.
My husband and I teach at a Seventh-day Adventist academy where rules regarding dress and after-hours fraternization between males and females are openly violated by a significant number of the students, with serious moral consequences. Most teachers simply shrug things off as a sign of the times. Our efforts will probably be insignificant given the failure of administration to do anything. Should we try to effect what ought to be—even if no one else does?

You should not abandon your sensibility to proper student (and faculty) conduct. To lapse into resigned acceptance is tantamount to abandoning the dictates of your conscience. In fact, to witness the erosion of proper standards among God’s people in any setting, and say and do nothing, is to risk culpability in God’s sight. Ellen G. White wrote: “We are just as accountable for evils that we might have checked in others, by reproof, by warning, by exercise of parental or pastoral authority, as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves” (Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 516).

A critical question, of course, concerns your approach. An initial step would be to discuss the matter privately with those in authority or with fellow faculty in open session. This process may reveal that more is being done than you know, that there are more than you realize who are concerned and would be strengthened by knowing your position.

However, even if the administration and your peers continue to ignore the situation, you are still not relieved of responsibility.

You can converse with students individually regarding their attitudes and actions, and you can utilize your classroom in appropriate ways for discussions of such issues. You need not effect wholesale reform to be successful; one person whose outlook and behavior is altered for the better is worth your investment of time and energy. But then, even if there are no observable changes—it is still the right thing to do.

I’ve heard that reading the Bible is important to making good decisions, but a lot of the situations we face today did not exist in Bible days—stock markets, microwave ovens, televisions, airplane travel, etc. I don’t see how the Bible is particularly relevant, other than in giving general principles of conduct.

The Bible assists us in decision-making in a number of ways.

- Reading the Bible sharpens the intellect. Ellen White stated, “The Bible is the best book in the world for giving intellectual culture. Its study taxes the mind, strengthens the memory, and sharpens the intellect more than the study of all the subjects that human philosophy embraces” (Gospel Workers, p. 100).

- Bible reading develops our powers of discernment. “A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers, and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan” (Messages to Young People, p. 397).

- The Bible contains a wealth of encouraging promises (i.e., 1 Cor. 10:13).

- The Bible furnishes us with stories of positive role models (i.e., Moses, Esther).

- The Bible strengthens our will or desire to do what we know to be right (i.e., Ps. 119:32-35, 46-48).

- Bible reading, as you have observed, enunciates principles that govern conduct (Ps. 119:105). There is no act, even among modern choices, for which there is no appropriate biblical principle.

- The Bible produces spiritual cleansing (Ps. 119:9, 11).

- The Bible generates thoughts of happiness and rejoicing (Ps. 19:7-11).

- Finally, and most significantly, by reading the Bible we gain power to act in harmony with God’s will (Ps. 119:40, 93). This latter good, the “quickening” or life-giving power to obey, is the truly unique provision of Scripture. It distinguishes the Bible above all other books and is the efficient cause of all true morality.

Calvin B. Rock is a general vice president of the General Conference. He holds doctoral degrees in ministry and Christian ethics.
The Urgency of the Gospel

It’s time to stay focused.

By Jan Paulsen

The following sermon was given by Pastor Jan Paulsen at the service at General Conference headquarters installing him as world church president on March 5.—Editors.

The title begs the questions: what is the gospel and wherein lies its urgency?

When God caused this movement to arise 150 years ago, He made the pioneers particularly conscious of a term found in 2 Peter 1:12—“present truth” (KJV)* (or “established in the truth you now have”). “Present truth” to those who pioneered the Advent movement (Joseph Bates, Hiram Edson, and James White) had particular reference to the two central teachings that characterized this movement more than any other, namely the sanctuary doctrine (what Bates meant by the “shut door”) and the Sabbath. Ellen White widened the term somewhat when she wrote, in the context of preparing to meet the soon-coming Lord, “We have no doubt . . . that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment” (Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 355).

For us as a church today, present truth is wide enough to find expression in 27 formulations of doctrine. These are intended to be a comprehensive statement of faith and doctrine as presented by the Bible.

Is this what is meant by “the gospel”? We have to be able to talk about “the gospel” without finding ourselves in tension with either our complete set of 27 fundamental doctrines, on the one hand, or the “present truth,” as the early Adventists saw it, on the other. “The gospel” is not in tension with either.

The church, at any time in history, has always had its “present truth,” a set of biblical understandings that were crucial to its identity, sense of mission, or what must be preached now. I believe that what we know as the gospel is the core central truth that the first church stood for, that identified them as a community of believers, and that was in fact “present truth” to them, in the sense of 2 Peter 1:12.

I invite you today to recognize what that “gospel” was, to recognize that it was then and is now the core of Christian faith and proclamation, without in the process feeling that we have said something negative or less important about the sum total of our doctrines, as if they were peripheral.

However, there is a real sense in which the original “gospel” was and is the heart of the matter, and the rest is commentary. Somehow I have to find, as a Seventh-day Adventist preacher, a way of living with that reality without my preaching becoming less Adventist and more of an insipid, general evangelical preaching.

Sadly, many who enter the pulpit do not find that balance. One criticism directed at our pulpit ministry is that the preaching “is not what Adventist preaching used to be,” that it has become so general that there is not much left of the doctrines we believe that God has entrusted to us.

When I was a seminary student some 40 years ago it was fashionable to emphasize that we had to get “back to the gospel”; that somehow our listeners, members, and others sitting in the pews had been force-fed too heavy a diet of “doctrines” and consequently were starved for “the gospel.” Thereby a tension was created between the gospel and “doctrines” that is clearly both alien and unbearable. A nd as a current reminder of the fact that we may not have got it right even as yet, there are fringe groups or individuals in the wings who accuse the church of having lost its way and who justify their existence by saying that they are involved in getting us back to the “old Adventist message.”

As a Seventh-day Adventist minister in the pulpit, I must remember that our members have chosen very deliberately and very freely to be Seventh-day Adventists when they could have chosen to be anything else—Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans, or Catholics. But they felt that this movement was God’s, and that the preaching and biblical teaching that we stand for are what God wants the world to...
They have chosen voluntarily to be members of this church, for reasons that are very important to them and that are specific. Let us therefore not forget that it is important to our members that the distinctive Adventist message be heard from our pulpits.

