The Sabbath Comes to Sánchez, Arizona

Let’s Do It—The $25 Club
Diana and Teresa
Ruth

As another Ruth, who recently lost a good husband of 57 years, I prayed before opening this Review. As I read Denise Dick Herr’s “A Woman Named Ruth” (July NAD Edition), I was in memory taken back to a Ruth- and Abraham-like experience in coming into this church—and how precious was the blessing God gave me.

Then Lennard A. Jorgensen’s “Present Hope” reminded me that the Lord is still with me “presently” and still has a play for my life in carrying on this beautiful message. Thank you for your good work—it’s working.

—Ruth Ennis
Macon, Georgia

I was quite dismayed to see that your publication insists on eschewing the racial identity of biblical notables. The picture of Ruth on the cover is identical to the picture of a Caucasian woman holding a cellular phone in “Present Hope.”

Then Lennard A. Jorgensen’s “Present Hope” reminded me that the Lord is still with me “presently” and still has a play for my life in carrying on this beautiful message. Thank you for your good work—it’s working.

—Larry Wright
Seattle, Washington

The use of the same model was intentional—a way of linking the two articles. But your point about Ruth’s racial identity is well taken. Our apologies.—Editors.

NET ’96: A Truer Picture

I was pleased with Monte Sahlin’s report on NET ’96 (“Lasting Impact,” July NAD Edition), but I offer a suggestion for a more meaningful comparison of percentages. In the table showing the percent of new members by age groups, the percent of the population has a different base. Although the table is accurate, it does not give a true comparison. Since children under age 10 are not included in the membership percentages, they should not be used in the calculations of the population. If we used the percentage of the population as if there were no one under age 10, the comparison would be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-18</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-30</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-66</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-up</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I believe this gives a truer picture of the age distribution.

—Roger Deapen
Harrah, Oklahoma

Courage—and Judgment

I appreciated William Johnsson’s tribute (“The Courage of the Remnant,” July NAD Edition) to Bent Nielsen, killed in Burundi—though I was left with questions about his family. Nielsen’s courage was, indeed, courageous.

But let me take issue with Sir Winston Churchill’s positioning of courage as “the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all the others.”

There is, in fact, another human quality that outranks it: judgment. Courage without judgment may be rank bullheadedness. As such, it impels senseless decisions, such as not to run away and fight again another day.

To use one of the editor’s examples: “The mother who stays by her children through fevers, fights, and frustrations instead of walking away also displays courage.” Yes, but it is a courage impelled by love. In the case of a highly contagious disease, loving judgment may impel the mother to have a child placed in an isolation ward, an act that may spare the lives of the rest of her children. (And yes, she will be outside praying, peeking in, and saying, “Courage, child, courage! Fight!”)

I recall a church employee’s decision to drop his opposition to an act he considered contrary to Ellen White’s counsel. “If I continue,” he said, “I’ll be replaced, and it will be years before the policy is changed. If I stay by, I’ll be able to work quietly for a change.” Some would label his decision craven. Instead, it was an act of courage subordinate to judgment. Later he did, indeed, succeed.
Ah, yes, that oft-quoted statement by Ellen White: “The greatest want of the world is…” Take another look. Only two of the five qualities involved could be placed under courage. The other three involve integrity.

—Roland R. Hegstad
Silver Spring, Maryland

Not Always Safe
I appreciated Clarence E. Hodges’ “The Witness Protection Program” (July NAD Edition), in which he drew a parallel between the protection given by U.S. marshals for endangered witnesses and Christians whose lives have been jeopardized for their faith.

While it is true that God has, indeed, given His witnesses protection and safety on many occasions, it is important to recognize the balancing truth that at times, in His omnipotent wisdom, no safety is given. The Acts 12 saving of Peter, noted in the article, is offset in the same chapter by the slaying of James. The stories of Daniel, Esther, and Elijah, also highlighted in the article, are counterbalanced by the accounts of John the Baptist, Isaiah, and Stephen. (The preceding editorial, “The Courage of the Remnant,” in that issue is also an example.)

While Hodges no doubt acknowledges this balance, he notes that of the 10,000 subscribers to the protection offered by U.S. marshals, “not one person has been harmed who remained in the program and followed its rules,” leading one to infer that God’s protection is likewise 100 percent. If that be true, in what way did John the Baptist, James, Stephen, or Bent Nielsen leave the program or fail to follow its rules? I’m sure that the church that prayed for Peter’s release also prayed for the release of James.

The need for this balance strikes close to home. When my father battled cancer, a good Adventist pastor told my mother, “He will be healed if you just have faith.” Unfortunately, guilt is the residue when the answer is not healing. A Christian, then, we rejoice in the days of sunshine and trust in the days of shadow.

—John Anderson
San Marcos, California

Tithe Distribution (cont.)
President Robert Folkenberg’s article (“Your Tithe Dollar,” June NAD Edition) on the use of the tithe dollar was welcome information to many members not cognizant of the figures he cited. Unfortunately, the article failed to address or allay widespread concern as to why we need all the present layers of bureaucracy. The present organizational structure was put in place in 1901. Surely nearly 100 years of progress in transportation and communication would suggest, if not dictate, a change in the way we structure our church operations.

As a direct result of modern technology, many large corporations with a worldwide presence are downsizing while showing increased productivity. Could we learn some lessons here?

My conversations with loyal and dedicated laymen and pastors who do any significant thinking on the subject indicate their belief that we are perpetuating an anachronistic system. They feel that nearly all the departments at the union level—and some at the conference level—could be eliminated without any consequential loss to the church and its mission.

Thirty years ago a very comprehensive study involving church administrators at every level recommended the combining and/or elimination of dozens of conferences and most unions in North America. Only two of our smaller and financially weaker unions ever implemented those recommendations. Based on Elder Folkenberg’s figures, even if the church saved one half of the operational costs of the unions alone, the total saving would be in the neighborhood of $12 million annually.

Could the increasing trend toward congregationalism be the result of our failure to address these overdue changes?

—F. Wayne Foster
Sarasota, Florida
"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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For several months I have been impressed that the Adventist Review has a special role to play in NET ’98—one that goes beyond sharing information about the event, and that involves you, dear reader.

NET ’98 will be far and away the biggest evangelistic thrust that the Adventist Church has ever attempted. The everlasting gospel will speed via satellite from the campus of Andrews University across the Americas, North and South; to Europe and the former Soviet Union; to India and Africa; and down to Austrailia, New Zealand, and the countries of the Pacific Rim.

Let’s pray as we’ve never prayed before for God’s guidance and empowering of this extraordinary outreach. Let’s pray daily that the Lord will keep His hand over Pastor Dwight Nelson, the one selected to preach every night, that He will keep him safe and well, give him physical strength and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Only as the Holy Spirit hovers over the endeavor can the barriers of language, culture, and tradition be breached.

I know Pastor Dwight well—he was one of my students when I taught at the SDA Theological Seminary. I want to uphold him in earnest, ongoing prayer, want to lighten his load in any way I can.

And I want the Adventist Review to link hands with his to help make NET ’98 all that the Lord intends for it.

The Adventist Review has a particular mission in the life of the Adventist Church. From the very beginning the Review has been about building up believers. With the “new” Review we spell out this mission in specific terms: we strive to make every issue strong in spiritual food, in the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in diversity, and in reader interaction.

Adventists spend a lot of money on evangelism—bringing people into the church. Often we don’t do much after they become members; some flounder, and many drift away.

I am hoping and praying for an abundant harvest of souls from NET ’98—are you? But what will happen afterward? When the big meetings and powerful preaching and wonderful music are all over and the screen is dark, what then?

