The Challenges We Face
The vital connections between theology, organization, and mission

The Great Bible Versions Debate

A Deeper Courage
The Vision Glorious

Bill Knott’s “The Vision Glorious” (May 28 AnchorPoints Edition), a dialogue with some of our church’s leaders and thinkers regarding Ellen White’s 1848 great controversy vision, got me to thinking. While they all stayed short of saying it outright, some of these men seemed close to the idea that a person must be a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in order to be saved in the end-time.

Please say that it is not so. There is no problem with saying that all folk saved in the end-time must belong to God’s church. The problem comes when we think that the Adventist Church is exactly God’s church. Surely there will be many Sabbath-believing, Advent-believing Christians who are not baptized members of the Adventist Church. Are they not going to be saved?

— Stanley Murphy
Zephyrhills, Florida

Though I appreciated much of what I read in this article, I think that in our effort to define ourselves as “distinct”—a “remnant”—we have withdrawn too much from our Christian brothers and sisters of the Protestant world. I am not advocating ecumenism, but if we do not develop relationships with people so they see us as loving Christians, they will not leave “Babylon” and join the “one fold.” They will view us as that strange cult that they know nothing about, and discrimination against us will not be difficult.

We must rub shoulders with our neighbors, demonstrate the love of Jesus, and be seen as real people. Perhaps then, when the Sabbath becomes a real issue at the end of human history, we will be seen as credible Christian friends.

— Thelma Negretti
Ringwood, New Jersey

“A The Vision Glorious” and Ellen White’s accompanying “What Will Yet Be” sparked a query: Do you have plans to address the prevailing ignorance of our Adventist philosophy? If so, will it be elementary enough to inform even the most ignorant?

We have new members who may not be fully grounded; we have students who may not be adequately instructed; we have family members who need review and revitalization and perhaps something to share with neighbors.

It seems to me that you have prepared the way for a series that would prepare each of us to be a more completely informed Seventh-day Adventist.

— Leora DeWitt
Boston, Massachusetts

A Special Offer

Many Review readers might be interested in ordering a copy of Elfred Lee’s painting Truth as It Is In Jesus. This beautiful work is owned by the General Conference Ministerial Association (in our May 28 issue we inadvertently left off the credit line) and is available in the following forms:

- Limited edition prints: $129 (includes shipping)
- Posters: $12 (plus $1.80 shipping)

To order, call 301-680-6508. Or send a check or VISA/ MasterCard billing information (including expiration date) to the General Conference Ministerial Association at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; fax: 301-680-6502; e-mail: 74532.2032@compuserve.com; website: www.adventist.org/ministerial.
photograph of the roundtable panel does not convey the inclusiveness previously touted by our denominational leaders and the Review staff: there are no young faces; there are no women.

No stigma is intended for the excellent panel shown, nor for their responses and remarks. But the medium is a significant part of the message. Either we mean it or we don’t that an army of rightly trained youth must be raised up to bear this vision glorious to the world.

Can there be a second chance arranged, with high school through older Generation X, male and female, and professional and off-the-street Adventists being featured in the Review as respondents to questions and convictions concerning the perceived substance of the “Vision Glorious”? Please try again.

—Gael Hoyt
Tehachapi, California

Presenters for the Toledo celebration of the 140th anniversary of the great controversy vision were selected for their expertise in the Spirit of Prophecy and Adventist heritage. To this group the Adventist Review invited Hedwig Jemison, retired director of the White Estate research center at Andrews University. Unfortunately, she was injured in a fall on the morning the Toledo event was to begin, and was unable to participate in our panel. Your suggestion for a second panel composed of persons from across the breadth of Adventism is excellent, and one that we’ll pursue.—Editors.

I was pleased to read the dialogue marking the anniversary of Sister White’s great controversy vision. All too often the church takes for granted the special truths entrusted to us, and it was refreshing to see our church leaders discussing our unique historical worldview.

As an Adventist young adult, this article was of particular interest to me. I’ve spent the past four years developing a musical stage play titled The Great Controversy, based upon the historical highlights from Ellen White’s great controversy vision. The play begins in heaven with the fall of Lucifer and ends with a glorious Second Coming finale.

All of our participants (a cast of more than 60) are Adventist young adults who have a love for music, drama, and God’s Word. The Great Controversy musical is one way that we can expand the dialogue about our unique beliefs both within the church and without. The Great Controversy will open in Los Angeles at the Wilshire Ebel Theater on August 16. A digital information can be accessed through the Plusline (1-800-SDA-PLUS).

I ask for your prayers as I prepare to undertake this large evangelistic music production.

—Bryan Musson, director
via e-mail

The Judas Virus
I found it very ironic that an Adventist author would complain that “determined independence is part of the insanity of the times” (see Lyndon K. McDowell’s “The Judas Virus,” May 28). Are not all Adventist heroes people who were determined and independent?

The article also missed the point somewhat about Judas. The tragedy was not that he betrayed Jesus, but that he refused to repent. All the disciples abandoned Jesus. Peter swore that he never even knew Jesus. But Peter repented, and Judas killed himself. What would we say about Judas today if he, like Peter, had repented, and the angel at the empty tomb had said, “Tell the disciples and Peter and Judas...”?

—Douglas Kingsfield
Bavaria, Germany

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“Behold, I come quickly . . .”

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

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You’re filling out a form—for a passport, a driver’s license, immigration. You come to the line marked “occupation.” And you write “student.”

I miss those days. There was something neat about them. Something exciting. “Student.” Not done yet. Still gathering information. Still acquiring knowledge. Potential still unknown.

“Student.” As I look back on it now, it signified a carefree time, a time when dreams are born, a time of experiment. And for those of us who were students in the sixties, it was an idealistic time—a time to hold the older generation up to scrutiny, a time to rail against the “military-industrial complex,” as we code-named the whole adult conspiracy in those heady days.

It was students who, by and large, undermined support for the Vietnam war in U.S. public opinion. It was in large part students who forced the 1989 political showdown in Tiananmen Square. And for those of us who were students in the sixties, it was an idealistic time—a time to hold the older generation up to scrutiny, a time to rail against the “military-industrial complex,” as we code-named the whole adult conspiracy in those heady days.

The trend continues today. Whether in Indonesia, in Korea, or on the streets of the U.S. Capitol.

Student days. Depending on your point of view, it’s an impetuous time, a reckless time, an intoxicating time, an exhilarating time. I miss those days.

Fast-forward now to the retirement years. Things are different here, vastly different. No more demonstrations in the streets—or hardly ever. No placard-waving, noisy crowds. No sit-ins. Yet I’ve noticed among some retirees a certain headstrong restlessness, a kind of throwback to student days.

Not in the same way, of course. But retirement is another time when courage seems to bubble up for some. Quiescent all their “active” lives, they suddenly discover a boldness they never knew they had. With perfect 20/20 hindsight, some come out with books and articles that startle and dumbfound their “brethren.” At last they can speak freely things they’ve been holding in for years—about Creation, the pre-Advent judgment, 1844, corporate repentance. And while their retirement checks from the traditional “storehouse” remain secure, a few proclaim new light regarding other storehouses more closely linked to their current extracurricular activities.

Student activism has its place. In not a few instances, it’s been the catalyst to overturn the status quo and lead to positive change. Likewise, some who’ve become (irritatingly) vocal in their retirement years might simply be emerging from a repressive climate—perceived or real—that clamps up people and makes them play it safe in their more vulnerable years.

But how deep is the courage displayed at these two periods of our lives? In the case of students, when you own nothing (or very little), you can afford to burn things up, break things down, upset the status quo. It’s not hard to be idealistic when you’ve written nothing yet (so to speak), done nothing major yet, and are not on the record for anything. And so far as the retirees I have in view are concerned, hindsight has the same idealizing effect. In fits of belated restiveness they attempt to start a revolution at twilight.

I was once a student, and wouldn’t have wanted anyone or anything to deprive me of the excitement of that intoxicating time. And as for retirement, I’m headed there. But I see these two periods as largely riskless.

In my thinking, authentic courage belongs to the middle years. That’s the period when the stakes are high, when we have a vested interest in the status quo— a mortgage to meet, a home to protect, children to educate, property to safeguard, a bank account to watch, a job to lose. These are realities that could make us cautious, cowardly, gutless—kowtowing to the powers that be, holding our peace when we ought to speak.

The middle years. To unfurl our true colors at this risky time, that’s courage—on a deeper level.

* Here I speak with particular reference to the Adventist Church.
Last month I reported on an interfaith effort to address poverty in the United States ("For the Least of These," June 25). A coalition of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders hammered out a Statement of Concern on the issue that offers suggestions on how local congregations, denominations, and governmental agencies can impact the war on poverty.

While following this story I was astonished to learn that the United States—with 13.7 percent (36 million) of its citizens living under the poverty level—leads the industrialized world with the highest proportion of its populace living in poverty.

Think about it. The world’s largest economic power has yet been unable, or unwilling, to address poverty within its borders. Perhaps America’s poverty rate is yet another example of Christ’s prophecy when He said, “For ye have the poor always with you” (Matt. 26:11).

I believe that poverty is more than just a fulfillment of Christ’s words. God uses the oppressed for His eternal purpose. From His birth, Christ identified with the poor. Jesus stripped Himself from the riches of heaven and sacrificed His divinity to live a life of poverty on earth. “He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9, NKJV).

By identifying with the poor, He brought a new dignity to the oppressed. Ellen G. White writes, “He [Jesus] chose poverty, and honored it by making it His lot. . . . By consecrating Himself to a life of poverty He redeemed poverty from its humiliation. He took His position with the poor that He might lift from poverty the stigma that the world had attached to it” (Welfare Ministry, p. 172).

More than just identifying with the poor, Christ also made the poor and oppressed a hallmark of His ministry. In announcing the purpose of His ministry (Luke 4:18, 19) Christ singled out the poor as recipients of the gospel. Though the gospel is meant for all, Christ wanted the poor and oppressed to know that the good news was for them.