But I come back to the core question: What is the gospel? For the answer we must go back to the Bible and the first generation of believers. Paul wrote to the believers in Rome as he introduced himself to them: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. . . . For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed” (Rom. 1:16, 17).

We preach, as we must continue to do, the Sabbath, the state of the dead, the millennium, healthful living, eschatology, the mark of the beast, the sanctity of the marriage, and so on. The “gospel,” however, to the early believers had a unique focus on the person of Jesus Christ. When the first believers preached the “gospel” they said something very specific about Jesus.

It is clear that that which was being asserted had the potential of creating feelings of shame with regard to the person of Jesus. Jesus Himself recognized this when He said: “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory” (Mark 8:38). Similarly, Paul wrote to his young coworker Timothy, “Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord” (2 Tim. 1:8), while he said of himself, “I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed” (verse 12). Likewise Peter: “I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame” (1 Peter 2:6) and “If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear
that name” (1 Peter 4:16). A gain, Paul told the Corinthians that the message of the gospel is folly to those who do not believe— it is a stumbling block, it is foolishness, it is not intellectual, it does not have any self-evident “learned” respect, it is said to be superstitious. But it is closely linked to the person of Jesus Christ.

So, what is the gospel?

Let me state it in a few succinct points that are simple and familiar to all of us. Then I must ask whether this gospel continues to be the heart of your and my faith and the focus of our spiritual journey.

1. Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah promised by the Old Testament prophets. He was the one of whom the prophets spoke, said Peter, and of whom they “searched intently and with the greatest care” (1 Peter 1:10). He is the one man “accredited by God” (Acts 2:22), and when it comes to salvation, He is the only way.

A roguant? Exclusive? Yes, maybe, but that is the truth. No wonder that this assertion was offensive to the Jews, as it will be to anyone who thinks that the solution lies elsewhere.

This is the beginning of the gospel. It means that through Jesus, God opens the future. Without Him there is no future to be had. The unbeliever must know that today. Our own children and youth, for whom the future lies so open and inviting, must hear that preached and asserted strongly today. They study at universities, they plan their professional future, they plan to marry and get a family. But alas, without Jesus Christ there is no future to be had. Of that there is no doubt!

The first point of the gospel says simply that there is a problem between God and humanity, a problem that we cannot solve but which nevertheless, if it remains unsolved, will cause us all to be lost forever. God said: I created man and woman, and although I am not responsible for the mess they have now gotten themselves into, I alone can bring them out of it.

To do that, God chose to die in Christ. The Bible speaks clearly: He died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3)—He was neither a martyr nor a victim. This is the only way in which the fallen world can be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:19). “He died for us so that . . . we may live together with him” (1 Thess. 5:10). A nd precisely because He died as a ransom to set us free, He is involved in mediation on our behalf (Heb. 9:15).

2. Jesus did not stay in the grave as humanity does. His death signaled the “death to death” (“the last enemy to be destroyed is death” [1 Cor. 15:26]); and, says Paul, had that not been the case, we would have been the most miserable of all people (verse 19). If we do not keep in focus that Christ rose from death, and that what means, the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear” (Acts 2:32, 33). He is involved in an ongoing ministry of reconciliation, which is the whole point of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Without that ministry we as individuals cannot effectively be set free from the failures of our past, our present, or the impending destruction of the future.

This is not speculation; it is simply the truth! The doctrine of the sanctuary, with all that it entails, is very much at the heart of the gospel and must be held high and asserted boldly by all who call themselves Christians.

4. The final point of the gospel is the second coming of Christ.

Frankly, you cannot be a believer in the New Testament sense of the term without believing in the second coming of Christ. “Men of Galilee: Why do you stand gazing into empty space? He will come again” (see Acts 1:11). Without the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, we are all left standing there gazing into empty space.

Peter expresses the familiar but ominous words about the second coming of Christ. It is a teaching that since the first generation of believers has been the object of mockery by the cynics and scoffers. A nd they will not go away. The problem with the scoffers is that they sometimes put on soft clothing and come into the church and mix with the believers. They cause uneasiness among believers by appearing to be intellectuals, well read, and ever so clever. They demand intellectual respectability of that which is to be believed.

The words of the Lord’s inspired servant are much to the point: “The success of the gospel message does not depend upon learned speeches, eloquent testimonies, or deep arguments. It depends upon the simplicity of the message and its adaptation to the souls that are hungering for the bread of life” (Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 231). Finding God and salvation was never meant to be a complicated thing. “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your
heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord” (Jer. 29:13, 14).

The scoffers sometimes intimidate the believers. Peter says that the problem with these scoffers is that they “deliberately forget” (2 Peter 3:5). It is a choice they make—they ignore the almightiness of the Creator, who caused the earth to be formed. But, says Peter, you, my dear friends, are not to forget (verse 8). God has no answer to the scoffers today, but one day He will require of them an answer.

Faith cannot be suspended until it has gained respectability. Faith accepts the truth as it comes to us from the Scriptures. Faith knows that its life and dynamic power disappear the moment it has to qualify itself by criteria that are basically and purely intellectual. Faith accepts the Word of God and accepts it without qualification.

This is the gospel. Is this still the heart and soul of your spiritual life? Is it still important to us?

But wherein lies its urgency?

1. The gospel is urgent primarily because there is a famine in the land. In the inspired words of Ellen White: “The world is perishing for want of the gospel. There is a famine for the Word of God. There are few who preach the Word unmixed with human tradition” (ibid., p. 228).

2. It is urgent because time is running out on us. “We have now only a little time in which to prepare for eternity” (Testimonies, vol. 7, p. 11). The believer knows better than anyone that the world as it is today is quickly running out of time. The social fabric of our society is crying out for deliverance. There is so much hurt that needs healing, and it is only getting worse.

3. The gospel it is urgent, furthermore, because it is under constant threat from pseudogospels—presentations from both the left and right that distort the gospel by offering alternative emphases or understandings to the doctrine of salvation. This is not new, but it is a disturbance and a hindrance to the proclamation of the gospel. I sense elements within our own church that struggle with getting the biblical balance right.