What if? What if every family that joins the church in North America received the Adventist Review every week (remember, the Review is a weekly) for a year? What if they had a steady diet of spiritual nurture, grounding them in the message and mission of our movement? What if they could read the stories of the God who is at work in our world today?

What a difference in the lives of these new brothers and sisters. What a difference in the number who stay instead of dropping out. So let’s do it. Let’s do the ”$25 Club” again. For every gift of $25 you, dear reader, send in, we will send the Review weekly to the home of a new family from NET ’98!

My best friend Noelene, who is also my wife, is right in this with me. Together we are giving the first check, for $1,000. That will send the weekly Review to 40 new believers.

I challenge 100 others to match this check. And I invite every reader to join us in this ministry. Simply make out a check to the Adventist Review, mark it “$25 Club,” and mail it to us at: 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600. You will receive a receipt from the General Conference Treasury if your gift is $100 or more; all gifts are tax-deductible for U.S. income tax purposes. We’ll print a list of all donors in the Adventist Review. Let us know if you prefer to have your name left out.

Remember, every $25 sends the Review to another new believer. If possible, make out your check in multiples of 25: 50, 75, 100, 1,000, 10,000, and so on.

I believe the Lord will do great things through NET ’98. I believe that the glory days are just ahead. I believe that we—yes, we—will see the everlasting gospel going to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (Rev. 14:6, 7) in a manner we have not dreamed of.

I believe the Lord wants to see an abundant harvest from NET ’98. But I believe that even more He longs to see these souls safe in the kingdom, eternally with Him. That’s why I say: Let’s do it—the $25 Club!
Why would a family sell the homestead they built from nothing and move to a new location? Why would a missionary father give up the best job he ever had and move back home with no solid job offer? The answer to both questions: To give their children the opportunity to benefit from an Adventist education.

Yes, Seventh-day Adventists are not only people of the Bible, but also people of education. As a fourth-generation Adventist, I want to tell my family’s stories:

My great-grandparents, the Lawsons, moved from their Columbia River homestead to Meadow Glade in the early 1900s so my grandfather, Walter, could attend an Adventist academy. Before long my great-grandmother, Knokey moved to the same little town so my grandmother, Beulah, could attend academy.

Upon graduation, my future grandparents did what many Adventists are still encouraged to do—further their education. Off to Walla Walla College went my grandfather, where his parents financed his education in part by the sale of land (an acre per year). To St. Helena, California, went my grandmother to get her nursing education, hoping she would also marry the man of her dreams. An Adventist education—and the sacrifice of their parents—brought them together.

The story is repeated in my own immediate family. My father, Robert, then treasurer of the booming South American Division, in the most professionally fulfilling job of his life, gave it all up to make sure that my teenage brother and I could attend an Adventist academy in our home country. Dad went without a job for several months. I realize now what a sacrifice he and my mother made for us.

Ask any group of Adventists how many are the first in their family to graduate either from college or from graduate school, and a large majority will raise their hands. From the time of birth almost every Adventist child is expected to go as far as God leads educationally. For some, full-time service comes upon graduation from secondary school; for others, it extends through postgraduate work.

The Valuegenesis study of youth and education showed that 66 percent of all graduates of Adventist academies go on to college, compared to 30 percent of public school students and 51 percent of those who attend Roman Catholic schools.

For a denomination our size we are one of the most educated in the world. Still, we face the challenge of making certain that our local churches are places where Christian warmth and care abound. Roger Dudley’s latest report, in which he followed a group of young people for 10 years, reveals that the atmosphere of the local congregation represents our greatest factor in keeping our graduates in the church—far more than doctrinal or lifestyle issues.

Is Adventist education worth the equivalent of a $5.4 billion endowment? (See page 31 for an exciting description about the funding of Adventist education.) I’m a church educational administrator, but I’m also a parent with children in an Adventist academy and college. What do I expect?

I want the young people who attend Adventist schools to benefit from our holistic emphasis upon the academic, physical, spiritual, and social aspects of personal development. I want my children’s relationships with dedicated Christian educators to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I want them to grow in faith maturity and to demonstrate denominational loyalty by greater participation in their local churches. I want outreach and service opportunities within Adventist education to make spirituality practical. I want academic excellence to be informed by a Christian worldview. I want Adventist young people—my own and others—to “think Christianly” and thus influence their workplaces, homes, and communities.

A quality Christian education is costly. But the equivalent of a $5.4 billion endowment is a small price to pay when we’re talking about eternity.

Richard Osborn is vice president for education in the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
GIVE & TAKE

HERALD’S TRUMPET

Some of our readers are taking the Herald’s Trumpet contest (held every five issues) rather seriously. “Attention Give & Take department,” faxed Jim Egly, of Yacolt, Washington, in late May. “Herald’s trumpet is on page 6... Can you please see that Herald gets it back?”

Since Jim’s entry in our “adults welcome” May 14 contest, we’ve had another “kids only” contest—in the June 18 Cutting Edge Edition. Our three winners were: Sasha Brauer, from Edinburg, Virginia; Christine Barnhurst, from Berrien Springs, Michigan; and Marguita Richardson, from Newport News, Virginia. Sasha, Christine, and Marguita received Sunny Side Up, a junior devotional by Céleste Perrino Walker and Eric D. Stoffle.

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 fun book called Lisa and the Drainpipe Prayer, by Mary Louise DeMott. Have fun!

CHURCH SIGN CONTEST

Back in April we invited readers to submit a photo of a compelling message on an Adventist church sign. Here are some of them:

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

The Fallbrook, California, church; submitted by Linda and Mindy Zinke

The Fairfax, Virginia, church; submitted by Leon Peek

The Sunnyside, Washington, church; submitted by Cherelyn Strickland

The Hillsboro, Ohio, church; submitted by Philip A. Lewis

The Bethel church, Pomona, California; submitted by the Bethel church

The Dexterville church, Fulton, New York; submitted by Nancy Whitens.

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.
How I see them

BY CALEB ROSADO

Editor’s note: Princess Diana was killed in a tragic car accident in Paris the morning of August 31, 1997. Mother Teresa died in her bed five days later. On the anniversary of their deaths, the following piece attempts an assessment of the contribution of these two remarkable women.

Within a week of each other the two most loved and admired women in the world died. One was a worldly princess; the other a spiritual one. One was young and beautiful; the other elderly and plain. One was royalty who left behind a $35 million fortune in her will; the other a simply dressed servant of humanity who left behind two saris and a pair of sandals. One lived among the rich and famous of the world; the other knew a life of abject poverty among the poorest of the poor—the unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for, the untouchables of the earth. One was tall and stately; the other was short and stooped. “It may have been one of God’s subtle jokes,” says Peggy Noonan, “that His exalted child spent her life looking up to everyone else.”

The contrasts continue. One took up the needs of the poor and the disenfranchised as a cause; the other shared the needs of the same as a calling. Her life of ministry to the poor and dying ended for one at age 36; with the other, 36 was the age she began her life of ministry to the poor and dying. One was taken abruptly from us as her star was rising; the other came to her end after a long and meaningful life of dedicated service.

In some respects, however, they were the same. Both
were born in privilege, with wealthy upbringings. And each became so famous as to be recognized the world over by their first names: Diana and Teresa (or Diana, Princess of Wales, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta). Both showed sensitivity for the needs of others from early childhood, embodying compassion in their own unique way and consistent with their character. Both renowned, their respective countries honored each with a state funeral. And—almost as if symbolic—both were buried on God’s day of rest, the Sabbath.