When the followers of John the Baptist asked Jesus if He was truly the Messiah, Christ responded by alluding to His ministry to the poor as a sign of His Messiahship. He said, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matt. 11:4, 5, NKJV).

Probably the boldest expression of Christ’s identity with the oppressed is seen in Matthew 25, where Jesus measures the righteous by their concern for the downtrodden. He equated our concern for the poor with concern for Him. “For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me” (Matt. 25:35, 36).

What does this mean for prosperous Christians today? What can we who are washed in the affluence of Laodicea learn? Perhaps the most important lesson is that concern for the poor is at the very core of a vibrant Christian life. It doesn’t matter how much we verbally profess a love for God; if we are not demonstrating compassion for the needy, our Christianity becomes a shallow form of godliness.

Too often Adventists, myself included, rely on our church’s support networks to fulfill our obligation to the needy. In 1996 the Adventist Development and Relief Agency distributed more than $114 million in aid to 12.5 million beneficiaries. In North America 250 Adventist Community Services centers helped 1.3 million persons.

These efforts are commendable, and many church members support these efforts faithfully. However, no amount of money can adequately substitute for our personal interaction. Perhaps we can start by following Christ’s example in Luke 14:13 and invite to Sabbath dinner someone who cannot repay the favor. Periodically we can volunteer at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, or just encourage a young person. As we become active the Holy Spirit will provide opportunities to show compassion. By starting with small acts of love we will truly follow in Christ’s footsteps and fulfill His great commission.
Herald's Trumpet

Hi, kids! Herald the Review angel is back, and Herald's trumpet is once again hidden somewhere in this magazine.

In our last contest (in the June 18 Cutting Edge Edition) we received 41 entries. Our three winners were Becky Crider, from Alberton, Montana; Justin Woods, from Star, Idaho; and Jason Sears, from Bonner Springs, Kansas—all of whom received the book Robby.

Where was the trumpet? On page 23.

If you're a kid and you can find Herald's trumpet this time, send a postcard telling us where you found it to "Herald's Trumpet" at the Give & Take address below. The prize is a great junior devotional called Sunny Side Up, by Céleste Perrino Walker and Eric D. Stoffle. Have fun!

We need you
Send Give & Take submissions to . . . Give & Take, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; E-mail: 74532.2564@compuServe.com. Please include phone number. Submissions will not be returned.

Adventist Life

It was my privilege to sit beside a lively, friendly Samantha at a recent church potluck. When I asked her how old she was, she said, "Four. How old are you?"

When I told her that I was 75, she scrutinized my face several silent seconds, then asked, "Did you start from a baby?"

I've been laughing ever since.
— Martha McCormick, Vancouver, Washington

When my 3-year-old grandson, Beau, was naughty, an occasional small swat had to be administered to his backside. One night my daughter was reading him the Sabbath school lesson about the Flood. She ended by stating that the door to the ark closed and all the people who disobeyed died in the Flood.

Looking up at his mama with tears in his eyes, Ben said, "Wouldn't a swat have been enough?"
— Shirley Karl, Chico, California

Teaching Adventist Heritage

Several months ago we invited readers to share successful methods or advice for passing on the stories of God’s leading in this church.

Some of the responses follow. Thanks to all who contributed.

We teach Pathfinders about Adventist history by holding Adventist Heritage camporees. For the weekend we try to re-enact an old-time camp meeting. We set up a large meeting tent and sing old-time hymns, listen to old-time sermons, tell stories about the pioneers, encourage the clubs to cook adaptations of period recipes, and play games on Sunday that were played by the children of that time period. It allows the Pathfinders to experience "living" history.

We have also done an 1844 and 1888 reenactment.
— George Gomoll, area coordinator, Illinois Conference

When my wife was helping in earliteen Sabbath school, another member, Mrs. Marsh, wrote a "mystery guest" skit in which a panel of teens interviewed two adults to find out what roles they were playing (in this case, James and Ellen White).

— Jack Nall, Tullahoma, Tennessee

Having been associated with the development of Adventist Historic Properties for about 14 years, I would like to share some principles for teaching Adventist heritage.

1. Recognize that studying our Adventist heritage is a very important—and interesting—way to understand our church and people. It should not be put on the waiting list, especially at school.

2. Believe that teaching about our heritage is important to Adventists old and young—especially our children.

3. Remember that teaching Adventist heritage is a continuous process—and shouldn't be limited to a six-week course.

— Hilda M. Crandall, Battle Creek, Michigan

Adventist Review, July 23, 1998 (983) 7
The Challenges We Face

Eyes on the future; guided by the past

BY JERE D. PATZER

There’s no one like an expert to tell us what we already know.

Perhaps that’s why we pay attention to experts at all—because they reinforce ideas or perspectives that we grasp intuitively, helping us to find a framework or a language to express what was previously inexpressible.

The expert’s conclusions may be no more profound than those of laymen and laywomen, but the apparent objectivity of an outside perspective causes us to give them additional weight. After all, as the old saying has it, what is an expert but an average person 100 miles from home?

One expert has recently told the world several things about the Adventist Church that many of us have sensed but haven’t fully articulated. A new volume by American sociologist William S. Bainbridge prominently features our denomination.

Thankfully, he was very gracious to us. He affirms what is increasingly apparent to all thoughtful observers: Seventh-day Adventists “have taken their place among major denominations.” Then he adds this incisive assessment: “Like other conservative denominations, the SDA Church has struggled to preserve its traditional beliefs and practices while confronting the challenges of a rapidly changing world.”

There’s no one like an expert to tell us what we already know. The present moment is one of unprecedented challenge to the Adventist Church as we wrestle to be faithful to our heritage and to be faithful interpreters of the Word in contemporary culture. Dynamic change is taking place all around us and even within our movement, and it’s apparent that we must also develop new ways of thinking. Learning to become aware of change is of first importance for our movement, and responding to change in thoughtful, faithful ways is equally imperative. We no longer have the options of ignoring change or not responding to it. As theological counterfeits and aberrations multiply, the authority and integrity of God’s church are challenged as never before, leaving thousands of honest Adventists uncertain about our mission.

Words such as “vision,” “mission,” “focus,” and “commitment for the future” have become so familiar in contemporary business culture that many regard them as clichés. But as many observers have noted recently, it’s one thing to have
commitment and vision, and quite another to act upon those principles in a timely way. Responding to challenges with timeliness is what distinguishes winners from losers, and the remnant from the merely reactive. The famous hockey player Wayne Gretzky has reminded us of how vision and response must work together: “I don’t skate to where the puck is,” he says. “I skate to where it’s going to be.” You’ll also remember that in the biblical setting, Noah didn’t build his ark in the rain.

Most of us know the story of former Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca—a classic example of a modern-day visionary. He not only dreamed new things; he also acted on those dreams. Some years ago Iacocca asked one of his engineers, “Do you think a convertible will sell again?” The cautious engineer’s response was pure textbook: “It will take three years to design one.” “No,” Iacocca retorted, “saw off the top of a car and give me one this afternoon!” That afternoon as he drove around town, he counted the hands of people smiling and waving and pointing at his unorthodox car. Within a year Chrysler had a new convertible model for sale, and an even greater share of the market.

Facing the Future and Remembering the Past

Whether we like the idea or not, the road to the twenty-first century will come at us as quickly as the road that kids face in those video arcade car races. Like our kids, we need to look ahead through the windshield to avoid every possible obstacle and pothole.Unlike many of our kids, we must also keep one eye on the rearview mirror, mindful of from where we’ve come. It’s a poor driver or a poor denomination that has learned nothing from the road behind.

Seventh-day Adventists have a precious heritage of which we are rightfully proud. Let’s not be afraid of going back to the basics—or the fundamentals, as some of us still call them.

I’m reminded of the classic line from the famous Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi, as he stood before his team, hoping to motivate them by emphasizing the basics of the game. “Gentlemen,” he began, “this is a football.” He taught his players superlative execution in the context of basic fundamentals.

So let’s review the basics in the context of the challenges we face. And in so doing, I would like to suggest a very basic premise. It’s easily illustrated by an equilateral triangle.

It is simply this: I believe God raised up our prophetic church by
- inspiring its theology,
- which drives its mission,
- made possible by its organization.

A II three of these elements are inextricably linked. A II three are divinely ordained. Diminishing any part, undermining any part, will cause the whole to collapse—about as satisfying as trying to sit on a two-legged stool. God’s church is not comprehensible without the three-part balance of faithful theology, fervent mission, and efficient organization.

Let me defend that thesis.

Our Christ-centered Theology

Our Protestant heritage has given us an inspired view of inspiration and revelation. Despite the carping of some among us, this view is neither complex nor hard to understand.

To paraphrase the words of Vince Lombardi: “Ladies and gentlemen, this is a Bible.” This is God’s inspired, authoritative, life-giving Word. It doesn’t merely contain His word; it is His word, faithfully reflecting all that’s needful for our salvation. And no evaluation, critique, dissection, or adaptation growing from scientific or archaeological hypotheses—no matter how plausible, intellectually stimulating, or ego gratifying—can alter the authority or majesty of this Word.

If the apostle Paul were writing to us today rather than to Timothy, I believe he’d say “All Scripture is given by inspiration . . . and I still mean all” (see 2 Timothy 3:16).

The habit of taking the Word seriously, as it is, is of first importance to all who claim to be Bible believers. I resonate with the words of Billy Graham: “I have no problem with the fish swallowing Jonah,” he said. “I would have believed it if Jonah had swallowed the fish if the Bible said it.” With A. W. Tozer I can say, “Give me Genesis 1:1 [“In the beginning God”]: the rest of the Bible gives me no problem.”

I realize that there are those who quickly label such ideas as “fundamentalist.” Against a serious listening to the Word, they pose what they call the leading of the Holy Spirit, a leading that inevitably seems to lead toward an unrighteous and unbiblical freedom to go their own way.
ties. To treat Jesus seriously leads one to the inevitable conclusion that He is authoritative. For others, however, Jesus Christ is authoritative. The Bible is always authoritative. They are called fundamentalists. For others, the Bible: “For some Christians, the beliefs in lifestyles filled with equality, mutuality, compassion, commitment, responsibility, and love. There is plenty of room in those lifestyles for gay persons, even for gay marriages.”