4. It is urgent because Jesus said that the gospel—God’s way of dealing with the sin problem—is to be made known to the whole world, and then “the end will come” (Matt. 24:14). The Lord is longing to come. We are invited to work with Him and the Spirit in setting the stage for that to happen. In what primitive form the gospel is to be made known, or at what level of understanding it is to be held, we do not know. What we know is that it is to be spread “as a witness” to the whole world, in order for God to be ready to say “It is finished.”

I am anxious that this church of ours should remain primarily Christ-focused and mission-focused. Unlike so many other human clubs and associations, we are not primarily an inward-looking community, that is, our interest is not first of all in those who are our members. Our focus is outward. We exist in the interest of those who are not part of us. It was God’s love for those who were “aliens and strangers” that motivated Him in giving His Son. And that expresses also the life of the church.

That sets our focus, and therein lies our urgency.

So I appeal to you to do your best to make this church of ours a warm and attractive community where sinners can feel at home; a place where individuals who come with many battle scars and who have not done particularly well, or who don’t see themselves as successful, can feel accepted and loved. I think that is what Christ would want His church to be. At the same time, let us make sure that the spoken witness of the church is strong and clear.

* Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

Jan Paulsen is the newly-elected president of the General Conference.
When the *It Is Written* and production staff from the Adventist Media Center arrived in Manila, Philippines, to prepare for the first in a series of 10 satellite evangelistic campaigns entitled ACTS 2000, they discovered that their equipment was tied up in customs.

It was a call to prayer! God’s answer included the direct intervention of that nation’s president and greatly encouraged the faith of those involved in this event.

Local Seventh-day Adventist pastors and members put forth diligent and prayerful efforts to prepare the hearts of thousands spiritually to hear the messages of *It Is Written* speaker/director Mark Finley as he shared the Word of God with a live audience in Manila.

This series also reached viewers at 15 satellite downlink sites throughout the Philippines and at other prepared sites, ranging from eastern Russia in the north to Australia in the south, and from the islands of Guam in the east to India in the west.

A language encoder allowed for the broadcast of simultaneous translations into Tagalog, Cebuano, and Hilong (major Philippine dialects), Tamil (a major language of India), Bangla (Bangladesh), Mandarin (China), Sinhala (Sri Lanka), Indonesian, Palauan, and Thai. There were also downlink sites in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Fiji, and New Zealand.

How did people respond to ACTS 2000-Manila and Mark Finley’s preaching? The 4,000-seat auditorium of the Philippine International Convention Center, the host site, was packed from the start. Each night the crowd grew, with the overflow audience first watching on a big screen in an outer courtyard, then by the final two sessions filling an adjacent 3,000-seat auditorium.

At other downlink sites throughout the Philippines crowds came by the thousands. In Jakarta, Indonesia, attendance climbed from 1,000 to 1,500. But the most dramatic increase was in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where Finley was seen on a 32-foot screen in a large sports stadium. The enthusiastic audience started at 20,000 and increased to a capacity 40,000 by the closing session!

In Manila the ACTS 2000 series was climax by a major baptism in which 1,362 people committed their lives to Christ and became members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
When the board of directors for Christian Record Services (CRS) met on February 24, they heard some exciting news. Larry Pitcher, president of the Adventist Church’s international outreach ministry to blind individuals, announced that for the first time in 10 years CRS is absolutely debt-free.

“I am deeply humbled and thrilled by what I experienced of God’s power in Manila,” Mark Finley reflects. “During this series I was deeply impressed anew that God is stirring this world. Men and women everywhere are longing for truth. They are spiritually famished. I am profoundly convicted that God will use the global uplinking of ACTS 2000 from each of its 10 sites as a powerful spiritual tool to reach millions.”

The remaining ACTS 2000 uplink sites are: June 1999, from São Paulo, Brazil; September 1999, from Bucharest, Romania; November 1999, from Santiago, Chile; January 2000, from Madras, India; March 2000, from Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.; September 2000, from Seoul, Korea; April 2001, from Kingston, Jamaica; and mid-2001 from Sydney, Australia.

The board members were so overwhelmed with praise over the news that they sang “Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow,” and joined in prayers of thanksgiving.

Based in Lincoln, Nebraska, since 1904, CRS has been sending braille literature and talking books and magazines to more than 80 countries. CRS prospered until 1987, when expenses exceeded income. “The problem worsened each year for 10 years,” Pitcher said.

“Ultimately the auditors told CRS administrators that if the church sold all the assets of Christian Record, there still would not be enough money to pay all the bills.”

To reduce expenses, officials cut workers, eliminated departments (including the deaf ministry), reduced publications, and curtailed camps and seminars. A turning point came in February 1997. “Our treasurer told me that we must borrow more money to make the payroll,” Pitcher said. “We knew that if we borrowed more, this would be the end of CRS. Our heavy debts were crushing the life out of our work for the blind. Besides, we had promised not to borrow again, but there seemed no way out.

“We called the department heads to our committee room to discuss our plight. Together we decided to pray again for God to deliver us. Collectively we claimed Bible promises and we simply asked God to share some of His vast supply of gold and silver that His work for the blind could continue without borrowing money in 1997.”

By the end of March CRS’s income was enough to eliminate the need to borrow funds. By the end of 1997 Christian Record had reduced its debts by more than half. Though 1997 was the best year financially that CRS offi-
A howl of complaint from the world’s insurance giants was given voice in the business section of the London Times on February 16, 1999.

After completing their calculations, the insurance industry reached the conclusion that the fiscal year just ended was the worst year ever for natural disasters. Hurricane Mitch, which hit Central America, killed 9,200 people and cost U.S.$5 billion (U.K.$3.1 billion) in uninsured losses and U.S.$150 billion (U.K.£94 billion) in insured losses. Last year’s 240 “significant windstorms” and 170 “massive-scale floods” accounted for 85 percent of insurance claims around the globe. Large-loss events totaled 538 in 1998. The next-highest total was for 1995, when there were 100 fewer.