Star Versus Saint
The contrasts and similarities between the two surfaced also in the media coverage of their deaths. For two weeks after Diana’s fatal accident the leading story on television networks around the world was about the tragedy. By comparison, the coverage of Mother Teresa seemed more like an appendage or a footnote. For weeks after her death Diana’s picture continued to grace the cover of just about every major news and entertainment magazine in the U.S. Mother Teresa, however—so far as I know—commanded the cover of just one major U.S. news magazine, Newsweek. In one Newsweek issue the report on Diana took up more than 40 pages, while that on Mother Teresa took up only four.²

Why the Disparity?
For one thing, Diana was primarily a creation of the media. Her connection to royalty, her beauty, her youthfulness, and her contagious personality were all excellent material to feed the media’s voracious appetite for ratings. She was a marketable commodity.
On the other hand, because of her values, her lifestyle, her age, her lack of physical beauty, the region of the world where she lived, and the people she served and with whom she identified, Mother Teresa’s appeal to the contemporary media was far less compelling—a reaction represented perhaps by a female caller on an American radio talk show. “We wanted to be like Diana,” she said. “Not many of us wanted to be like Mother Teresa.”

You see, Diana represents a life of both/and—a life of having your cake and eating it too. By contrast, Mother Teresa’s life symbolized one of an either/or—as in “No one can serve two masters.” Thus Diana could choose her causes at will. Just before she was killed, for example, she went from some 100 causes that she supported down to just six. Mother Teresa, on the other hand, had just one cause: being faithful to Jesus Christ in the person of the poorest of the poor, the dying, the diseased, the unwanted, the disprivileged.

This all brings to the fore an obvious question: Whose legacy will better stand the test of time? My personal belief is that in the end, that of Mother Teresa will be the more lasting, the more significant, the more far-reaching in its scope and impact. For while Diana’s life and death did touch the masses, the impact of her legacy, in the final analysis, could be merely superficial and transitory. One headline in an Indian weekly captured, I think, the essence of the situation: “Mother Teresa was a landmark. Diana, a concerned tourist.”

Mother Teresa’s life truly pointed to that of Jesus Christ, the ultimate landmark. In the words of one writer, she “saw a form of Jesus in each human being, and administered to each person in this light. She did not see a human being who should be judgmentally shunned because they are diseased, poor, gay, of a different race or religion, or even a murderer—she saw a manifestation of Jesus in need of our love and assistance. If we learn nothing else from this saintly woman, I hope we learn and uphold this vision.” In Mother Teresa our world has witnessed a remarkable manifestation of the person of Christ.

“I see God in every human being,” Mother Teresa once declared. “When I wash the leper’s wounds I feel I am nursing the Lord Himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?” How many of us could say the same? How would the world be different if in every needy person we encountered we sensed the person of Jesus Christ?

With which of the two women do we

“The Christlike Life: Excerpts From Mother Teresa”

BY CALEB ROSADO

How can we live the Christ-life? Consider the following sayings from Mother Teresa:*

- “The dying, the cripple, the mental, the unwanted, the unloved—they are Jesus in disguise.”
- “It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.”
- “There is a terrible hunger for love. We all experience that in our lives—the pain, the loneliness. We must have the courage to recognize it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them.”
- “Calcutta can be found all over the world if you have eyes to see.”
- “In the developed countries there is a poverty of intimacy, a poverty of spirit, of loneliness, of lack of love. There is no greater sickness in the world today than that one.”
- “You will be surprised to know that in the poorest neighborhoods in many of the cities where we live and work, when we get close to the people who live in shacks, the first thing they ask for is not bread or clothes, even though often they are dying of hunger and are naked. They ask us to teach the Word of God. People are hungry for God. They long to hear His Word.”

* http://www.lollie.com/teresadiana2.html
identify? In whose presence would we have felt more comfortable? Whom would we want to be like? My sense is that, like the woman caller on that radio talk show, we'd prefer to be more like Diana. Diana we admire close-up. The media cannot seem to give us enough of her. Mother Teresa we admire from an emotional distance. Her immediate presence pricks our conscience and conduct too painfully.

And it's all fairly understandable. Diana was more like us—flawed but trying. Mother Teresa, some would say, was a “living saint,” seen by many as flawless in her love, her dedication, her commitment to Christ, her ministry to the other that is not like us. There is a fear that if we allow Mother Teresa to get too close, we may be challenged to reexamine our Christian malpractice.

**Thermostats or Thermometers**

Both Diana and Mother Teresa sought to make a difference in the world. They were thermostats, not thermometers. A thermostat alters the temperature around it; a thermometer merely records it. A thermostat is active; a thermometer is passive. Thermostats are active agents of change; they influence their environment. Thermometers, on the other hand—are passive elements—do nothing to alter the conditions around them.

At the last judgment, when God separates the sheep from the goats, the difference will be that the sheep, as thermostats, are involved in active, selfless service for others. “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me” (Mark 25:35, 36, RSV). On the other hand, the goats—the thermometers—are self-seeking, concerned only with themselves and their interests, doing nothing to change the situation around them.

“Truly I tell you,” said Jesus about the woman who anointed His feet, “wherever the good news is proclaimed in the world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her” (Mark 14:9, NRSV). Both Mother Teresa and Princess Diana were thermostats. But especially Mother Teresa. And if there ever was another woman to whom Jesus’ words might apply, it would have to be Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

In the largest state funeral since the death of Mahatma Gandhi 50 years before, Mother Teresa was laid to rest in Calcutta. At Gandhi’s funeral the following words were spoken by a news reporter covering the proceedings—words that could very well have been spoken about Mother Teresa, for whom I have adapted them:

> The object of this massive tribute died as she always lived, a private woman, without wealth, without property, without official title or office. Mother Teresa was not the commander of armies, nor a ruler of vast lands. She could not boast any scientific achievement or artistic gift. Yet humans, governments, dignitaries from all over the world have joined hands to pay homage to this little wrinkled woman in a sari, who sought to transform the world’s attitude toward the poor. . . . Mother Teresa has become the spokesperson for the conscience of all humankind.

3 Http://www.ccnet.com/~suntzu75/pim973.htm
5 From Richard Attenborough’s film Gandhi (1982).

Caleb Rosado is a sociologist and president of RO S A D O C O N S U L T I N G for Change in Human Systems, in McKinleyville, California.
“Who despises the day of small things?” (Zech. 4:10, NIV).

IN THE SUMMER OF 1899 TWO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS knocked on the door of Marcial Serna, pastor of the Mexican Methodist Episcopal church in Tucson, Arizona. Walter Black, a literature evangelist, was selling books and Bibles in the Tucson area. Charles D. M. Williams, sent to help develop the interests, accompanied him.

When Pastor Serna answered the door, both Black and Williams were delighted to discover that he was bilingual. Enthusiastically Black presented his canvass. However, after listening politely, Serna told them, “I’m sorry, but I already have a lot of books. I’m not interested in purchasing any more.”

Try, Try Again

The two men left somewhat disappointed. Sensing, however, that the pastor was sincere and, if given the opportunity, might be open to more dialogue, they decided to try another approach. Returning the next day, Black and Williams knocked again on Serna’s door. “Pastor Serna,” Black began, “I’m at a real disadvantage since there are so many families living in the area who don’t speak English. Would you be willing to teach me some Spanish so I could communicate with the people when I visit their homes?”

Pastor Serna was a sincere man who truly wanted to help them. “Con gusto [with pleasure],” he told them. “Come back tomorrow morning and we’ll start your lessons.”

Early the next morning Black and Williams were back at Serna’s house learning to roll their r’s and twist their tongues in imitation of their Spanish teacher: “I think it would be good if we had something to look at, to be able to see the words we’re trying to say,” Williams suggested. “Why don’t you show us some of these words in the Bible?”