Using God’s Special Gift

Being led by the Holy Spirit and adhering to the authority of Scripture are never mutually exclusive. When I need additional insights from the Holy Spirit for my life today, I know just where to find them.

Most of us have a shelf full of those red books that need to be dusted off and used again. Admittedly, in the past they have been abused and misused. But now they are unused, or as the author herself predicted, “made of none effect.”

Why should she be ignored? Why should we be ashamed? Certainly we all know of other denominations that have much less to offer through their prophetic leaders. Yet they aggressively promote them. Why would Adventists rather depend on superficial drivel from some second-rate psychologist when we have been blessed by God’s messenger? Ellen White is a credible force to be reckoned with. Even if you ignore her insights, you cannot ignore her role. She remains:

- The fourth most translated author in the history of literature;
- The most translated woman writer in the history of the world;
- The most translated American author, male or female.

Recently I spoke to a large group of health-care administrators and mentioned that I wasn’t embarrassed by the fact that while getting a doctorate in management, I got some of those old books off the shelf. During my coursework I read the Bible from cover to cover, the Conflict of the Ages Series, the nine-volume Testimonies, and the Ellen White biographies. I had to do that because of my personal need to go back to the basics, to immerse myself in the fundamentals of this movement of God. I wanted to undergird my modus operandi of management with the timeless truths of inspiration. Let others call them just nice devotional works. I can testify that back to the Bible and the works of Ellen White, we will find that they clearly identify our unique mission in the challenges we face.

Cafeteria Theology

Some among us today are advocating that we jettison the baggage of some of our unique historical doctrines. With Kenneth Samples, a leading critic of our faith, they conclude: “Some of the distinctive Adventist beliefs that were originated by its pioneers still plague the contemporary church.”

As some lead a frontal attack on the investigative judgment, the sanctuary, and even the Sabbath, others circulate the notion that Adventists ought to be free to pick and choose which doctrines are important—a kind of cafeteria theology, as it were. While individually defensible, our doctrines are unitedly inseparable. There is a golden thread that ties and brings harmony, symmetry, and beauty to our message. I appeal to you—don’t let it break.

One illustration may suffice. Following the lead of evolutionary geologists, some Adventists today deride belief in a universal flood as impossible. Nevertheless, I continue to believe in the flood described in Genesis 7.

First, the Bible says it happened. That ought to be enough for any of us. Second, if God intended us to believe that the Genesis 7 flood was only local, He would hardly have chosen a worldwide symbol—the rainbow—as His promise that such a flood would never happen again. A localized flood matched with a worldwide symbol of its nonreoccurrence would be absurd and would make God something less than honest.

Without a universal flood, the data of the geologic column would point to the likelihood of organisms dying before human beings walked the earth and before the sin recorded in Genesis 3 ever occurred. Death before human sin

Michael Morse, a United Church of Christ minister, recently wrote in the Washington Post about the implications of one’s view of the authority of the Bible: “For some Christians, the Bible is always authoritative. They are called fundamentalists. For others, however, Jesus Christ is authoritative. To treat the Bible literally leads to all kinds of serious distortions and cruelties. To treat Jesus seriously leads one to the inevitable conclusion that He believed in lifestyles filled with equality, mutuality, compassion, commitment, responsibility, and love. There is plenty of room in those lifestyles for gay persons, even for gay marriages.”

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Recently I spoke to a large group of health-care administrators and mentioned that I wasn’t embarrassed by the fact that while getting a doctorate in management, I got some of those old books off the shelf. During my coursework I read the Bible from cover to cover, the Conflict of the Ages Series, the nine-volume Testimonies, and the Ellen White biographies. I had to do that because of my personal need to go back to the basics, to immerse myself in the fundamentals of this movement of God. I wanted to undergird my modus operandi of management with the timeless truths of inspiration. Let others call them just nice devotional works. I can testify that back to the Bible and the works of Ellen White, we will find that they clearly identify our unique mission in the challenges we face.

Cafeteria Theology

Some among us today are advocating that we jettison the baggage of some of our unique historical doctrines. With Kenneth Samples, a leading critic of our faith, they conclude: “Some of the distinctive Adventist beliefs that were originated by its pioneers still plague the contemporary church.”

As some lead a frontal attack on the investigative judgment, the sanctuary, and even the Sabbath, others circulate the notion that Adventists ought to be free to pick and choose which doctrines are important—a kind of cafeteria theology, as it were. While individually defensible, our doctrines are unitedly inseparable. There is a golden thread that ties and brings harmony, symmetry, and beauty to our message. I appeal to you—don’t let it break.

One illustration may suffice. Following the lead of evolutionary geologists, some Adventists today deride belief in a universal flood as impossible. Nevertheless, I continue to believe in the flood described in Genesis 7.

First, the Bible says it happened. That ought to be enough for any of us. Second, if God intended us to believe that the Genesis 7 flood was only local, He would hardly have chosen a worldwide symbol—the rainbow—as His promise that such a flood would never happen again. A localized flood matched with a worldwide symbol of its nonreoccurrence would be absurd and would make God something less than honest.

Without a universal flood, the data of the geologic column would point to the likelihood of organisms dying before human beings walked the earth and before the sin recorded in Genesis 3 ever occurred. Death before human sin
defies the statement of God that linked these as cause and consequence, and
makes the plan of salvation advanced in Genesis 3:15 to deal with sin and death
superfluous and even meaningless.

Cafeteria theology leads others to challenge historic Adventist eschatol-
ogy, minimizing or eliminating such features as Sunday law legislation, the sig-
ificance of the Sabbath as an end-time test of loyalty to God, and the bibliically
prophesied role of the Papacy in orchestrating persecution of God’s remnant.

Ellen White clearly understood the dangers of this fallacy:
“Separate the Sabbath from the messages, and it loses its power; but when connected with the message of the third angel, a power attends it which convicts unbelievers and infer-
dels, and brings them out with strength to stand, to live, grow, and flourish in the Lord.”

The unique and complementary thrust of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14 is just as fundamental to the continuing health of this movement today as it was to our founding nearly 150 years ago. Ellen White said it then, and I believe she would say it today to those attempting to establish a confederation of nondenominational Sabbathkeeping churches in North America. I believe that’s what she would say to dissi-
dent pastors who are mistakenly concluding that they have the wisdom to decide which of the 27 Fundamental Beliefs are truly important.

As if we needed it, yet another expert reminds us that the vitality of Seventh-
day Adventism is directly tied to its distinctive understanding of Bible truth. Dean Kelley, a Methodist guest lecturer at Andrews University some years ago, made this insightful comment:
“The things that I have mentioned about tithing, the seventh-day Sabbath, foot washing, etc., are the things that make the Seventh-day Adventist Church unique, distinctive, and demanding. They give it its bite, its convincingness, its seriousness. Each church needs its own way of insisting that ‘you have got to live up to this to be one of us.’ If you strip the require-
ments all away, you can render the movement feeble, pallid, and ordinary overnight. So there’s the answer to your question. How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church stop growing? Be like the Methodists.”

I testify to a truth that needs no seconding by experts: the Lord gave this movement its doctrines—all of them—in a marvelously connected body. These doctrines have called out a people—a remnant—from among Protestant and evangelical faiths that are even now succumbing to the allure of nondistinctive, pluralistic theology. As those faiths slide into neoortho-
day Adventism.

Responding to challenges with timeliness is what distinguishes winners from losers, and the remnant from the merely reactive.

A House Built by God
Today the notion of “postdenomina-
tionalism” is quickly gaining respectability. At the October 4, 1997, Promise Keepers rally in Washington, D.C., nearly 1 million men cheered as Max Lucado proclaimed sectarianism a “sin” and called for a broad but non-
specific Christian consensus.

Others like Peter Wagner, the great church growth “guru,” hail postdenomi-
nationalism as the precursor to a new ecumenical unity that the movement emerging from Vatican II never accomplished. Taught by the culture that holding distinctive beliefs is an impediment to love, many of our young Adventists are echoing this ambiguity about the purpose of our denomina-
tion. It is no exaggeration to say that among Gen Xers anyway, we are experiencing an identity crisis. Two of our top conference youth directors were recently in my office characterizing some of the sharpest academy and college kids as good Christians, but showing little commitment to the specific calling of our Adventist message.

If, as some claim, we were once guilty of emphasizing Adventism at the expense of a love for Christ, we must now admit that we are in danger of raising a generation of Adventists who have minimal commitment to the God-given role of Adventism.

God raised up the Adventist Church to accomplish something no other denomination is prepared to do. When God gave our church its theology, He also gave us a practical organizational structure.

As a part of my dissertation, I studied the development of that structure. How our early church leaders hammer ed it out makes for some pretty fascinating reading. And the development of the organizational structure was inspired by the same Designer who inspired our doctrines.

I am painfully aware that we can become bureaucratic and institutional rather than personal and relational. Our world church can easily mimic the culture of other multinational corpora-
tions. With world-class educational institutions, publishing houses, and medical institutions, there is a very real danger that we begin drawing our self-image from our corporate identity rather than our mission. God-given and useful institutions become an end in
themselves rather than a means to an end.
Should our church adapt to make use of better business practices and current technology? Absolutely. We should streamline, eliminate duplication, and “right-size” our organization where ever possible.

But the words of Ellen White from 1893 are still valid: “Let none entertain the thought, however, that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study, and many prayers for wisdom that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord, I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled.”

Does our church organization have flaws today? Certainly. Since it has members like you and me, it naturally has weaknesses. But I feel sorry for those who spend their energies focusing on the sins of God’s people rather than on the Saviour of God’s people. I praise God for our “enfeebled and defective” church. And I believe it is still “the one object upon which God bestows... His supreme regard.”

Our Dynamic Mission

When God had given our church a clear system of theology and guidance in the erecting of the organizational structure, we were poised for our prophetic mission—a mission that is different from that of any other denomination. Evidence abounds that this church is alive, vibrant, and exploding in growth. Cynics will say that we’re not growing as fast as the other churches. And cynics will say that we’re not growing as fast as the church is alive, vibrant, and different from that of any other denomination.