Europe was plagued with natural disasters caused by “extreme weather.” The summer heat waves igniting forest fires in Greece alone cost U.S.$675 million. The British floods cost U.S.$500 million.

The insurance companies are blaming the big rise in natural disasters on “rising global temperatures” aggravated by the La Niña climatic cycle set in train by El Niño.

The catalog of disasters drawn up by Gerhard Berz of the Munich Geoscience Research Center for the 1998-1999 fiscal year includes the May-August forest fires in the United States; the July-September floods in Bangladesh which (at their worst) rendered two thirds of the country under water; floods in Romania, China, and the Netherlands; and freak winter storms impacting the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Poland, and others.

Natural disasters have always occurred. Is it possible that the end-time prophecies relate to an increase in their incidence and scale?
Quiz

1. In 1894 an Adventist administrator and a layman requested land in Rhodesia. On the 12,000 acres received, they established Solusi Mission. Evangelism continues in this country in which 35 percent of the people trust in ancestral spirits. In Mashonaland evangelists and literature workers have brought many into the church and trained them to teach in new places. In what country is Mashonaland?
   A. Malawi  C. Zimbabwe
   B. Zambia  D. Botswana

2. Global Mission funds are nurturing an active group in Garesnica in the Balkans. Their meeting place has been renovated and funding provided for outreach. Adventists number fewer than one to 1,000 in the population, and political upheaval surrounds them in Serbia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. A long with Slovenia and Macedon, their country was born with the breakup of Yugoslavia. Zagreb is their capital. Name this country.
   A. Croatia  C. Dalmatia
   B. Slovenia  D. Montenegro

Answers:

1. C. Zimbabwe. To the tribal people, who worship ancestors, the Christian message is difficult to comprehend. Global Mission funds evangelism among these peoples.

2. A. Croatia. The population is 40 percent Serbians, 20 percent Croatians, 8 percent Bosnians, 8 percent Slovenes, 6 percent Arians, and lesser percentages of 19 other groups. Religious affiliations cross ethnic lines.

3. D. Haryana. A year and a half ago the work began with 94 Global Mission pioneers.

—Compiled by F. Donald Yost, Office of Global Mission, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Newsbreak

and Oakwood College president before coming to the General Conference as a vice president in 1985.

Rock, who has 47 years of service, chairs the International Board of Higher Education and the Loma Linda University and Loma Linda University Medical Center boards. “Rock has been a counselor on educational matters affecting the global church,” says Humberto Rasi, GC Education Department director. “Through Operation Reachback he is channeling the talents of scores of African-Americans to strengthen Adventist mission in Africa.”

Adventists Hold First Brazilian-Portuguese Camp Meeting in North America

February 4-6 marked the first Brazilian-Portuguese Adventist camp meeting held in North America. More than 1,200 persons from all across the United States and Canada attended the meetings at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, reports pastor Edemilson Cardoso, of Fort Lauderdale.

The featured speaker was evangelist Alejandro Bullon of the South American Division. Orlando was chosen because it represents a great potential for evangelism, says Cardoso. “Because of its tropical climate, Orlando attracts a large number of Portuguese and Brazilians.” From the first church organized in New Bedford, Massachusetts, 60 years ago, the Portuguese-Brazilian work has grown to nearly 2,500 members in 34 churches and groups in North America.

Andrews University Honors Blythe Owen, a Centenary Role Model

Andrews University recently honored the life and work of composer Blythe Owen at her 100th birthday. University officials organized a concert of Owen’s works performed by faculty and students.

Owen, a piano professor at Andrews from 1961 to 1981, has won numerous national and international awards during her storied 80-year career of active music endeavor. “Dr. Owen was a trailblazer in the truest sense of the word,” said Peter Cooper, chair of the Music Department. There are few musicians of whom it can be said: ‘Their music deserves to be heard.’ Blythe Owen is one of them.”
A Lay Member’s Guide to Evangelizing Your Pastor’s Kids

Four ways to make them feel special

BY CHANTAL KLINGBEIL

Chances are that you have a couple of us in your church school, church, and Sabbath school. You can’t miss us. When we are good, we are a wonderful asset to the church and our parents’ ministry. When we are bad we are a headache to the church and a festering sore in our parents’ hearts. We are your Pastor’s Kids (PKs).

PKs are unique. Or better said, we are a group who somehow fall through the cracks of church groupings. There are special support groups for single parents, singles, and seniors. There are retreats for pastors and their wives, but not too many ministries aimed at us PKs. We find ourselves intricately woven into a ministry that we did not choose but, like the Levites of old, were born into. Of course, we have many wonderful opportunities and experiences that other children can only dream of. We get to move often and see the country, or if our parents are missionaries, we get to see the world. We can attend Adventist educational institutions at a discount rate. We get to see and be part of the behind-the-scenes workings of our church. Sadly, though, some of us grow up frustrated and rebellious, tearing away from the church and leaving a long string of question marks in many hearts.

This phenomenon is nothing new—Eli had the same problems with Hophni and Phinehas, and Samuel’s sons also seemed to have missed the heart of their father’s ministry. A lot can be said about parents too busy with the Lord’s work to take time for their families, but what it basically boils down to is that many of us PKs have never found Jesus for ourselves. That makes us a mission field too. You as a layperson can play a pivotal role in our getting to know Jesus personally.

Have you ever thought of yourself as an evangelist? You as a layperson will probably be one of the most effective evangelists in this area. Here are a few time-tested tips to help as you venture into this mission field:

Give your PKs a safe environment. PKs know instinctively that we are different and often feel watched by the church members. This pressure makes some of us rebellious. Make an effort to show us that we are not a show window but a garden. Learn our names and use them. In your conversations refer to us as “Joe” or “Sue” and not as “the pastor’s children.” Take the time to find out about our hobbies and what we want to do as a lifework. Invite us to Sabbath lunch sometime without our parents. Let us know that in your presence we can be ourselves without any danger that what we say will be discussed over next week’s potluck.