“Good idea,” Serna agreed. Placing the Spanish and English Bibles side by side, they opened them to the first chapter of Genesis and continued their study. Everything seemed to go well. Black and Williams learned many new words: Dios (God), hombre (man), día (day), noche (night), and numbers up to seis (six).

The next day, however, when they started studying in Genesis 2, things changed. When they read, “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which God had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God...”
created and made” (Gen. 2:2, 3), the lesson ended in a disagreement over the word sábado (Sabbath) and which was the right day to observe as the day of worship. Serna was confident that Sunday was the right day to observe. “I know Sunday is the Sabbath,” he asserted. “I can prove it from the New Testament. If we can’t agree here, perhaps we should have a public debate and let the people decide who is right.”

Sincere Seekers

Less than 100 miles away in a community named Sánchez (after the family who settled the area) lived two brothers, Abel and Adiel Sánchez. They belonged to one of the small Methodist congregations served by Pastor Serna. Abel and Adiel sold produce from the Sánchez family gardens and orchards to people who inhabited the nearby mining towns. To make the rounds by horse-drawn wagon typically took a week or more. On Sundays the young men, 25 and 27, respectively, would set up camp for the day, eager to “keep the Sabbath holy.”

One Sunday as they were reading their Bibles, they read Exodus 20:8-10: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” The Scriptures taught that sábado, the seventh day of the week, is the Sabbath, not Sunday, as they had learned growing up.

Upon returning to their rancheria, they immediately sat down and wrote to Pastor Serna. “Why do we keep Sunday?” they asked. “The Bible tells us to keep the seventh-day Sabbath.” Serna wrote back: “I’m dealing with two book salesmen on this very subject. We are going to have a debate. I’ll show them from the New Testament that the Sabbath has been changed to Sunday in commemoration of the Lord’s resurrection. As soon as I get through with these young men, I’ll come and teach you the truth about Sunday.”

The Great Debate

Many interested Christians and curious onlookers were present on the day of the debate. In those days debates were a type of entertainment. Both of the young Adventists had prepared diligently, but Walter Black led out. Walter had a list of more than 40 Bible verses to use in his presentation. But just before he got up to speak, the Lord impressed him to make a very simple presentation. He cut his list of texts down to 12. As Walter made his presentation, Marcial Serna began to take detailed notes for his planned rebuttal. But the more Serna listened, the fewer notes he took. Finally he completely stopped taking notes and only listened.

By the time his turn came to speak, Serna stood before those assembled,
and with a few expressive words he confessed, "I now see that my supposed opponents have brought out the truth from God's Book. I was going to show them where they were wrong, but it's clear from God's Word that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and I promise you and God that next Saturday I will rest on that day. With God's help, I will keep His Sabbath."²

After this surprising testimony, Serna invited Black and Williams to his home to discuss the matter further. He told them about the letter he had received from A bel and A diel Sánchez. "The hand of the Lord has been working," he said. "At the right time He will send you to me. My eyes have been opened to understand His Word on this particular subject. I plan to go see the young Sánchez boys in answer to their letter about the Sabbath. Will you go with me?"³

A Seed Takes Root
Meanwhile, on the Sánchez rancheria it was harvesttime. One day when they returned from one of their trips, they found a letter from Pastor Serna waiting for them. "Hey, A bel, here's a response from Pastor Serna," A diel said as he opened the letter. "He says he'll be here in the middle of this week. The two men he was having the debate with will be here too. I wonder if he proved to them that Sunday is the Lord's day of rest?"⁴

That Wednesday evening M arcial Serna came as he had promised, and brought with him the two young literature evangelists. The town church was filled to capacity, as word about the special meeting had circulated throughout the community. Nearly every family was present.

As Black and Williams stood to address the group, they must have wondered why they, two young Anglos who could not speak Spanish, came to be addressing an audience, most of whom could not speak English. But Pastor Serna and A diel Sánchez translated their message about the seventh-day Sabbath.⁵

The message, however, divided that small church—and the Sánchez family. The two young Adventists stayed in the area and studied the Bible with all who were interested—including A bel and A diel—for several months. Then tension within the family grew to the point that Don Lorenzo Sánchez, the family patriarch, called a family meeting, intending to settle the matter once and for all.

After a spirited discussion, Lorenzo had his Sabbathkeeping sons and daughters stand before him. Sitting in his chair with his rifle across his legs, he warned them solemnly: "This division in the family—with some worshiping on Saturday and others worshiping on Sunday—is not good. You must give up these crazy Adventist ideas about Saturday being the Lord's day and worship the Methodist way, the way I brought you up. If you do not," he threatened, "I will kill every one of you."

One evening when the sons came home from work, Don Lorenzo was waiting for them at the door. "A bel, A diel, have you decided to give up this foolishness about the sábado yet?"

"Papa, we cannot do other than what the Bible tells us," they answered respectfully.

"Well, since you will not renounce your faith, I have no choice but to disown you. You are no longer my sons. You are no longer Sánchezes. Take your belongings, your families, your Sabbath, and get out of my house immediately."

Sadly the two young men, their wives, and their little ones packed their few belongings and moved outside into the yard, for there was nowhere else to go. For a time they were forced to live under the álamo (cottonwood) trees near the house, sleeping outdoors, eating outdoors, and cooking on an open stove.

But their faith never wavered. They had promised to follow God's Word, even if they were the only ones. Eventually a relative had pity on them and took them in. They had passed the test, and God had provided for them.

Dying Words
In December 1899 Walter Black and Charles Williams had a group of 15 people ready for baptism. Among them were Marcial Serna, A bel and A diel Sánchez, and several other members of the Sánchez family. Black and Williams contacted the Arizona Mission in Phoenix, requesting that someone be sent to baptize the group. R. M. Kilgore, who was in charge of district 5 of the General Conference, responded to the call and boarded a train for Sánchez.

When Elder Kilgore arrived, he met with the baptismal candidates and found them all firmly grounded in the truth. Arrangements were made for a baptismal service, and on December 9, 1899, a cold but sunny afternoon, Kilgore led the baptismal candidates to the bank of the Gila River, where one by one he immersed them in the chilly waters. Pastor M arcial Serna was the first one into the Gila River for his spiritual burial and resurrection to a new life in Christ as a Seventh-day Adventist.⁶

Meanwhile Don Lorenzo was determined to make good on his threat. He had acquired a revolver and plenty of ammunition. He planned to kill all the newly baptized Adventists when they came back to the church from the baptismal service.

After the baptism the members returned to the church for a 3:00 service. Toward the close of the meeting a man came running from the Sánchez house, about 1,000 yards from the church. Excited and out of breath, he called out to the Sánchez brothers, "Your father is dying."

A ll the sons and daughters hurried to their father's bedside and proceeded to take him to the hospital in Solomonville, a few miles away. He had suffered a stroke, and the doctors did all they could, but to no avail. Eleven days later he passed away.

But before Don Lorenzo breathed his last, he gathered his family close to his bedside and pronounced a blessing on each one. When he came to A diel, he said, "Son, you have been a kind and obedient son. I have always been pleased with you. But lately you have chosen to obey your heavenly Father according to your conscience."
God give you the courage and strength to do what you have determined.”

On December 23 the Sánchez Seventh-day Adventist Church was officially organized, becoming the first Spanish Seventh-day Adventist church in North America. R. M. Kilgore and C.D.M. Williams officiated. When the church elected officers, it was no surprise that Adiel Sánchez became the elder of the small congregation.