Prophetic mission—a mission that is in the erecting of the organizational clear system of theology and guidance in the operation of an education system unmatched by any Protestant denomination. Hundreds of thousands of young Adventists and others are growing deep in the things of God at thousands of elementary and secondary schools and approximately 80 colleges and universities.

God’s last-day remnant church is truly standing in the gap today, proclaiming Christ as no other movement ever has. Despite challenges to its core theology, assaults upon its structure, and cynicism in some quarters about its divinely inspired mission, the Seventh-day Adventist Church gives evidence of a Spirit-led resilience when other faiths are crumbling and dying away.

Listen to this line from Ellen White that I came across just a few days ago: “The Lord has allowed matters in our day to come to a crisis, in the exaltation of error above truth, that He, the God of Israel, might work mightily for the greater elevation of His truth in proportion as error is exalted. With His eye upon the church, the Lord has again and again allowed matters to come to a crisis, that in their extremity His people should look alone for His help... God reserves His gracious interposition in their behalf till the time of their extremity.”

I praise God for His plan. He raised up our prophetic church by inspiring its theology, which drives its mission, made possible by its organization.

And incredibly, He has entrusted all that into feeble hands like yours and mine. Every day I am humbled by the realization that God has called me to be a member of His church—His Body—and to share in His mission to the world. Like me, I know you too are filled with astonishment at the goodness and graciousness of our God.

How did Ellen White put it?

“In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing,” she penned, “I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”

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2 Michael M. Morse, in Washington Post, quoted in First Things First, March 1997, p. 62.
4 Kenneth Richard Samples, foreword to The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists, p. xvi.
5 Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 337.
9 ———, Life Sketches, p. 196.

Jere Patzer is president of the North Pacific Union Conference.
In his famous History of Science (1929), Sir William Cecil Dampier wrote, “Science, we have now come to understand, cannot deal with ultimate reality; it can only draw a picture of nature as seen by the human mind.”

Shhh . . . this is the best kept secret of the twentieth century, in which science has become to us what Marduk was to the Babylonians and Lenin to the Communists—a god.

Today the ultimate arbiter of truth, the final determiner of knowledge, isn’t found in the Bible, but in the lab. “What science cannot tell us,” wrote Bertrand Russell, “mankind cannot know.” In other words, if it can’t be proved scientifically, if it isn’t within the realm of empirical inquiry, then it can’t be known; instead, it can be only believed (as one might believe that red is prettier than green). Because science, for example, asserts that the dead can’t be raised—then they can’t (though, actually, Tulane physicist Frank J. Tiler wrote a bizarre book, The Physics of Immortality, in which he tried to prove through physics alone that the dead will be resurrected).

The deification of science is a great myth of the modern era, akin to deification of the Caesars in an earlier one. Science has its role, no doubt, and works well within it. But just because chlorine’s good for killing germs, that doesn’t mean you want it for mouthwash. To modify and paraphrase Galileo: science might be able to tell us how the heavens go—but not how we go to heaven.

Indeed, the most important thing we need to know—salvation by faith in Christ—is beyond science. What can the lab teach us about atonement, sin, redemption, the Second Coming? After all, when science states that we’re here only because some conglomeration of inorganic elements turned by chance into a primitive life form that over billions of years evolved into everyone from Sophocles to Cal Ripken, the limits of science become painfully obvious. (A mother of my favorites is how the dinosaurs became extinct: supposedly, a giant comet hit the earth and covered it in smoke, killing all the vegetation and thus taking all the brontosauruses, pterodactyls, and so forth with them.)

Not only the limits but the dangers of science (when out of its element) are revealed in a new book, God, the Evidence, in which Patrick Glynn attempts to use near-death experiences as proof of immortal human souls. Glynn asserts that modern scientific research “proves” that the experiences of people “leaving” their bodies at “death” and talking to dead relatives are some sort of journey into the “next life.”

No wonder Ellen White spent so much time warning about spiritualism in the final deceptions that will sweep the world before the Second Coming. The conscious immortal soul now has the twentieth century’s imprimatur of science to back it up—and only fundamentalist Bible hicks argue against it.

The church isn’t immune either. Some Bible teachers claim to use the “scientific approach” to study Scripture, as if that method will reveal the true meaning of the text. A gain, what can science—which denies a literal six-day creation and a universal flood—tell us about Jesus giving sight to the man blind from birth, the feeding of the 5,000, the raising of Lazarus, or the healing of Jairus’ daughter? It can’t tell us anything, except that these events could not have happened. These teachers would be better off using the “voodoo approach” for interpreting the text (at least voodoo has room for faith).

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, in The Brothers Karamazov (1880), expressed concern, through the character Father Paisy, about the danger of attributing too much to science: “Remember,” the monk said, “that the science of this world, which has become great, has, especially in the last century, analyzed everything divine handed down to us in the holy books. A fter this cruel analysis the learned of this world have nothing left of all that was sacred of old. But they have analyzed only the parts and overlooked the whole, and indeed their blindness is marvellous. Yet the whole still stands steadfast before their eyes, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Good counsel all the way around.

Clifford Goldstein is editor of Liberty, a magazine of religious freedom.
By Ellen G. White

As all the different members of the human system unite to form the body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole. The advancement of the church is often retarded by the wrong course of its members. Unit ing with the church, although an important and necessary step, does not make one a Christian or insure salvation. We cannot secure a title to heaven by having our names enrolled upon the church books, while our hearts are not in union with Christ and His people. We should be His faithful representatives on earth, working in harmony with Him.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” We should keep in mind this holy relationship, and do nothing to bring dishonor upon our Father’s cause.

Our profession is an exalted one. As Christians, we profess to obey all of God’s commandments, and to look for the coming of our Redeemer. A most solemn message of warning has been intrusted to God's faithful few. We should show by our words and works that we recognize the great responsibility laid upon us. Our light should shine so clearly that others can see that we glorify the Father in our daily lives; that we are connected with Heaven, and are joint heirs with Jesus Christ; that when He shall appear in power and great glory, we may be like Him.

We should feel our individual responsibility as members of the visible church and workers in the vineyard of the Lord. We should not wait for our brethren, who are frail as ourselves, to help us along; for our precious Saviour has invited us to join ourselves to Him, and unite our weakness with His strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits. None of us can occupy a neutral position. We are active agents for Christ or for the enemy. We either gather with Jesus or scatter abroad. True conversion is a radical change. The very drift of the mind and bent of the heart are turned, and the life becomes new in Christ.

God is leading out a people to stand in perfect unity upon the platform of eternal truth. Christ gave Himself to the world “that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” This refining process is designed to purge the church from the spirit of discord and contention, and from all unrighteousness, that they may build up instead of tear down, and may concentrate their energies on the great work before them. God designs that His people should all be joined together in unity of faith. The prayer of Christ just before His crucifixion was that His disciples might be one, even as He was one with the Father, that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him. This most touching and wonderful prayer reaches down the ages, even to our day; for His words were, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” How earnestly should the professed followers of Christ seek to answer this prayer in their lives!

Many do not realize the sacredness of the church relation, and are loath to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church; and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice.

Those who hold responsible positions in the church may
have their faults in common with other people, and may err in their decisions; but, notwithstanding this, the church of Christ on earth has given them an authority that cannot be lightly esteemed. Christ, after His resurrection, delegated power to His church, saying, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." A relation to the church is not to be easily canceled; yet some professed followers of Christ will threaten to leave the church when their path is crossed, or their voice has not the controlling influence which they think it deserves. But in doing this they would themselves be the greatest sufferers; for in withdrawing beyond the pale of the church’s influence, they subject themselves to the full temptations of the world.

Every believer should be wholehearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest; and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it rather than to himself, it can do far better without him. It is in the power of all to do something for the cause of God. Some spend a large amount for needless luxuries and to gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church. They are willing to receive all the benefits of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills. Those who really feel a deep interest in the advancement of the cause will not hesitate to invest money in the work whenever and wherever it is needed. They should also feel it a solemn duty to illustrate in their characters the teachings of Christ, being at peace one with another, and moving in perfect harmony as an undivided whole. They should waive their individual opinion to the judgment of the church. Many live for themselves alone. They look upon their lives with great complacency, flattering themselves that they are blameless, when in fact they are doing nothing for God, and are living in direct opposition to His expressed word. The observance of external forms will never meet the great want of the human soul. A mere profession of Christ is not enough to prepare one to stand the test of the judgment. There should be a perfect trust in God, a childlike dependence upon His promises, and an utter consecration of self to His will.

If the world sees a perfect harmony existing in the church of God, it will be a powerful evidence to them in favor of the Christian religion. Dissensions, unhappy differences, and petty church-trials dishonor our Redeemer. All these may be avoided, if self is surrendered to God, and the followers of Jesus obey the voice of the church. Unbelief suggests that individual independence increases our importance; that it is weak to yield to the verdict of the church our own ideas of what is right and proper. But to cherish such feelings and views will only bring anarchy into the church and confusion to ourselves. Christ saw that unity and Christian fellowship were necessary to the cause of God; therefore He enjoins it upon His disciples. And the history of Christianity from that time until now proves conclusively that in union only there is strength. Let individual judgment submit to the authority of the church.

The apostles felt the necessity of strict unity, and they labored earnestly to this end. Paul exhorted his brethren in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

He also writes to his Philippian brethren: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

This article is reprinted from the January 25, 1887, issue of the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.
Austen faced into the sun and smiled, his long journey near its end.

He had devoted his time and energy to seeking the treasure, traveling many long miles away from home and loved ones, and all because of his friend Davis. “Let me tell you about the treasure in my homeland!” Davis had proclaimed. “When you find it, you must make good use of it and take care of it. It’s worth the effort, and there’s enough for everyone.”