Don’t take us for granted. PKs have lived through countless Revelation seminars, stop-smoking plans, and evangelistic campaigns. We have heard church members discussing long and hard about how to win all the world. We have heard stirring testimonies of drug addicts’ conversions and other great sinners coming to Christ. But as PKs we have no such stirring tales to tell. We have always been Adventists and part of the church furniture. Has anyone labored over our souls? We know that sinners in the world are important to God, but we need to know that God loves us individually. Someone must ask us if we would like to accept Jesus into our hearts. Don’t assume that the pastor will speak to us (working with your own family is always
the most difficult task—even for your pastor) or that we will make a stand for Christ while ushering or folding bulletins.

Treat us normally. While making us feel special as individuals, don’t make us feel different because we are PKs. Going through all the phases of childhood and then the treacherous road of adolescence is difficult enough without the knowledge that our parents’ ministries will be judged largely by our behavior. Being a pastor’s kid is not normally a great social asset to an adolescent, and some of us may go to extremes in trying to prove that we can be like the worst of our peer group. Don’t let us call your bluff; keep on looking for and treating us like the persons we can be. Hold us to the same standards as you would anyone else, but let us know that you would love us and expect this of us even if we weren’t PKs. Please don’t let us get away with trying to use our birthright as a threat to get what we want. We need to learn to work like anyone else. Later on, when we enter adulthood, we will be grateful to you, knowing in our hearts that we have succeeded by the grace of God and not because of the positions of our parents.

Model Christ. Any evangelistic effort will be futile if Jesus isn’t revealed to others. Spend time with Jesus and His Word—fall in love with Him. Remember that your pastor’s kids have probably seen some sides of your church that are not too pretty. We know that Pastor X did not resign because of poor health, but because of the other woman in his life. We know that Mom and Dad had a big fight on the way to church, and now Dad is sweating through a sermon on 1 Corinthians 13. You probably wouldn’t notice, but we know. We can spot a hypocrite a mile away. We are not expecting perfection, but honesty.

We need to see what Jesus is like. We need to see Him making a difference in ordinary, everyday lives—in your life. You may not have much to tell us that we don’t already know, but you have a lot to demonstrate. We, like all young people, pick models, and consciously or unconsciously pattern aspects of our lives accordingly. You are not just the little old woman in the back row or the young convert trying to find his place. To someone, perhaps to one of us PKs, you may be modeling Seventh-day Adventist Christianity.

Evangelizing us PKs won’t break your church budget. It requires no special programs or material. It does, however, require a little of your time, prayers, and sensitivity. When we give our lives to God, there probably won’t be any great conversion stories, and only in heaven will you know of the role you have played in our conversions. But as we in turn are used by God, your evangelistic efforts, like the widening ripples of a pebble thrown into a pond, will widen into the joy of the multitude standing on the sea of glass.

Chantal Klingbeil teaches at the Peruvian Union University in Lima, Peru.
HERE IS ALWAYS A DANGER IN GOING back to any place you have loved. The intervening months and years have subtly sifted memories, dropping details through the screen, making more of some things than they probably deserve. A charitable haze settles down on the fields where once you sweat and struggled, allowing you to see only a beguiling twilight goldenness. Hard edges soften; unpleasantness recedes.

I piloted my rented Renault toward Newbold College one recent Friday afternoon, driving half by hunch, as much afraid of navigating memory lane as of the numerous clockwise roundabouts. Twenty-one years earlier I had traveled this same route by double-decker bus, clutching my fare ticket in a sweaty palm, dependent on the kindness of strangers to know just where to disembark. Now I was hurrying to interview others who had also chosen Newbold for their college education.

In 1977 I had lived out a dream to spend a semester studying in England. For a literature major whose ancestors hailed from Cornwall, few dreams were more compelling. In front of me stretched 20 weeks of afternoons in the British Museum, strolls through ancient churchyards, listening to the vesper choir at Windsor Castle. In between, of course, there would be such classes as Medieval English Lit, Journalism, Life and Teachings of Jesus, Christian Ethics—the necessary structures by which to justify a four-month feast to feed my soul.

But God had other plans, it seemed. Among the glorious afternoons examining first editions and wandering through Westminster Abbey, He placed a confrontation with His Son and a call to ministry that profoundly shaped the next two decades of my life. The prayer I shared at Newbold with Britons, Finns, and Germans opened my American Adventist eyes to a different and compelling vision of my church. Three thousand miles from home, I found a sanctuary in which God rearranged my life.

With such sanctified nostalgia firmly in possession of my thoughts, I hungered to know if any of today’s Newbold students were being similarly inspired.

“I’ve grown more secure in my faith since coming here,” says Robin Anthony, a fourth-year humanities major at Newbold. “I’m more certain of the fundamentals of Adventism and more grounded in God’s Word.”

The son of missionary parents, Robin spent six childhood years in Sri Lanka, where his father held pastoral and administrative assignments for the Adventist Church. After completing secondary training, Robin worked as a computer installer for a local government, but found that the work, though professionally challenging, isolated him from others.

“I wanted to be with Christian people,” he says softly. “I was looking for a Christian environment in which people shared basic tenets of my faith. Newbold answered that need.”

The college has hardly been a comfortable cocoon, however. “Like every growing Christian, I’ve had crises that have arisen from my personal study of Scripture,” Robin says. “I’ve struggled to understand the meaning of Scripture and sense its application to my life. I have to trust that issues will resolve themselves as I keep exploring the Bible.”

Though not finishing Newbold with a pastoral-track theology degree, Robin is waiting on God to understand if pastoral ministry should be in his future. His strong interest in Christian apologetics may take him to a postcollegiate year...
in London, where he could study with leading evangelical thinkers. Avid reading of works by Francis Schaeffer, Alister McGrath, and Os Guinness, among others, has sharpened his focus on Adventism's biblical foundation.

“Even when the path is difficult God doesn’t leave us alone,” he concludes. “I’m trusting that wherever God finds for me to work, I’ll have a chance to share my testimony to the value of God’s word in my life.”

“God wanted me to come to Newbold,” says second-year theology student Lani Edwards with slow smile, “but I don’t think He wants me to be a pastor.” A recent summer spent working as a youth pastor of a central London congregation offered her rewarding opportunities to preach and give Bible studies, but pastoral care visits proved daunting.