The Unfinished Church

Because the Methodists in the Sánchez family were now fewer than the Adventists, they decided to hand over the little adobe church to the new Adventist believers. “We will give you this building,” the Methodists said, “with the condition that you help us build a new church for our members.”

The Adventists agreed, and both groups promptly laid the foundation and put up the walls and the doors for the new building. However, before they could get the roof on, it began to rain. The water continued to pour down day after day, causing the project to come to a complete halt.

When the rain finally stopped, the Sánchez family ventured out to inspect what was supposed to have been the new church building. The unprotected adobe walls had become waterlogged, and two of them had collapsed. There was no way to salvage it, and it remained that way, never completed.

In 1927 the Sánchez Adventist congregation built another church building in the same general area. The shell of that little church still stands. Angel Tarin, one of the family members, relates: “If baptismal candidates were still wearing jewelry when they got up to take their vows on the platform of the church, the pastor would ask them to remove their jewelry and drop the rings, earrings, and bracelets through the cracks of the platform floor so no one would ever get them.”

Stella Lopez remembers that her mother, Reyes, dropped her jewelry through the cracks on the platform on the day of her baptism. Many years later, when the building was no longer in use, treasure hunters who knew about this custom went into the building and tore up the planks, searching for the discarded jewelry.

As the years passed, the children of the charter members moved away. Some went to Adventist colleges and became nurses and teachers. Many served in church institutions. Because of the gradual exodus of young people, in 1946 the Sánchez Spanish church merged with the Safford English church, leaving the Tucson Spanish church as the oldest Hispanic congregation still worshiping in North America today.

Manuel Vasquez is vice president for special ministries in the North American Division. This story is taken from a book he is writing about the history and progress of Spanish-speaking Seventh-day Adventists in North America.

Celebrating the Centennial

Next February the North American Division Office of Multilingual Ministries will commemorate 100 years of Adventism among Hispanics in North America.

The event will take place in Sánchez, Arizona (near Safford), on Sabbath, February 27, 1999. Representatives from the state of Arizona, the North American Division, the Pacific Union Conference, and the Arizona Conference—in addition to interested Adventist members—will dedicate three historical markers and honor the efforts of those first Hispanics who responded to the Sabbath teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

For more information, contact the Office of Special Ministries, North American Division, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Or call: 301-680-6413.

Manuel Vasquez is vice president for special ministries in the North American Division. This story is taken from a book he is writing about the history and progress of Spanish-speaking Seventh-day Adventists in North America.
What are you doing to fill this empty space? What are you doing to help God’s love break through in your part of the world?

TELL ME MORE
To receive Global Mission newsletters, support Global Mission pioneers, or join the Global Mission Prayer Ministry, simply call 1-800-648-5824.
I wish I didn’t have a sister!” grumped Becky from the back seat. “I wish I were an only child!”

“Mean Beck!” her sister shot back, as the two locked eyes in a fierce glaring match that was turning an already long drive home from California into a tedious clash of wills.

As I officiated from the front seat, alternately disciplining and distracting my frustrated daughters, I remembered another batch of battling siblings who verbally slugged it out on another long drive . . .

“Dad, Jennie’s feet are in my face again!”

“Jennifer!” Dad commanded over his shoulder. “Get your feet out of Leslie’s face!”

My tormentor grudgingly removed the filthy objects from my nose level and stuck them out the car window.

From my left, our oldest sister, Debbie, scolded, “Why can’t you two stop acting like children and behave more maturely?”

Jennie and I huffed, “And who put you in charge? You’re not Mom!” Resisting Debbie’s big-sisterly authority was the one thing that momentarily united Jennie and me.

Sisters! Who needs them? I was sure I could get along just fine without mine. But since nobody seemed to care what I thought, and because I was the youngest, I had been plunked, sullen and protesting, smack in the middle of these two people to whom I was related against my will. And so was I destined to endure 1,500 torturous miles from Los Angeles to Jonesboro, Arkansas, our stepmother’s hometown, where we deprived Westerners were to receive an initiation into the “three H’s” of the truly civilized world—Southern hospitality, hominy grits, and humidity.

A fter three days of baking sun and overpriced souvenir shops we rolled into Jonesboro, where Faye’s family regaled us with dumplings, catfish, and turnips, and treated us like the royalty we most certainly were not. We loved every minute of it—and even got along when we weren’t trying not to. Although when Debbie fell in love with a boy named Michael Nutt, Jennie and I couldn’t resist serenading her with the clever refrain, “Debbie loves a nut, Debbie loves a nut . . .”

Too soon our visit ended. Back we rolled over the sweaty miles, bickering all the way to the outskirts of LA—where two fragrant, extremely filthy feet reappeared in my face.

“Dad, her feet are in my face again!”

“Jennifer!”

Sisters! Who needs them? A s three girls tussled and teased in the back seat of a dusty Cadillac barreling west on Route 66—and two dirty feet waved wildly in the breeze—I didn’t think I did. But the passing years have convinced me otherwise.

I’ve watched Jennifer grow up from a bratty big sister to a talented graceful woman with a gift for creating beauty. I’ve watched her devotedly play both father and mother to her two young children, when she was all they had. I respect and admire her immensely and consider it a privilege to name my youngest daughter in her honor.

Our older sister, Debbie, forgave us all our meanness and immaturity and blossomed into a beautiful gifted woman. I watched her organize and coordinate a thriving family business and an active household. I watched her love her husband and children with every ounce of her generous being.

And for the past three years I helplessly watched my sweet, gentle sister Debbie wage an unbelievably courageous war against the ravages and indignities of a destroyer called cancer. And though her indomitable spirit cried “Live!” her enemy, at last, proved too great for her.

I said goodbye to my sister on a warm fragrant morning in May. I wept goodbye silently to the melancholy crying of bagpipes, in a green suburban cemetery, in the company of family and friends. And I whispered that I would see her again, strong and beautiful, when the Lord returns to make things right.

Three sisters have grown, and one rests in the Lord. But two little ones rush to fill the gap in the cycle of life. As a little brown Nissan speeds east on Interstate 40, away from the soft ocean breezes of southern California, two young sisters squabble and scrap in the back seat. Though they don’t yet realize it, they are learning to love, learning to be the special friends they will become, learning to need the special friendship that only a sister can provide.

Leslie Kay writes from Chloride, Arizona, where on occasion she referees sibling rivalries.
LIVE IN TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS.

During the weekend I am Mr. Mom, joining my little Alexa in her fanciful universe and especially enjoying my second time around in cradle roll. Bright-eyed and bubbling, my daughter and her classmates gleefully flit and flutter the flag flying high over the castle of their hearts. They know the One who wants them for a sunbeam.

During the week I am a graduate student, seeing all versions of people struggling with everyday disappointments and personal problems. In this world joy is rarely expressed. Even with the most composed, the aloneness and lostness are too hard to conceal. A less-than-quiet desperation all too often fills their eyes.

I am troubled at how easily I slip from one world to the next. I am astonished at how comfortable and assured I am as I join with my daughter in cradle roll enactments of the gospel while such desperation exists in my other world. The joy and hope of Christ seem so reachable to me in these simple Sabbath school moments. How is it that outside these felt-covered walls such lostness continues to thrive? How might I share the good news in a way it can be heard by seekers who may not even know what they are looking for?

Be a Refuge

Compelled by the contrast between my worlds, I felt an urgency to do something. Just as I was ready to venture out and transform the world, Chaplain Bill Mahedy's comments made me pause: “I thought the primary emphasis should have been on the church’s mission to evangelize and serve the world. When I made this point, the [young adult] community argued that while those missions are essential, the church must first be a haven and refuge before it can work effectively in the world.”