So now Austen was just two days’ journey from the capital city. As day became evening, he turned onto a dirt driveway leading to one of the farmhouses scattered nearby. It wasn’t just shelter that he sought, but guidance as well. Unsure of the exact location of the treasure, or what actions might be necessary to gain his share, Austen hoped to find assistance from the locals.

The farmhouse family welcomed Austen, who didn’t wait long to state his business. “I’m looking for a treasure, which I understand is nearby,” he said.

“A treasure?” cried the littlest boy, with wide-open eyes. “Nearby?” asked the oldest daughter.

The father frowned at his boots. “Well, yeah,” he drawled, “there’s a treasure.”

“The father frowned at his boots. “Well, yeah,” he drawled, “there’s a treasure.”

“A treasure? I used to,” said the farmer, still looking at his boots. “I put it up in the attic for safekeepin’. That was a few years back, an’ not too long ago I went up to check on it.”

“Well?”

“It was gone.”

“Gone?” said Austen.

Early morning found Austen traveling on. In the afternoon, as he came near the city, he stopped at a grand estate. A maid ushered him into the parlor, where he met the woman who owned the estate. Again Austen came quickly to the point, asking about the treasure.

“A h, yes,” the businesswoman smiled and leaned back. “There is a treasure. When I was young and inexperienced, I acquired my share of that treasure. I energetically put it to work. A s time went on, however, I learned a great deal about business. Soon I realized that the treasure wouldn’t take me where I wanted to go. So I started doing things my way. A s you can see, I’ve been very successful.”

Thanking the woman politely, Austen bid her goodbye.

“That’s strange,” he said to himself as he walked on. “Davis spoke of a splendid treasure, yet the people who are so near it don’t seem to care.”

Austen entered the city that evening and spent the night in a little hotel. Dawn found him striding through town to the mansion of one of the city’s most respected men, Mr. Hastings Magnus.

Austen was ushered into Mr. Magnus’ receiving room. Although Mr. Magnus seemed inclined to small talk, he was cut short by his guest.

“I hear,” Austen began at once, “that in your land there is a great treasure, enough for every seeker. I’m a seeker. You’re a man of high standing, and your ancestors have lived here since the founding of the city. What can you tell me about the treasure?”

Mr. Magnus wrinkled his eyebrows irritably and looked at the ceiling. “Surely you came for some reason other than to
waste my precious time babbling about a mere trifle.”

“N o, no,” Austen protested. “I understand this treasure is quite splendid. Perhaps you don’t understand which one I’m talking about.”

“I don’t have time to discuss such matters,” Mr. Magnus said as he looked down his nose at Austen. “If you want to know about treasure, ask the banker or the geology professor. Or better yet,” he said with a smirk, “go find yourself a pirate.”

Austen went out of the mansion and sat on a bench in a bare little park. He was so lost in his gloomy thoughts that he hardly noticed the pigeons pecking at a sandwich near his feet. He had put all he had into his search for the treasure, but even in the very town where the treasure supposedly lay he could find nobody to direct him to it.

An old woman sat down at the other end of the bench. Her hair was windblown, and ancient shoes flapped under her small feet.

Austen looked at her several times. Finally he moved a little closer and said, “Good afternoon.” She looked up, surprised. He went on: “I’m, er, seeking a treasure.” A sudden sparkle shone in the woman’s eyes. With hope in his voice Austen asked, “Do you know about this treasure?”

“Indeed I do, sir. I have some of the treasure myself.”

“You do?”

“That I do. Me an’ my daughter live in an old apartment downtown. My husband lived his life spending all he earned an’ more, making enemies of people all over town. When he died, he left us nothing but a big debt and an army of angry folks to deal with.”

“How terrible!” Austen interrupted. The woman smiled and went on. “But we found the treasure! No pile of gold could buy it, ‘cause gold don’t heal hearts and turn hatred to love. Nope, the only thing that could do us any good was the treasure. It’s made us happy, and that’s one thing our enemies can’t take from us.”

Confused, Austen asked, “You have this treasure, yet you can hardly provide for yourself? Is there anything good about it?”

“Confused, Austen asked, “You have this treasure, yet you can hardly provide for yourself? What good is such a treasure?”

“The treasure brings peace, mister, peace an’ love. A n’ it brings forgiveness, joy, strength, an’ courage. I can see you’ve been seekin’ the treasure. You’re very near! Come along an’ I’ll show you the way.”

Austen followed. And he found the treasure. It wasn’t the hardworking farmer, the successful businesswoman, or the respected community leader who led him to it. It was a poor despised woman who loved the treasure enough to show Austen the way.

What will you say when others ask you about your treasure?

The Adventist Review is looking for writers who can communicate spiritual truths in fresh, creative parables and metaphors. Manuscripts of 700 words or less can be sent to: Parables of the Kingdom, c/o Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Manuscripts cannot be returned.

Lainey Cronk is an eleventh grader who wrote this when she and her family lived in Lawai, Hawaii. In addition to writing she enjoys music and art.
AWR Role Expands in the Americas

BY ANDREA STEELE, ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO SPOKESPERSON

The Adventist World Radio board of directors recently voted a new initiative to serve Central and South America. Working in conjunction with the Inter-American and South American divisions, AWR will launch a new Spanish network delivering programs to local church-operated AM and FM stations via satellite.

Maximum Coverage

More than 50 such stations already exist, and many more are under development. It is believed that “much of the population of the two divisions will eventually be covered by these local broadcast entities,” says Don Jacobsen, AWR president. "The greatest challenge to local stations is the production of sufficient quality programming," says Jacobsen. “At its broadcast center in Costa Rica, AWR will serve as the collecting point to help produce, gather, and assemble the very best in Spanish programming.”

The programs will then be sent to Nova Friburgo, Brazil, where they will be uplinked to a satellite and from there can be downlinked and broadcast from local radio stations throughout the Americas.

AWR will maintain its commitment to its prime shortwave target areas, principally Mexico and Cuba, by cooperating with shortwave partner stations serving those two countries from Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, said Jacobsen. AWR will also take a first step in extending its shortwave coverage of South America by providing a transmitter at the Voice of Hope station in Juliaca, Peru, near Lake Titicaca.

“We are very happy about this new assistance from AWR,” said Israel Leito, president of the Inter-American Division. “We should have taken this step long ago.”

NET ’98 Offers Continuing Education Options

BY BETTY COONEY, ASSOCIATE COORDINATOR AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR NET ’98

If your church is hosting a NET ’98 downlink site, church members and visitors attending the event may be able to take continuing education courses.

The following list of course descriptions provides several educational options for college, high school, and junior high students. They also provide another avenue to build interest in the global evangelistic series.

Andrews University. RELG 496 Special Projects in Religion: God, Humanity, Community, and the Nature of Belief. Offered in cooperation with Home Study International, this distance learning course is a special offering coordinated with the NET ’98 evangelistic meetings. Students are expected to attend and participate in the meetings. During the series, required reading will include Steps to Christ; the two latest books by NET ’98 speaker Dwight K. Nelson, Outrageous Grace and Built to Last; plus The Reign of God following the series.

There will also be written assignments that students may complete before or after NET ’98. For more information about the course call 1-800-782-4769.

Atlantic Union College. Public Evangelism Seminar: This three-credit course is designed to give students practical perspectives of the organization, methodology, and preaching of public evangelism in a contemporary framework. Call (978) 368-2490 for information.

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. CHMN 660 Field Ministries: This four-credit course is available to pastors currently enrolled in their M.Div. or D.Min. programs who are involved in conducting the NET ’98 series. For further information, call Russell Burrill, director of the North American Division Evangelism Institute at (616) 471-9220 or e-mail him at 104100.20@compuserve.com.
ADRA Assists Survivors in Second Afghanistan Earthquake

Following a 6.5 (Richter scale) earthquake in northern Afghanistan on May 30 the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is providing assistance to thousands of survivors. ADRA staff estimated 80,000 homeless people in the mountainous region and 5,000 fatalities. ADRA staff members in Tajikistan are purchasing and packaging emergency items for 5,000 refugee families, approximately 40,000 people. The items, including shoes, clothing, soap, detergent, and kitchen sets, will be packaged into one bag per family.

At least 100 villages, with populations ranging from 50 to 1,000, have been completely wiped out. In one incident 150 orphans who survived an earlier earthquake five months ago were housed in a school. During the second earthquake the school collapsed, killing all 150.

“We can’t count the number of dead; we can only count the number of villages that have been completely destroyed,” said Conrad Vine, ADRA/Tajikistan director, as he made final arrangements in Moscow for relief to the earthquake victims and their families.

“Earthquake survivors are dying every night from exposure in the freezing temperatures. No food can be grown in the high altitude. The refugees have lost everything, including their domestic animals,” Vine added.

Because of the frozen earth, the dead can’t be buried, so corpses are lined up on the ground. As they deteriorate, the water supply is becoming polluted. Typhoid and diphtheria are rampant, and now there is a measles epidemic. ADRA will join many relief agencies in using helicopters to deliver the aid materials quickly. Vine said it would take one week by road to reach the mountainous disaster area from Tajikistan, whereas a helicopter can provide the necessary items in one hour.

“The Afghanistan refugees know that the helicopters bring them food and life for one more day. The helicopters also transport the ill to emergency hospitals that have been established in tents,” said C. Lee Huff, Euro-Asia Division president.

Vine believes that ADRA is not just saving lives. “We’re bringing hope to people that somebody cares about them, that somebody loves them. A s long as a person has hope, they will live for tomorrow.”

Relief efforts are scheduled to last for three months. After completing a successful first phase, ADRA hopes to receive additional funds. Other international relief agencies are providing food.

Fourth Quarter Offering Supports Big City Evangelism

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the fourth quarter of 1998 will support evangelism in the major metropolitan areas of North America: New York, Toronto, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Teams from the Voice of Prophecy, It Is Written, Amazing Facts, and Breath of Life will work closely with local conferences and congregations in evangelizing these cities into the next century.

The first of several evangelistic series will be held September 10 through October 10, 1999, in New York City. An Amazing Facts satellite meeting featuring Doug Batchelor will be conducted, with downlinks to at least 200 churches and 800 homes.