“God has given me a talent for languages,” she adds, retracing summers spent at Saleve Adventist University in France and Bogenhofen Seminary in Austria, mastering French and German. She finds the Greek and Hebrew courses in her theology degree both fun and challenging, and looks forward to possibly teaching theology or biblical languages on the collegiate level.

Originally from Glasgow, Scotland, Lani sees herself ministering in the United Kingdom when she finishes at Newbold. “I believe God has called me to stay in Britain to help find effective ways of ministering to Britons,” she says, noting that membership growth among the nation’s White population has been minimal in recent years. “I’m sure I’ll serve the church in some capacity, even if that position hasn’t been developed yet!”

For now, Lani invests her nonstudy hours as part of a team that operates a website aimed at young British Adventists, YouthPA GES (http://www.youth-pages.org) is a vibrant connection point for hundreds of young adults at both Adventist and non-Adventist colleges around the English-speaking world, offering church news, downloadable publications, and a place to share prayer requests and make connections with more than 400 young adults in 70 countries.

“I love working with computers,” Lani adds, “and I’ve really enjoyed helping at YouthPA GES. Right now that’s the ministry God has given me.”

Samantha (Sam) nee Lond and Owen Owusu have found new meaning and life partners in each other since coming to Newbold College. Married in a December 4, 1998, ceremony, Sam and Owen are both completing theology degrees and plan to use their training in mission service. Though raised in Britain—she in Grimsby in north-central England and he in southeast London—each has traveled extensively and lived in other areas of the world.

“God has put a spirit of get-up-and-go in both of us,” Sam says with a laugh. She spent time travelling in the Mediterranean before becoming an Adventist Christian and choosing Newbold College. Her experiences in Israel, Egypt, the Greek islands, and across Europe found an answer in Owen’s travels in the United States and to the Micronesian island of Pohnpei, where he also served two years as a student missionary.

“We’re both very much interested in teaching, probably on the secondary level,” Sam says, noting that both she and Owen have been greatly blessed by strong Christian mentors. “Our greatest satisfaction is in helping other young people make good decisions, and we’re committed to being examples for them.” She has plans to complete a diploma in Christian counseling after Newbold to further prepare herself.

Owen’s year teaching religion to Pohnpeian students also convinced him that God wanted him in some kind of youth ministry.

“Newbold has helped to sharpen our commitment to mission,” Owen concludes. “The backgrounds we’ve had before coming here have just added to our enthusiasm to be of service wherever God plants us.”

A n irrepressible smile stole across my face as I drove away from Newbold in the darkness. There is also a joy in going back to any place that you have loved, I concluded, especially when the values you learned there find a continuing echo in the lives of others.

With lives like these available to Him, God must have great plans for Great Britain.

Bill Knott is an associate editor of the Adventist Review.
The Healing

Sickness brought her to the hospital, but friendliness brought her to Jesus.

BY EVERETT F. COLEMAN

OUR TELEPHONE RANG ABOUT 7:00 A.M. the first Monday of October. “Elder Johnson of the General Conference has a message for you from Africa,” said the voice on the other end of the line. We weren’t surprised, as my wife and I had done relief work in a bush hospital in northern Nigeria the previous year, and we had been asked to come back in the winter. But we were surprised when we were told that the
A frican call would be canceled if we would take an emergency call to Penang, Malaysia.

Johnson informed us that one of the doctors at the Adventist hospital in Penang had been injured in a motorcycle accident and was somewhat incapacitated. Would we be willing to temporarily replace him?

“Just a minute; let me talk with my wife,” I said. “She’s here with me.”

A fter a moment of consultation I announced, “Yes, we’ll go. We’ll need a visa, and we may need some shots, so it will take at least three weeks before we’ll be ready.”

“All right, we’ll plan on seeing you in one month.”

A Brief History

Shortly after we arrived in Penang, I was sitting in my office when I received a phone call from someone who identified himself as James. He was calling to make an appointment for his wife, Daisy. She wasn’t feeling well, and they couldn’t figure out why. I suggested a complete physical.

When James and Daisy came into the office, James told me a bit of their history. He had come to Penang 10 years earlier to work as a consultant at a large textile mill. When he arrived, he and his previous wife had found a church of the same denomination as the church they had attended in Europe. “We also learned that this church had a hospital and two European-trained doctors. We were welcomed as members of the church.

“All went well for several years,” he continued. “But when it came time for a vacation to Europe, the mill was having problems and I couldn’t travel with my wife. The first indication I had that things weren’t going well was when my wife wanted a longer vacation. Then she wrote and told me that she had found an old boyfriend and wanted a divorce.

“Several years went by. I fell in love with my Malay secretary, and we were married. My new wife is a Buddhist, and my church disfellowshipped me for marrying an ‘unbeliever.’”

Diagnosis

A fter Daisy’s examination, I ordered some lab tests, took a detailed history, and gave them a report of the findings.

“I’m certain that I’ve found your problem,” I told them. “I checked with our pharmacy, and we have a medicine that’s very good in treating this condition. We can treat you as an outpatient and repeat your tests in 10 days or so to make sure that you’re well; or, if you wish, we can admit you and treat you in the hospital.” They chose outpatient treatment.

“Does Daisy feel better?” I asked when James called a few days later.

“Yes,” he answered, “but she’s not getting well as quickly as we had hoped.”

“Would you like to put her in the hospital?” I asked.

“Ask Daisy,” he said, and he handed the phone to her.

Daisy said that she felt some better. But she felt tired and weak, and she wanted to come to the hospital.

When I tried to arrange for a room, I discovered that no private rooms were available. In fact, the only open bed was in a three-bed ward near the room where we had morning worship.

Responding to Treatment

Daisy was on bed rest that first day in the hospital. The next day she was up only as long as she felt comfortable. When we sang for morning worship, Daisy was in the doorway of her room listening. By the third day Daisy was down the hall by the door to our worship room. And the next day Daisy was sitting on a chair inside the room.

It so happened that we also had a hospital employee named Daisy, and we introduced her to our patient Daisy. They became friends almost immediately. We introduced Daisy to the hospital chaplain, who also was the pastor of our English church. When we found out that Daisy could read English, we supplied her with interesting reading material.