The unfortunate reality for seekers is that many of the communities they have experienced perpetuate their feelings of alienation. When seekers come to my church, I hope they will find it a safe place to be. My church and I need to make sincere efforts to be a place where burdens become lighter (see Matt. 11:28-30). Our willingness to carry each other’s burdens (see Gal. 6:2) is the proof that needs to be in the pudding before I invite a prebeliever to taste. Making my church a refuge is essential.

Making myself a refuge is equally as important, if not more so. “There can be no real reverence for God,” writes Chaplain Steve Daily, “where there is no genuine commitment to meeting human needs. Conversely, there can be no properly motivated, healthy service where there is no reverence for God.”

My commitment to meet seekers where they are and accept them unconditionally is the ultimate reflection of my reverence for God. The first relationship a seeker may have with Christ may be through me.

Be Relevant

Relevance is just as important. If religion “is to bring hope into people’s lives,” writes George Barna, “bustlers [also called Gen Xers] would describe that hope as it relates to the explication of ethical insight, purpose for living, and the development of greater emotional balance. Their interest in spiritual matters wanes as soon as the discussion rolls around to matters of a higher level; religion, for their purposes, must be tangible, useful, and intelligent.”

It is no longer sufficient to have provable, rational religious truth. Prebelievers today seek truth that applies to their lives. “Older evangelism techniques,” writes Jim Belcher, “which aimed to convince skeptics that belief in God was ‘logical’ or ‘rational’ will no longer work in a postmodern age . . . the church must find new ways to relate.”

Pastor Todd Hahn adds, “If Christians are going to reach this generation with the gospel, much more careful thinking will have to be done as we try to find ways to communicate God’s story in a creative and contextual way.”

So how is this relevance captured? What’s the secret to contextualizing such an important message?

Dieter Zander appears to be on the right track with his development of New Song, a thriving young adult church in southern California, and his current work with Axis, the Generation X ministry of Willow Creek Community Church.
“Reaching out to busters is very much like going to a completely different country and immersing yourself in a foreign culture,” says Zander. “If we were going to China and wanted to reach out to the people of a rural village, we would go live among them, learn their language, build relationships, and work to discover what kind of redemptive analogies we could find in their culture to communicate the message of the cross to them. That is what we must do if we hope to make Jesus relevant to busters.”

The key to relevance seems to be a willingness on my part and the part of my church to enter the world of seekers; to do more than swing the church doors open and say, “Come on in.” Relevance demands an experiential empathy on my part, one that exposes me to the lostness, desperation, alienation. In this exposure I begin to learn the language and the culture. Only in their shoes can I begin to reveal the relevance of redemption.

Be Relational

Seekers are searching for someone who understands, for relationships that are a refuge and are real. Contemporary evangelism is primarily about relating—not only for the sake of converting, but for the long-haul love of it. Emphasizing the need for relational depth, Pastor Dwight Nelson notes, “We must be willing to rethink and revamp our traditional methods of worship and evangelism if we are going to seriously undertake our mission to baby busters.”

But author Kevin Ford amends, “If the evangelism of choice for today’s generation is personal and process-oriented, does other forms of evangelism are invalid? No! Other forms, such as Billy Graham-style mass evangelism and media evangelism, can still be used to reach Generation X—but to be effective they must be linked with a personal, process-oriented approach.”

So I need to be willing to be with seekers, to hang out, to relate. Sounds a lot like that first-century Man whose story is captured in the Gospels. Seekers are looking for Christ in me...in us.

Won by One

What if I did at least one thing to be a refuge, to be relevant, to be relational? What if my Sabbath school peers all did one thing? What if our church did one thing? One by one, lives of pre-Christians would be impacted—and so would ours.

For example, to become a refuge you could volunteer to do one day of child care for a single parent. Or help your church have a youth/young adult Sabbath once a month.

To be relevant, you might have lunch with one young adult seeker, learning more about their experiences. Or read one book on reaching Generation X. Or spend one year as a missionary to the inner city.

To be relational, you might mentor one teen or young adult. Or volunteer one evening a week at a local hospice. Or write one letter a month to an inactive church member.

With NET ’98 coming in October, I pray that by accepting the wonXone challenge you will open up an opportunity to invite and accompany one seeker to the series, sharing in more depth the character of God you have displayed in at least one way.

Seekers desire what Alexa gets from me and her Sabbath school. They want something that Jesus Christ can clearly give through me and you. So let’s start today—to become refuge, to exude relevance, to extend relationship—won by one.

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1 By “seeker” I am referring to those non-Christian individuals searching for some form of spirituality. I also refer to them as “pre-Christian” or “prebelievers,” holding to the hope their journey will lead them home to Him.


8 T. Celek and D. Zander, Where the Soul of a New Generation is (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1996).


11 For more information on dre.am VISION ministries’ wonXone campaign, visit their website: http://www.tagnet.org/dvm/1x1.html. To share questions or experiences with this author, send e-mail to dreamVISION_ministries@CompuServe.com. For more information on NET ’98 visit http://www.tagnet.org/dvm/net98.html or http://www.net98.org.
knowing God personally and accepting the salvation that He bestows upon those who by faith accept what He has done for us in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2), is the greatest privilege a person can have. Second only to that is the privilege of being a member in good standing in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The darkness in the world, and even in Christendom, serves to make us value the blaze of light that the Lord has poured out upon this church (through no merit or righteousness of our own). Like Job, we should in humility exclaim, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. W henceforth I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6).

To be a Seventh-day Adventist—loving God and the truths He has revealed—is one of the greatest privileges. Yet along with that privilege comes responsibility. We haven't been given this truth merely to contemplate its finer points; instead, we have been called to be colaborers with heaven in spreading it worldwide. Jesus expressed this best when He said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48).

Responsibility, therefore, entails accountability. Sure, we understand that we are all accountable to our Maker on judgment day; "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). But what about our accountability to each other, not just as individuals, but as congregations? Does a congregation have any accountability? And if so, to whom and for what?

Not every group of people who congregate and who claim to hold our beliefs can automatically become a Seventh-day Adventist church in the world sisterhood of churches. This is a privilege bestowed upon a company of believers by fellow Seventh-day Adventists.

It works like this: a company of believers comes to a local conference and asks to be part of the official Seventh-day Adventist Church. The conference executive committee can grant the request, but only on a temporary basis; it does not have the final say. That can be granted only by a conference constituency meeting, which is composed of representatives of all the churches in the conference. In other words, being a Seventh-day Adventist congregation is not a right inherent to a group of believers, but a privilege granted by the body of believers in the conference. Representatives from sister churches in the conference, meeting in a conference session, have the ultimate authority not only to recognize but also to disband a church.

As the General Conference president I don't have that authority; the division, the union, and even the local conference executive committees don't. The power to recognize or disband congregations exists only at the level of church members appointed to represent each church in the conference. Consequently, a congregation is accountable to those other churches that have granted it the privilege of being part of the denomination.

The privilege of being recognized as a Seventh-day Adventist congregation carries with it responsibilities and accountability. If it didn't, it wouldn't mean much to be a Seventh-day Adventist church. A congregation that requests acceptance in the sisterhood of churches agrees to operate in harmony with the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that are approved by the widest possible representation of the global church—the General Conference in session. Thus each congregation is obligated to operate in harmony with the Church Manual; to support growth in its local communities as well as in a global outreach, to be faithful in its representation of the truths we profess, and to operate in harmony with the financial guidelines approved by the church's representative bodies. Adhering to the Church Manual and policies isn't optional; it's what each congregation agrees to do when it joins the sisterhood of churches.