Additionally, 50 outreach meetings will be conducted concurrently throughout the city, with speakers chosen by each of the supporting conferences. These include Greater New York, Northeastern, New Jersey, and Allegheny East conferences under the direction of the Atlantic and Columbia unions.

“New York City remains as one of the greatest challenges facing the North American Division,” says Alfred C. McClure, NAD president. “It is almost impossible to exaggerate anything you might wish to say about New York.”

New York is the largest city in the North American Division. Brooklyn alone is approximately the size of Chicago. Its surrounding metropolitan area is also the largest in the country. With more than twice the population of Los Angeles, no other city comes close to New York in size or influence.
Pray for the Peace of Belfast

BY BILL KNOTT, ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE ADVENTIST REVIEW

I thought a parade was supposed to be a happy event. The big brass band turning up the avenue, the bagpipe skirling in the park, the route awash in a sea of flags—these are the sights and sounds of parades the world over. We expect to laugh and smile, to wave and clap, to revel in the public joy of being agreed about something—a hero or a culture.

Parades in that tiny crosshairs of dissension known as Northern Ireland are anything but happy these days. The advent of the summer “marching season” means that grim-faced partisans of orange and green—of Protestant and Catholic faiths—don sashes and sally forth, intent on stirring up the passions of their political and theological opponents. It is not enough that they choose to strut their painful stuff among their own. They have, they claim, a fundamental human right to march through their opponents’ villages, waving what amount to battle flags beneath the noses of their foes.

Pity the new government that tries to put an end to this symbolic nonsense. Those who have a stake in strife will shower David Trimble’s fledgling administration with insults and bricks as it tries to find a third and middle way. The majorities of both Protestants and Catholics who voted for peace and cooperation barely two months ago may fade back into the woodwork, leaving the streets to the bullyboys.

A round the world people of faith must gather to pray for Northern Ireland—pray that the Lord of peace will find His way again into the hearts of those who so fiercely claim to serve Him. Only the rediscovery of the real Jesus will ever transform hatred into healing, and bring this dreadful marching to an end.

SDA Representative Participates in U.S. President’s Religious Freedom Initiative

Invited by United States president Bill Clinton to a meeting on religious persecution abroad, John Graz, director of the General Conference Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, met with a presidential advisory committee at the White House on June 18 and spoke with the president.

“The president spoke in very supportive terms about religious freedom,” says Graz, “reminding the audience that it is the core of the United States Constitution.” In his address Clinton also alluded to the fact that the U.S. was founded by those who were persecuted for their faith. He said that all religious persecution around the world concerns the U.S. government.

At the meeting President Clinton vowed to speak openly and directly about human rights and religious freedom during his trip to China. While in China Clinton made good on that pledge. At the White House meeting Clinton also indicated that China would be more respected and influential in the world if it implemented human rights. “The president also called on China to release prisoners of conscience,” reports Graz.

Adventists have been at the forefront of religious liberty promotion since their beginnings in the 1860s, and continue to work for human rights worldwide from a nonpolitical perspective.—Adventist News Network.

Quiet Hour Breaks New Ground in India

A six-member evangelistic team from the Quiet Hour conducted a first-of-its-kind outreach series in Jowai, Meghalaya, India. The meetings ended with 12 new believers joining the Adventist Church.

The event marked the first time that a North American-based evangelistic team conducted a series in the area. The series included a children’s program and health and family lectures before the main sermon. About 500 persons attended the nightly meetings.

“The seed of God’s Word was sown deep in the hearts of those who heard these messages,” says K. B. Kharbtes, Global Mission coordinator and ministerial secretary of the Khasi Jaintia Conference. “Please pray for the church that has been planted in Jowai so that it will continue to grow.”

Global Mission volunteers and conference personnel will be following up the interests in Jowai.

Peoria Church Experiences Amazing Growth

Planted in the waiting room of a dentist’s office, the Richland Bridge Seventh-day Adventist Fellowship
Majority of Americans Favor Greater Diversity

The majority of Americans are interested in greater diversity in society, but they value it by smaller margins where they worship, live, and work, a survey by the National Conference for Community and Justice reveals.

Those polled placed more importance on diversity in their police forces, schools, and government. The poll, released April 27, registered responses by 1,014 adults.

A sked about the importance of “more racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity,” 72 percent said it was very or somewhat important among law-enforcement officers; 68 percent said it was similarly important among local, state, or national government leaders; and 67 percent said it was important in public schools.

The poll found smaller majorities viewing diversity as important in other settings: 58 percent in their place of worship, and 56 percent in their neighborhood. Those who most favored increased diversity were African-Americans, women, people aged 25 to 34, and workers with household annual earnings of $20,000 to $39,000.

—Religion News Service.

Adventist writers differed about whether the outbreak of World War I at the end of July 1914 signaled the cataclysm through which human history would end.

A front-page article entitled “The European Conflict” in the August 13 edition of the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald provided a helpful survey of the political and historical circumstances that had led to war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia on July 25. Readers were given a sketch of the entangled alliances across Europe that brought England, France, and Russia to the aid of Serbia, while Germany, and soon, Turkey, sided with Austria-Hungary.

In company with many Adventist interpreters of prophecy, S. M. Butler saw events leading to an ultimate Russian victory over longtime rival Turkey. This assumed victory would, he wrote, fulfill the prophecy of Daniel 11:45 and usher in the second coming of Christ.

Editor Francis Wilcox offered a more cautious assessment on page 6: “This [the new war] is not, as has been suggested by some, the war of Armageddon. . . . What changes will take place on the map of Europe no human mind can forecast or predict.” Wilcox’s insight now looks prophetic: “There may be many changes before the end of human history.”

Church in Peoria, Illinois, started as a Bible study group in 1995. Within six months the group had grown to 30 members and organized as a company in the Illinois Conference.

The group then purchased a school with 30,000 square feet, 16 classrooms, a full gym, and seven acres of land. Today the congregation has 55 members and 80 persons in attendance. “What makes this unique is that no finances come from the conference,” says Dr. Rod Willey, the dentist who started the Bible study group. “Our goal is to establish three or four churches, with one pastor to supervise the churches.”

The Peoria church will be featured on the Adventist Communication Network broadcast First Wednesday, which airs at 7:30-8:30 p.m. (ET), August 5, on Galaxy 9, channel 2. For more information about ACN programs, call (800) ACN-1119.

News Notes

✔ NET ’98 Updates. If you have e-mail capability and would like to receive regular updates on NET ’98, e-mail majordomo@tagnet.org. In the text area of your message simply write "subscribe net updates."

✔ Home Study International has lowered curriculum prices for preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1-6. The average cost per student is $472. For more information call (800) 782-4769.

✔ Don Ammon, executive vice president of Adventist Health, based in Roseville, California, was recently appointed president of the West Coast health-care corporation.

Don Ammon

Frank Dupper

Juan Prestol

A mm on replaces Frank F. Dupper, who is retiring, effective December 31. Formerly Adventist Health System/West, Adventist Health has 85 hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and other health-care units.

✔ Juan Prestol, associate treasurer of the North American Division, was recently elected division treasurer. Prestol replaces George Crumley, who retires in September.

What’s Upcoming

Aug. 1 Global Mission Evangelism Day
Sept. 5 Lay Evangelism Day
Sept. 12 Adventist Review promotion
Sept. 19 Family Togetherness Day
As a counselor I meet many people struggling with problems.

One day while I was working with a young couple, something happened that resulted in a turning point for me. While helping perfect their communication skills, I heard him complain to her, “You always interfere in my business and want to tell me what to do.” He went on to explain situations in which he interpreted her actions as manipulating and controlling—buying him a new shirt for a church program that he did not want to attend, telling his mother they would take her out to eat when he did not have time that week, and giving him extra money left over from grocery shopping after she had charged more than $100 on one of their charge cards.

As he finished his tirade, she burst into tears and cried out in frustration, “But I was just trying to be nice.”

The minute I heard those words, I experienced a flashback and saw myself defending my actions to someone I loved by using the very same words. As an added touch, I had thrown in the comment “There are some nice people in this world, you know!”

Like the whirling lights on a police car, ideas began flashing in my brain. What about “being nice”? Isn’t that what God had in mind when He said “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32)?

Isn’t this what General Conference leaders had in mind when they designated the Seventh-day Adventist Church as “the caring church”?

But is it possible to be too nice? Could Seventh-day Adventist caring come across as manipulation? If we invite someone to dinner, then turn it into an indoctrinating Bible study, is that manipulative? If our gifts to loved ones are always religious books or tapes, are we demonstrating Christ’s love or our desire to control what they believe? If a person is experiencing a problem, are we ever ready to demonstrate our knowledge of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy by verbally bludgeoning them with verses and quotations? We are instructed to give the gospel to all the world, so doesn’t that mean that we should help God out with this stupendous task and do something?

After a lot of mistakes on my part, much prayer, and study, I finally discovered that I cannot do anything. The more I do, the more I try to play God. (Which reminds me of someone else who wanted to be God and said, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” [Isa. 14:14]).

I also discovered that to “be nice” personally required a lot of effort on my part. I was running here and there, transporting, cooking, cleaning, shopping, buying, and visiting people in one big whirlwind of activity. In fact, some days I would get so wrapped up in being nice to others that when I went home, I became an old grouch. I was so busy being nice that I didn’t have much energy or time left to have a real relationship with God or with anyone else. I was doing my own religious thing in my own arrogant way,

BY JEAN M. ANDERSON

A Corner on

You don’t have to try to be nice.
and I found out it wasn’t what God had in mind. I decided that being nice was not satisfying, and I wondered what it would be like to be me.

Being a high achiever, I find it difficult to let someone else do something nice for me. However, if someone did manage to do something nice for me, I would do something nicer. I wanted the corner on niceness. I realized that this attitude had to go, so I humbled myself before God and confessed that I was tired of being nice. I was sick of my life of niceness, and if He wanted it, He could have it—not just a portion, but all of it, every day, every hour, every minute, forever.