Daisy was getting better every day, and we realized that very soon she would be going home. We wondered, How can we follow up Daisy’s interest in spiritual things?

Daisy went home on Friday, and we were very much surprised to see her back for worship the next Monday morning. She had their driver bring her to the hospital so she could go to worship. She enjoyed the singing and the friendly way she was treated.

Staff members who had befriended Daisy were able to get her to sing with them for worship, and later on for worship services at the church. When Daisy decided to go back to school, we wondered if she would lose interest in worshiping with us. But she continued to participate in services both in the hospital and in the church.

The Next Chapter

Soon our three months in Malaysia came to an end. But for the next year and a half we corresponded with Daisy and James. One day we were shocked to hear that James had died unexpectedly.

Shortly afterward we received a letter in which Daisy said that her sister had made some vows to Buddha, but that as soon as the vows were fulfilled, Daisy was going to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some of her friends asked her why. She answered, “I was loved into it.”

W hen I attended medical school at the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University), we were told that the medical work is the right arm of the three angels’ messages. When I asked what constituted the medical work, the typical answer was: doctors, dentists, and nurses. But in Daisy’s case, and in many others’ as well, lots more people were involved in reflecting God’s love—including some who were not yet Adventists.

Over the years as we corresponded with Daisy, she often wrote of her happiness in knowing Jesus, and about her many friends in our Adventist hospital and church.

Thank God for our medical work.

Everett F. Coleman is a retired physician who lives in Yakima, Washington.
Is the gift of tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 unintelligible utterances or foreign languages?

There are three main interpretations of the manifestation of the gift of tongues in the church at Corinth.

The first one argues that the gift was the ability to speak the language of angels. This is based on Paul’s reference to the “tongues of... angels” (1 Cor. 13:1). The second interprets that the gift of tongues was the capacity to speak other languages through the power of the Spirit (Acts 2). The third interpretation states that the gift designates ecstatic or unintelligible utterances under the influence of the Spirit, in that Paul says the messages were unintelligible (1 Cor. 14:2).

To decide which is the right interpretation, we must begin with 1 Corinthians 14. Can we gain from it a clear understanding of the nature of the gift in that particular church? Paul does not provide a detailed description of the manifestation of the gift in that chapter. Therefore, we must allow for different possibilities. We can then ask, based on the Scriptures, which is the most probable interpretation.

2. Immediate Context: What do we learn about the gift of tongues from 1 Corinthians 14 itself? The first and most striking thing is that the gift seems to be unintelligible: “No one understands him” (verse 2). This is radically different from the manifestation of the gift in Acts 2 and has led some to conclude that the gift had more than one expression. Others try to harmonize both cases, arguing that in Corinth the gift was unintelligible because the languages spoken were unknown to the hearers and that translation was needed, as Paul himself suggested (verse 13).

Second, Paul states that the gift does not result in the loss of self-control. In church, only two or three should speak in tongues; and if there is no interpreter, those who are being used by the Spirit to speak in tongues should keep quiet (verses 27, 28). The capacity to control the expression of the gift seems to indicate that we are not dealing here with ecstatic utterances during which the individual loses self-control.

Third, over against prevailing ideas in the religious world today, Paul does not expect or encourage every church member to receive this gift. In fact, he seems to discourage it, at least in church. For Paul the gift of prophecy in the church is more meaningful and important than the gift of tongues. He does not consider it to be an indispensable sign of conversion or of the reception of the Spirit.

My comments simply illustrate the difficulty of coming to a definite answer to your question. The biblical support for the interpretation of the gift of tongues as languages is very strong. In fact, the Greek word glossa, when used to designate a gift, does not mean “tongue” but “language.” The modern manifestation of “speaking in tongues” should not be equated with the gift as described in the New Testament.

*Bible texts in the article are from the New International Version.

Angel Manuel Rodríguez is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.
Pastor Kyaw felt his pulse quicken as he approached the customs barrier to catch a flight to Singapore. His briefcase and bags were stuffed with brightly wrapped packages—recorded tapes for broadcast to his country from the Adventist World Radio station on Guam. AWR staff would carry the tapes from Singapore to Guam.

Pastor Kyaw’s country banned all kinds of imports and exports—religious tapes were no exception. Taking them out this way could bring the law down on him. But if the broadcasts were to continue, they had to take risks. He breathed a prayer and remembered the staff at the studio. They would be praying too.

As he passed through the checkpoints, Kyaw remembered all the ways they had used to move tapes in and out of the country—mailing them as birthday and Christmas gifts, asking tourists to take them out, making sure that everyone they knew who left the country took at least one or two. He was offering a prayer of thanks that this bold approach was working when four customs agents appeared.

“The X-ray machine shows that you have tapes in your luggage,” one said. “Taking tapes out of the country is prohibited. Come with us.”

Pastor Kyaw thought of all the hours he and others had put into preparing the programs. Being totally honest, he opened his briefcase and took out a tape. “Here, this is one of the tapes. They are religious programs for broadcast on Adventist World Radio,” he smiled. “You can hear my voice on this one, if you wish.”

One of the agents looked hard at Pastor Kyaw. “Did you say Adventist World Radio?” he asked.

“Yes, that’s right. We have a program called The Voice of Hope.”

“Really?” the agent grinned. “That’s my favorite program. I listen to it every day.”

He turned to the other officers. “These programs are good,” he said. “We should let them through. These aren’t just religious programs; they talk about health and how to look after your family, and many other good things for the people.”

With smiles and handshakes the agents went back to their office, and the pastor boarded his flight with a smile on his face and a prayer of thanks in his heart. Once more God’s providence had ensured that broadcasts would continue to bring the joy of Jesus to people who might not hear His name in any other way.

This story is one of six in a new Adventist World Radio storybook. To get your free copy, call 1-800-337-4AWR, or send an E-mail to awrmaterials@awr.org.

Walter Scragg is a former president of AWR and two world divisions, author, evangelist, pastor—now retired, but still writing, in Sydney, Australia.