Though each church (like each individual) will have its own unique character, temperament, and style, the global family of churches has the right—indeed, the obligation—to ensure that each congregation operates in harmony with principles it agreed to follow when it requested the privilege of becoming a church in the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the General Conference.
Have you ever been to a petting zoo? You’re allowed to go inside the pen to be with the animals. You can look at them up close and pat them. There might be sheep or chickens or a cow, and there are always goats.

Goats are great for petting zoos. They are gentle—you don’t have to worry about them biting or scratching. (They have been known to butt with their heads.) They are patient and don’t mind if kids touch them. They are cute and small—just the right size for petting.

Goats like to eat. You’ve got to be careful—sometimes they even try to nibble on your clothes.

People make jokes that goats eat anything—paper, cardboard, tin cans. I have never seen a goat eat metal, but I have seen them eat paper, and I have pulled my shirt away from goat’s teeth.

You might think it’s strange for a goat to eat paper or clothing. But paper is made out of wood, and clothing is often made of cotton. Wood and cotton come from plants. Plants are good to eat. The goat smells the plant in the paper or clothing and thinks it is something to eat.

Goats are not discriminating eaters. They are happy to eat things that other animals won’t touch.

People are not like goats. Most people are discriminating about what they eat. It is important for us to learn to discriminate. Babies learn to discriminate between the things that are good to eat (like apples) and the things that are not good to eat (like dirt).

But we have to be careful how we use our discriminating skills. Discrimination is wrong when we make our decisions based on the wrong type of things. It is easy to judge people by the way they look—by what color their skin is, how old they are, or what kind of clothes they wear. These things don’t tell us much about the person. If we decide we don’t like someone based on how they look, we discriminate against them.

The Bible says, “God does not see the same way people see. People look at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7, ICB). God sees our potential. He sees what we can become. God can help you learn to see the way He sees.
A group of 28 students and faculty members from Loma Linda University (LLU) in California traveled to western Ethiopia recently, where they participated in a “fly ‘n’ build” project at Gimbie Hospital. The project was the first phase of a development initiative started by Adventist Health International/Ethiopia.

“The group journeyed 14 hours by bus from Addis Ababa, carrying needed supplies and food,” says Gail M. Ormsby, director of LLU’s School of Public Health’s Center for Health and Development. “This was an ideal opportunity for students to experience firsthand the meaning of mission and development.”

The LLU team joined an eight-member team from the Adventist Development and Relief Agency/Netherlands. Both teams assisted in digging the foundation for a 13,000-square-foot two-story building that will house outpatient services, operating and delivery rooms, and patient units. Physicians and medical students worked on the patient units, assisting the hospital’s medical staff. The two groups also assisted in preparing vegetable garden plots and inventorying medical supplies.

“Adventist Health International is a new initiative by LLU that works with Adventist institutions to provide consultation, training, management guidance, equipment, and support for struggling mission hospitals and rural health services,” says Richard Hart, dean of the School of Public Health. “Human resource development is a critical part of the ongoing capacity of the hospital.”

Built in the 1940s, Gimbie Hospital was originally one of four Adventist hospitals in Ethiopia. Today it is the country’s only Adventist hospital. In addition to Gimbie Hospital, the church also operates 14 health clinics.

This article is reprinted from Loma Linda University Today, May 7, 1998.
Church Responds to Los Angeles Times Articles

On August 13 and 14, 1998, the Los Angeles Times published a series of articles focused on controversies affecting the Seventh-day Adventist Church and several Adventist institutions, including Loma Linda University and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). Responding to concerns raised in the Times articles, the General Conference Communication Department and ADRA issued the following statements:

Today (August 13) the Los Angeles Times ran an article (the first of a two-part series) under the headline “Currents of Change Roil Seventh-day Adventists” (www.latimes.com). The Seventh-day Adventist Church appreciates this opportunity to share its message and mission with a wider public.

Though it is difficult to discuss the beliefs and activities of religious organizations in the secular press, we applaud media interest in the growth and development of the Adventist Church, which now numbers almost 10 million members living in 207 countries around the world.

The “currents of change” mentioned in the article reflect the natural tensions that develop in a rapidly growing global organization, and while the Adventist Church is committed to excellence in all areas of its operation, it is the first to admit imperfections.

Ongoing debates on a variety of topics illustrate the open attitude of the church’s administration. While there will always be some differences of opinion, the church strives to maintain fair and just procedures, as would be expected from a Christian organization.

Robert S. Folkenberg, president of the Adventist Church, spent considerable time last summer with the Times reporters during the weekend of a camp meeting in the Portland, Oregon, area. His staff, as well as representatives from ADRA, Loma Linda University Medical Center, and the North American Division, have responded to the many requests for information from the reporters for a period of some 16 months, providing facts, resources, and names of people to interview in order to write a meaningful, hopefully objective story on the work of our church.

In a number of instances we are disappointed that the reporters did not choose to balance their article with the wealth of material provided that demonstrates the positive and beneficial work the church undertakes around the world.

Much of the information raised in the Times article relates to issues of the past and is “old news.” The church remains committed to resolving any continuing difficulties, and actively seeks excellence in its service to humanity.

The perspective of the church’s president, cited in the article, appropriately expresses the Adventist position: “You can always find something you’d like to improve. But we remain a vibrant, positive, engaged church affecting powerfully the communities where it serves.”

Ray Dabrowski
Communication director
Seventh-day Adventist world church headquarters

ADRA Refutes Article by Los Angeles Times

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND—Today the Los Angeles Times printed an article that called into question the Adventist Development and Relief Agency’s (ADRA) international development efforts. ADRA rejects the article by the Times as either a factual account or a legitimate criticism of its operation. The Times reporters chose to present information in a way that misleads and encourages damaging conclusions.

ADRA fully cooperated with Eric Lichtblau and Tom Gorman, the Los Angeles Times reporters, and provided them with extensive documentation, including government reports, audits, and financial statements. In addition, ADRA invited the reporters to visit any of its more than 150 field offices. Lichtblau chose to visit ADRA’s Haiti operations, where he was given unrestricted access to program personnel and crucial documentation. The article does not reflect ADRA’s openness, nor does it present a factual or balanced analysis of the information provided.

Both formal and informal evaluations continue to demonstrate ADRA’s commitment to deliver high-quality relief and development programs, which in 1997 brought much-needed assistance to 14.7 million of the world’s neediest people. ADRA’s programs have been commended by governments, international organizations, communities, civil representatives, and partner nongovernmental organizations. As evidence of their continuing trust in ADRA, a wide variety of government and private funders continue to provide funding for ADRA’s international humanitarian work.

ADRA maintains high standards of accountability to all of its donors. It is ADRA’s policy to conduct regular audits for purposes of monitoring and ensuring financial compliance. External auditing is provided by one of the “big six” international auditing firms. In the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID)
most recent inspector general’s review of A DRA’s audit reports, A DRA’s programs were in accordance with USAID’s financial requirements. “The auditors’ reports on internal controls contained no findings that were system-wide or applied to USAID.”

“A DRA’s role within the Seventh-day Adventist Church structure is a mandate from the church members to carry the humanitarian mission to people in need around the world,” A DRA executive vice president Mario Ochoa told Lichtblau and Gorman. A DRA is a humanitarian agency that works to improve the lives of people in need. A DRA’s commitment is to serve people in the most effective way possible, without regard to race, gender, political affiliations, or religious beliefs.

Today Ochoa repeated the statement he made on October 24, 1997, to Los Angeles Times editor Michael Parks, saying, “To the best of our knowledge, there are no outstanding issues of any significance between A DRA and any of the international development finance agencies that provide funding for A DRA’s programs. To the extent that there may have been any such issues in the past, they have been fully addressed by A DRA to the satisfaction of the agencies involved.”