What a relief! I found that I don’t have to try to be nice. I can just be me. I just have to submit to Him constantly, turn over the problems, rejoice in the joys, and keep giving all that I am and all that I have back to Him. Now God can work in me to enhance the specialness of the personality He gave me. He can also work through me, for if I let Jesus control my life, instead of my “niceness” people will see His glory and His character. Instead of coming across to others as a manipulative, controlling, or pushy person, others may instead see Christ’s spontaneous, self-forgetful, genuine love and compassion for others. And isn’t this what the Christian life is all about—more of Him and less of self?

Jean M. Anderson owns and operates Cleburne Counseling Center in Cleburne, Texas.
The Bible Versions Debate

Why some Christians get upset about which version they hear in church

BY STEVEN THOMPSON

HAS THE AUTHENTIC WORD OF GOD reached us only in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible?

Recent publications have revived a nineteenth-century argument that the KJV is the only reliable Bible because it's based on manuscripts divinely protected from errors. This idea was urged on an earlier generation of Adventists by Benjamin G. Wilkinson, whose book Our Authorized Bible Vindicated appeared in 1930. Wilkinson drew upon the work of Englishman John W. Burgon (1813-1888), dean of Chichester Cathedral in England and staunch defender of the KJV against the Revised Version of 1881.

Burgon’s chief argument was that the King James translators relied on a group of Greek manuscripts that had been providentially preserved from scribal mistakes and intentional changes through the centuries. More recent translations are unacceptable, Burgon argued, because they are based on much later manuscripts not providentially protected from errors.

Let’s Take a Closer Look

How sound are these allegations? To answer, we must take a brief look at the history of the printed Greek New Testament.

Before the invention of movable type, all documents for mass distribution, including all ancient manuscripts of the Bible, went through the hands of scribal copyists. Valuable as it was, the scribal process fell short of perfect accuracy. Scribes sometimes introduced errors into a document, some of which were copied by subsequent scribes. But the introduction of printing in Europe in the first half of the fifteenth century made possible for the first time the accurate and rapid duplication of identical copies of these ancient documents, putting an end to the phenomenon of scribal error.

As the Reformation dawned, European Christians felt the need for a printed Greek New Testament. But which Greek manuscripts should they use? Clearly none of the originals of the Gospels or Epistles had survived, and no two of the existing copies contained identical wording.

In August 1516 the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus, while visiting the publisher Johann Froben in Basel, Switzerland, discussed the need for a Greek New Testament. Aware that the Roman Catholic Church was about to publish one in Spain, the two men agreed to rush through their own edition ahead of the competition and scoop the market. Erasmus agreed to find suitable manuscripts and edit them for publication, but in the limited time available was unable to find even a single manuscript containing the entire New Testament. So he relied on about five manuscripts in the Basel University library, none of which was older than about A.D. 1000. He then wrote in the margins and between the lines a number of corrections that he felt were necessary, and sent the manuscripts to the typesetter.

A nother problem Erasmus faced was that none of the manuscripts he found included the book of Revelation. To solve this, he borrowed a twelfth-century manuscript of the book from a friend, but the final page containing the closing six verses of the book was missing. To fill the gap, Erasmus translated the missing verses from his Latin Bible back into Greek, an approach that resulted in Greek expressions that
have never been found in any other Greek manuscript of Revelation, but that remain in some printed Greek New Testaments to this day.

Elsewhere in his borrowed Revelation manuscript the words of John had become so mixed up with those of a Greek language commentary that Erasmus had to rely again on his Latin Bible to disentangle the authentic Greek text.

The hasty production schedule on which he and his printer had embarked not only forced the use of a very limited number of manuscripts but also led to inadequate proofreading, leaving hundreds of typographical errors in the first edition.

In spite of these major weaknesses, the Erasmus Greek New Testament of 1516 was a publishing success, even though it had its critics. A second edition appeared three years later and was used by Luther for his German New Testament translation. Three more editions appeared by 1555, and Erasmus' work exerted a major influence on the printed form of the Greek New Testament for the next 400 years, resisting all efforts for improvement, even where obvious faults existed. In a dozen passages its readings are unsupported by any known Greek manuscript, yet it has attracted a loyal following bordering on reverence. Its obvious errors remain uncorrected in the most recent reprints, largely resulting from the argument that it is based on manuscripts that were providentially preserved from errors.

Enter a Powerful Slogan

In 1633, publishers of an edition of the Greek New Testament coined as part of their advertising blurb the expression “Textus Receptus,” meaning “the text which is now received by all.” The slogan stuck, and to this day the expression Textus Receptus refers to the Greek New Testament based on the work of Erasmus.

It is clear that the Textus Receptus does preserve a form of the New Testament found in the great majority of Greek manuscripts (about 95 percent of the total), most of them copied between about A.D. 750 and 1500.

And when a comparison of their wording is made, it becomes clear also that they have a high level of agreement with one another, a factor taken by the defenders of the Textus Receptus as a reassuring sign of its providential preservation. Textus receptus defenders also argue, on the basis of the principle of majority rule, that so many manuscripts agreeing among themselves cannot be wrong.

Scholars today, however, have access to a far larger number of older New Testament manuscripts than did Erasmus in his day—about 5,000, compared to Erasmus' five. And today's scholars have come to know much more about the history of these manuscripts and the relationships between them.

The Drive for New Greek Texts: How It Happened

As early as 1550 an edition of the Erasmus Greek text was published with notes in the margin of each page containing readings from 14 manuscripts that varied from the text of Erasmus. It was an early acknowledgment by scholars of the need to consider possible corrections to the text.

By about 1700, scholars had examined up to 100 Greek New Testament manuscripts, several of which considerably predated those used for the Textus Receptus—some dating back as early as about A.D. 350. In comparing them with the textus receptus, scholars cataloged some 30,000 variant readings.

The process of examining additional manuscripts continued for the next 275 years, with the discovery of new manuscripts multiplying the number of
Was the Text Corrupted?

BY STEVEN THOMPSON

Did the ancient scribes deliberately corrupt the message of the New Testament by altering texts to support particular doctrinal views? The answer is yes, they did. How extensive were such scribal changes? More extensive than formerly recognized, according to recent scholarly work.

And such changes are not limited just to certain manuscripts, such as those used by Westcott and Hort for their New Testament text. Rather they are to be found among all manuscripts, without regard to “family” affiliation. (See main article.)

This is not to say, however, that the New Testament is riddled with hundreds of doctrinally “doctored” passages and that its modern reader must despair over whether the basic message of the Word of God has become forever concealed behind the accumulated clutter of scribal changes. Fortunately, the evidence that enables scholars to discover these doctrinally motivated scribal changes also enables those same scholars to restore the correct form of the text.

Choosing a Translation

BY STEVEN THOMPSON

1. Become aware of the difference between formal (literal) translations and dynamic (written to express the meaning) translations.

2. Use at least two translations, one formal and one dynamic, for serious Bible study. Use a third to help clarify the range of possible meanings in passages where translators differ.

3. Two of your three “serious study” translations should be less than 50 years old. While there is nothing fundamentally unreliable about the KJV, it should be supplemented by modern translations, as many words have changed in meaning over the years.

4. Choose translations produced by translators from the most diverse range of Christian denominations possible to reduce the likelihood of distortion resulting from denominational bias. Recent translations that best meet this criterion are in what is known as the authorized English Bible tradition—they follow in the tradition of the KJV. These include the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version from the United States, and The New English Bible and The Revised English Bible from the United Kingdom.
and accuracy of the Textus Receptus. This was the basis for their argument that the KJV New Testament is superior to that of modern translations.

At least three other objections have been put forward:

1. Some claim that older manuscripts, such as Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, produced during the centuries following the death of the apostles were subject to doctrinal contamination under the impact of Greek philosophy.

But historians would point out that, far from there being a limited and well-defined period of time during which Greek philosophy impacted unfavorably on Christian doctrine, it is more correct to say that there was no time—from the beginning of Christianity until the invention of printing—when Greek philosophy was not exerting a major influence on the church.

2. The allegation of doctrinal or denominational bias as an influencing factor on the work of modern textual scholars is sometimes raised by defenders of the Textus Receptus. This argument does not stand up well to investigation because of the international and interdenominational backgrounds of those who practice textual criticism. There is no evidence of any particular denominational bias emerging from those projects. The burden of proof really rests on those making the allegation.

3. Finally, some charge that modern Greek New Testaments are the result of Roman Catholic plots to undermine Protestant translations. This is completely untrue. Greek New Testament texts produced by Catholics during this century tend to follow the Textus Receptus more closely than do those produced by Protestants, in complete contradiction to some unlearned assertions.

Judge for Yourself

This article is not meant to defend one Greek New Testament text over another. Rather it is an attempt to provide essential background information to enable readers to judge for themselves the validity and accuracy of conflicting claims and hypotheses. I want, in closing, to make two points:

1. The King James translators themselves, contrary to the impression given by that version’s staunch defenders, did not rely solely on the Textus Receptus. How do we know? It can be determined by checking the English of the KJV against the Textus Receptus. More interestingly, a diary of one of King James’s translators, the Rev. John Bois, of Cambridgeshire, was recovered and published about 25 years ago, revealing, in the words of one who was present and involved, the procedures used. It included extensive comparisons and selections from manuscripts known at the time.

2. Modern translators do not rely on the Westcott and Hort text. In fact, not a single well-known English New Testament produced this century is based on that text.

A ny argument that proposes only two Greek New Testament texts, one pure and the other corrupt, is a misleading oversimplification. While it is true that scholars for a time placed manuscripts into hypothetical “families” (as did Westcott and Hort), it is not true that there were only two and that modern scholars simply rejected one in favor of another. A more apt description of the process is that as scholars discovered increasingly earlier manuscripts, they developed a growing awareness of some inadequacies of the Textus Receptus and began, about 200 years ago, to subject it to a program of correction. The process continues to this day.

The KJV is a sound translation for those at home with its formal and archaic language. But we should ignore arguments to the effect that it is more reliable because its translators used providentially protected manuscripts. That theory is based on ignorance and is out of touch with the way God speaks in these critical times.