STANDING FOR JESUS: In remote villages dotted over the mountains and valleys of Myanmar, Adventist groups like this one are springing up as a result of Burmese broadcasts heard on Adventist World Radio. In one village a young woman who accepted Jesus and was baptized met fierce opposition from her family. Villagers accused her of cursing the village with her new religion. Under these pressures she took poison—but she was not harmed. Awed by the power of her God, May’s family took Bible studies and were baptized—as were more than 30 other villagers. The little congregation is still growing.
A family of squirrels lives in our backyard. It's fun to watch them.

We like to feed them corn. First we bought a squirrel feeder that is basically just a chain. You loop it around a branch and twist a cob of corn onto the screw at the end. The squirrels pull the chain up with their little paws or they climb down the chain and eat the corn upside down. That feeder was fun—but then we got the squirrel-a-whirl.

The squirrel-a-whirl is like a Ferris wheel. You bolt it to a tree. It has three sticks that spin around. You screw a cob of corn onto the end of each stick. When the squirrel steps on it to get some corn, it goes for a ride. Now, that's fun to watch.

Some of the squirrels try to creep along the stick so it spins only a little bit. But other squirrels evidently like to spin. They leap onto it and go whirling around. It's always busy.

On a sunny day there is always one squirrel twirling while another is chattering at it to hurry up. Sometimes they lose patience and chase each other around. That's fun to watch too.

As long as there's corn left on the cob, the squirrels are out there gathering it. They can't possibly eat it all, so what do they do when they get full? They bury their food. You can see them digging little holes and covering them up and then racing off to get more corn. They are so busy, and they are so funny.

Do they remember where they've buried the corn? Of course not! How could their little brains remember all those kernels? Is the corn lost forever? No. Fortunately, squirrels have a good sense of smell. A hungry squirrel sniffs around for the hidden corn.

Chances are the corn it finds was buried by some other squirrel, but who cares.

It's fun to watch squirrels scampering around. They seem happy to be busy.

Kids and grown-ups are usually happy when they're busy, too, especially when we can help others with our effort. Jesus made us so that we would be happy when we do the kinds of things He did—when we show kindness, love mercy, and live humbly with each other (Micah 6:8).

Being part of God's grace family means looking for ways to help and serve other people: parents, brothers and sisters, friends, neighbors.

There are a lot of people who could use your help. So scamper off like a little squirrel and get busy.

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**Family Time**

On Tuesday (or whatever day you like), invite your family to worship God together.

- Ask the person with the shortest first name to count to 100 slowly while the rest of you quickly try to find pictures of people helping each other. Look in magazines, books, newspapers—and bring them back to your worship room. Show everybody your pictures, and tell them which kinds of helping you would most like to do.

- Ask an adult to tell you about sometime when Jesus led them to help someone who was really in need. Then tell your own story about a time when you were able to help someone.

- Look at a Bible story about Jesus helping people (Mark 7:32-37). Why did Jesus do such unusual things to help this man? (Hint: Think about how you would show someone you were going to help if he couldn't hear or talk.)

- Sing your favorite song about helping. Be sure to thank Jesus for the people who have helped you and your family, and ask Him for a chance to show His love to others this week.
We were sorting, packing, and trying to decide what to do with Mother's things. Most of the items ended up at the garage sale, some at an antique auction, and others were taken to the Community Services center. And some we kept.

Mother had just had her ninety-second birthday, but Alzheimer's prevented her from comprehending the significance of that milestone. She had been away from her home for two years, and now it was sold and being emptied for the new owner.

On the night of our arrival she sat down on the edge of her bed and asked, "Tell me, where are we?" It seemed that her fragmented mind was attempting to put some pieces of a puzzle together.

On her dresser were several pictures of family, including one of my late father as a young man. "Who is this?" I asked. After a little contemplation she answered, "That's my man! And he looks exactly like himself."

Next I showed her the picture of herself in her late 20s posing with a large bouquet of roses that Dad, a photographer, had taken. Since this was long before the days of color photography, Dad had tinted it himself. Mother did not recognize herself, but when I assured her the picture was of her, she was pleased and repeated it to me a minute or so later. Then it was forgotten.

As I did my best to allocate her belongings, I couldn't help thinking of what each had meant to her. The brown-and-white stuffed dog that stood stiffly on her nightstand had been made for her by an elderly friend. It was precious to her. So I packed it. I couldn't discard the 1951 black-and-white camp meeting picture my father had framed. Pillowcases my late sister, Alma, had embroidered were also important to Mother. But they were worn and frayed, and I decided to let them go.

And then I found it—the little gray cotton bag. It measures about 10 by 12 inches. Remnants of a string sewn near the open end are still attached, though frayed. On closer examination, its value increased in my mind, but not because of its contents. It held Mother's coin collection. I suddenly realized it had a history—a rich history of how

Mother dealt with poverty. I noticed that every stitch of this creation had been sewn by hand.

During World War II, when we were fleeing from our home, Mother's sewing machine had to be left behind. So this little bag was a wartime product. How she acquired the fabric I don't know. It may have been the not-so-worn part of a straw tick.

Her resourcefulness and unerring devotion to her family were evident in all we had. How I wish I could ask her the initial intent of the little gray bag. It now displays numerous holes mend ed with needle and thread. But what was its use? I don't know. I do know it was needed, for that's why she made it. Do I need it? No. Will I keep it? Yes.

On second thought, I do need it.

I need it as a reminder that the value and significance of one's usefulness does not change with time. Like this little gray bag, Mother was created for a purpose, and she fulfilled that purpose to the best of her ability. Not only did she lovingly care for her family until death took her husband and two of her three children from her, but she shared her meager assets to build a forest chapel in India—in memory of my father. And at least four baptisms are the direct result of her prayers and Bible studies.

But now she too is worn. Her mind is frayed like the string on that little gray bag. Her usefulness, in human terms, is a thing of the past. She forgets names, except the name of Jesus. She still talks to Him. When she feels particularly lonely and helpless, she reminds Him of His promises, one of them being "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And because He doesn't forget, her forgetfulness doesn't really matter. Not in terms of her value. Will He keep her? Oh, yes! After all, He made her when she was needed—for this world and the next.

Lydia Janzen lives in Redlands, California. She is employed as secretary/accountant by Redlands Aviation and cares for her 92-year-old mother.