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1 Incidentally, two of these manuscripts with their “corrections” are still in the Basel University library.

2 In making this argument, however, they seem not to realize that the touted agreement is far from word-for-word.

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Steven Thompson is the dean of the Faculty of Theology at Avondale College in Cooranbong, Australia.
MOLINÉ, Olof Thorbert—b. Nov. 15, 1912, Shonts, Alberta, Canada; d. Mar. 11, 1998, Loma Linda, Calif. He served 32 years as a hospital administrator at Hinsdale, Illinois, and at Porter Memorial in Denver, Colorado. He is survived by his wife, Ruth Ziprick Moline; one son, Douglas; two daughters, Gail Hancock and Nancy Hansen; one sister, Margaret Young; and five grandchildren.

NEUFFER, Julia—b. Oct. 18, 1907; d. Mar. 15, 1998, Orlando, Fla. She served as an editor at the Review and Herald Publishing Association for 29 years. Expert in Greek and Hebrew, she was an assistant editor for the Bible Dictionary and The SDA Bible Commentary series.

PINE, Carl—b. Nov. 22, 1916, Farmerville, La.; d. Mar. 15, 1998, College Dale, Tenn. He pastored in Oklahoma, Missouri, Virginia, and Maryland. After retirement he served as a chaplain and assisted in churches in Tennessee. He is survived by his wife, Martha Clark Pine; three daughters, Jean, Jody Lay, and Carleen Adams; one brother; two sisters; and four grandchildren.


THOMPSON, Clara—b. June 15, 1918, Roscoe, Ill.; d. Feb. 12, 1998, Westminster, Calif. She served as an elementary teacher and site coordinator. After retirement she volunteered at Orangeewood Adventist Academy. She is survived by three sons, Blair, Jon, and Mark; two daughters, Caroline Addison and Melinda Todora; and 10 grandchildren.


WALDE, Elmer R.—d. Apr. 4, 1998, Sonora, Calif. He served as a church administrator in California and at the General Conference, was associate speaker for the Voice of Prophecy, pastored the Honolulu Central church, and worked in musical evangelism. He is survived by his wife, Esther; and three daughters, Donna, Carole, and Colleen.

WALLENKAMPF, Arnold V.—b. Jan. 1, 1913, Rattvik, Sweden; d. Mar. 6, 1998, Grand Terrace, Calif. During his 40 years of service he was a pastor, Bible teacher, seminary instructor, and staff member of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference. He also served in the Philippines, was a writer, and knew 10 languages. He is survived by his wife, Mae Sorenzen-Wallenkampf; three children, Karen, Mari, and Victor; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

WILLSEY, Alice R.—b. Oct. 8, 1940, Sacramento, Calif.; d. Feb. 7, 1998, Takoma Park, Md. For several years she served as director of student finance at Columbia Union College. She also served with her pastor-husband, Steve, for nine years in the Inter-American Division and for the past 24 years in Georgia, Iowa, the District of Columbia, and Maryland. She is survived by her husband, Steve; one son, Steven Mark; two daughters, Amy Willsey and Angela Paris; her parents, Mark and Lois Fowler; two sisters; and one grandchild.
Continuing the topic of medical ethics, launched last month, I turn again to the responses received from readers. While the following two letters represent specific viewpoints, it is my hope that they prompt all of us to examine our consciences and do what we believe to be right—in whatever setting we find ourselves.

Often witnessing becomes more difficult when we are in the midst of those who share our personal belief system. As a student attending public high school, I turned down offers to dances, Friday night pep rallies, and Sabbath afternoon ball games, explaining, “It’s against my religion.”

As a student on an Adventist college campus, however, I found myself digging deeper to explain to peers why I would or would not engage in particular activities. The surface explanations would no longer do. The theology of my religion was not unknown to those whose life choices differed from mine. In such a setting I learned to give an accounting not only for the facts of my faith, but for the ways in which I found them relevant to my own existence.

Such is also the case in the following letter: “The most challenging issue I had to face was that of Sabbath observance in our own Adventist hospitals. I offered to work every Sunday in order to have Sabbaths off. I asked for every other Sabbath off, or one out of three. . . . I discussed it with my supervisor, appealed to the director of nursing. . . . all with no appreciation of my convictions.

“I was a young mother at the time and needed to be with my husband and children on Sabbaths to help teach the children proper Sabbath observance. I felt strongly enough about Sabbath observance that I donated everything I earned on that day to the church so that I would not work for profit on the seventh day. I did not remain in the employ of an Adventist hospital for long. Once outside of the system, I had no further problems with Sabbath observance.”

Says another writer: “I am a Seventh-day Adventist nurse consultant with a federal government entity that is responsible for regulatory oversight of our nation’s different health-care facilities. Twelve years ago I left my position at a genuinely fine Seventh-day Adventist medical center that succumbed to the pressures of the local affluent community to give up Adventist leadership positions to non-Adventist staff without substantive efforts at active recruitment of Adventist professionals. This led to a subtle form of compromise with our well-tested and unique principles of Adventist Christian health care.

“One occasion I recall getting a patient ready for his open-heart bypass surgery. The preoperative checklist of ‘must-do’ items was to assure that the patient was receiving spiritual care. I asked the patient, with whom I had already established a bond of mutual respect, if he would like me to pray with him. During the course of our prayer, the head nurse, who liked to ridicule our Adventist beliefs as much as possible, blared out that we needed to stop this ‘praying nonsense’ and not take the spiritual component of the checklist so seriously.

“I left denominational employment shortly after, but on good terms. I loved to work there and never lost my love for our distinctly unique Adventist philosophy of health care. I have never lost my love for my church beliefs or my church. Since that time I served with the U.S. Navy. The Gulf war and Somalia were some of the best places I have ever had for sharing my faith.”

Each of us, wherever we are, whomever we work with, is called to answer to our personal convictions. Whatever they may be, God calls us to listen to His voice, follow His leading, and move forward with faith and optimism.

Sandra Doran, Ed.D., is an educational consultant specializing in learning disabilities and attentional issues.
stepped from the cozy lamp-lit room into darkness. The joy in the eyes of the older couple standing in the warm yellow square of the doorway warmed the chilly black night. I climbed into my car remembering their strong testimony of the Lord, started the engine, and smiled.

I had been a Christian for years, but only became active in a church in the early sixties as I served in the home-visiting program. My smile broadened, for each time I went to minister, I received far more than I gave.

A right turn put me on Peasley Canyon Road, near Auburn, Washington. The narrow winding highway led down from the heights to a connecting road north to Kent, where I lived. Though heavily used during the day, that night it lay deserted before me. The dark shape of an unlit car blocked my path. My headlights picked out a hulking figure beside it.

A dozen thoughts swept through my mind. Should I simply swing into the other lane and drive on? What if someone was hurt? What if I knew what might happen on this lonely stretch of road, or when someone else might come along? I sighed, braked, stopped, and got out. “What seems to be the trouble?” I asked as I walked toward the motionless car.

A man stumbled toward me, obviously having great difficulty keeping his balance. Alcohol fumes reached me before he did. In a drunken, disoriented manner he explained, “Ran out of gas. Can’t get to service station.”

I told him I’d push him. We managed to get his car to the station at the bottom of the hill, and he reached for his wallet.

I shook my head. “Keep your money. I don’t want it.” He scratched his head. “Wish I could do something to repay you.”

“You can,” I told him. “The next time you see someone in trouble, help them.” I drove away, his mumbled thanks following me.

Years passed. As a Boeing employee I often traveled to other states to give training. One flight had a brief layover in Atlanta, which was just long enough to call a sister I hadn’t seen in some years. I fumbled in my pocket for a quarter, but my hand came out empty. How ironic. A median with $100 traveler’s checks for my expenses, I didn’t have money for a local telephone call.

A quick glance at my watch showed my precious layover time dwindling. I hurried to a nearby business, hoping to cash a traveler’s check. They refused. I went to another. And another. No one would cash my traveler’s check, despite explanations of my dilemma.

“Excuse me,” I turned toward the sound of the soft voice. A well-dressed young African-American woman stood just behind me.

Surprised, I asked, “Are you speaking to me, ma’am?”

“Yes. You said you wanted to call your sister?”

I nodded. “I haven’t seen her in years, and have only a few minutes until departure time. And no one will cash a traveler’s check.”

She fished in her purse and held out a quarter. “Here. Call your sister.”

I stared at her. A wave of gratitude swept through me. “I wish I could do something to repay you.” Strange. The words sounded familiar.

She pressed the quarter into my hand and said, “You can. The next time you see someone in trouble, help them.” She smiled and walked away.

I had been paid. In full.

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Saved by a Parrot!

PASTOR B. PILMOOR

This story comes to us from England. It actually appeared in the newspaper there. You will have a hard time believing it!

A man named Mr. Stone drove his van to a place where he had a garden on the outskirts of town. Unfortunately, he forgot to lock his hand brake (that extra brake used when cars are parked). He jumped out of his van and began to walk toward the garden gate. At that instant the van rolled forward and knocked Mr. Stone to the ground and trapped him there. He was unable to escape, so he began to shout, “Help! Help!” as loud as he could. But no one was near to hear his call. He was also in great pain, as the front wheel was on his leg. He continued shouting, “Help! Help!” But in this isolated place, who would hear him? The sun was going down. It would soon be dark. Will I have to stay here all night like this? He thought to himself.

However, there was a mobile home park not far away. Inside one of the mobile homes was a beautiful scarlet-and-green macaw parrot. It heard the cry “Help! Help!” and what do you think happened? Sonny the macaw loudly began to screech, “Help! Help!”

Mr. Burstow, a worker in the park, heard the parrot’s screeching and hurried to find the trouble. Sonny stopped screeching, and in the distance Mr. Burstow heard the faint echo of the man crying for help. He ran and found the man and pulled the van off Mr. Stone’s leg. Then Mr. Burstow told him about Sonny.

Can you imagine being saved by a parrot? Remember, when we get into trouble, God has a thousand ways to save us, and this is just one unbelievable way!