A DRA welcomes any inquiries regarding its international relief and development programs. You can contact A DRA at 1-800-424-A DRA (2372).

AWR Letter Box

“I send warmest greetings on the wings of an eagle to my favorite station. You have brought real hope to my heart when I listened to the words of Christ Jesus in your broadcast. I dream of the wonderful Jesus and His love toward enemies. I wish we had such a Jesus in our religion. But I know that Jesus is for everyone, even for us Muslims.”
—Middle East.

“I so much enjoy your discussions on health matters, as I am in the medical field, and I find it difficult to go through a day without listening to A W R.”—John, from Nigeria.

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Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600
Or call toll-free: 1-800-337-4297
E-mail: info@awr.org
Website: www.awr.org

 Lies, Yawns, and Religious Liberty


Defenders of religious liberty, take notice.
Numerous polls tell us that a majority of Americans think our popular president perjured himself in court and lied in public when describing his relationship with a female White House intern. The polls also show that a majority of Americans don’t think that’s very serious.

An August Newsweek poll claimed 59 percent of Americans don’t believe the president’s denials, and 54 percent believe that either nothing should be done (19 percent) or that the president should simply apologize (35 percent). A ccepting, as we apparently do, that the president committed a serious crime (perjury) that strikes at the foundation of our judicial system, A americans wink, or worse, we yawn.

These polls ostensibly reveal what we think about the president or his detractors. In the big picture, however, they tell us something far more serious about ourselves: A americans are losing their grip on the rule of law.

The implications for religious liberty are ominous: feelings are more important than fact, likableness means more than law, popularity trumps principle. A nation unwilling to invoke legal principle against a popular president will surely have an even harder time invoking legal principle in favor of an unpopular minority.

Interestingly, the willingness to ignore legal principles in this case is not emanating from the so-called Religious Right. The kind of toleration our freedom depends on is founded on the rule of law, not on the primacy of popularity we see billowing over the Left horizon. A willingness (as the polls show) to ignore those principles prepares for a time when intolerance can flourish.

The political horizon is, after all, a circle. The line between the so-called tolerant Left and the so-called intolerant Right is indistinct. But when the whole horizon, Left and Right, conspires against the rule of law, freedom will be surrounded— and doomed.
More Exculpatory Strategies

In an earlier column (Aug. NAD Edition) we looked at the evil of a judgmental attitude and how it corrupts character and destroys community. Jesus taught His followers, “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1).

But Jesus’ words have been taken to mean that we have no right to judge others at all, and no obligation to confront one who has erred, even in love. The distinction Christ made between good and bad judgment has been replaced by a rejection of judging altogether, a classic “baby thrown out with the bath water” scenario. All judging has been condemned as insensitive and unwarranted, no matter the spirit in which it is conducted. Those who would hold others accountable by questioning their behavior are labeled “callous” and “uncaring.” And we have been led into a nondiscriminating acceptance of everything as the measure of graciousness.

The impact upon community, including Christian community, has been devastating. The desire to affirm every person whatever his/her practice has led us into a wounding relativism in which nothing is wrong in itself and no one is to blame for anything. Even perpetrators are cast as victims. In the words of one writer: “We are a society awash in exculpatory strategies.” Exculpate means “a release from consequences or suspicion of guilt, often unconfessed guilt.”

We have become experts at exonerating ourselves and others. No one is responsible. No one can be held accountable. And no one has the right to question the performance of another. The popular emphasis on openness and sensitivity has overwhelmed the critical faculties of discernment and assessment. We are in danger of losing altogether the capacity to discriminate between right and wrong, between good, better, and best. Is this what Jesus had in mind?

If Jesus meant that we are not to judge others under any circumstances, why does He also warn us of the importance of proper judgment? “By their fruit you will recognize them. . . . A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. . . . Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matt. 7:16-20, NIV).

Jesus does not intend for His followers to exercise no judgment at all. His “judge not” is not a command to indiscriminately accept everything. It is an edict against pre-judging, against peremptory legalism, against casting and vindictiveness that leave no place for forgiveness and reconciliation. As Christ’s followers we cannot dispense with moral judgment, a necessary element of Christian character. It helps us negotiate our way through a confused society of lost values and standards. It helps us to evaluate our own hearts, which are “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9).

It is not the faculty of judgment that Jesus attacks, it is punitive accusations, sweeping condemnation, and the spirit of “unforgiveness.” Christ would have us learn proper judgment, judging with humility and in the spirit of redemption. We should judge ourselves first, then judge others by the same standards—but with more grace (see Gal. 6:1).

On the night of the Passover, when He knew He was headed for a cross and Judas for a noose, exculpatory strategies were the last thing on Jesus’ mind. He had one chance to save the betrayer before it was too late. Without exposing him to others, Jesus signaled Judas that his secret was out and his sin known. The betrayer’s only chance was to face his wrong and repent. But Judas would not. And when he finally threw down the silver coins and confessed “I have sinned,” it was too late (see Matt. 27:3-5)!

I don’t want that to happen to me. And what’s more, I don’t want it to happen to you. I would rather confront you in love right now, even though I know it will be uncomfortable for us both, in the hope that you will see your error and be saved. A nd my prayer is that you will love me enough to do the same for me.


John S. Nixon is senior pastor of the Oakwood College Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama.
It was cold. And getting colder by the day. Each morning the windshield of the car was frosted over. At sunset little puddles in the parking lot of the supermarket turned to ice. Moving from sunny southern California to Denver in the summer of 1981 had been a relatively smooth transition. But as the leaves turned golden in the fall, it was clear that our two growing daughters would need heavy clothing for the Colorado winter. We were unprepared.

My hectic sabbatical study and work schedule didn't allow me the luxury of crafting garments for them. Multiple brief excursions were made to the shopping malls looking for coats for the girls. Each time we began with enthusiasm. Each time we returned with growing frustration, unable to find anything that fit them and the extremely tight family budget.

Snow fell. I could delay no longer. We left home early Sunday afternoon and drove to a KMart south of the city. There in the children's clothing were the perfect all-weather coats—sky blue in color, lined with removable flannel, and just one of each size needed by the girls. Each glance at the price tag and my relief turned to total frustration. Both girls needed a coat, but I had only enough money to purchase one.

An exhaustive search revealed no other options. Near tears, we left and drove to the local Target store. This time there was absolutely nothing that fit.

"What should I do, Lord? This is not a want; this truly is a need!" The reality of our changed circumstances was starkly evident in so many ways. Months before, we had sought God's leading in this career change. Nagging uncertainty mushroomed suddenly into a menacing cloud of doubt. My inner dialogue continued: "God, was it really Your will that we come to the Mile-High City? Did I want to come to this research center so badly that I misread Your leading?"

On the way home we passed the KMart again. On an impulse I swung the car into the parking lot. The girls chided me for the useless detour. We sat in the car and talked to God about our dilemma. In spite of scanty resources, we had continued to pay a faithful tithe. We claimed God's promise in Malachi—what could and would God do for us?

As we passed through the double doors into the store, a voice on the speaker system announced a "new special" in the children's department. It took just seconds to find the flashing blue light. There was only one item of clothing on sale—the very coats we had selected two hours previously! "Two coats for the price of one!" The garments still hung exactly as we had left them. Grabbing them, we raced to the checkout line. Even the cashier was amazed by our bargain. By the time our purchase was completed, the sale was over! In the space of five minutes our dilemma was solved. We marveled at God's amazing providence and incredible timing.

Through the intervening years the "miracle of the two blue coats" has been a source of reassurance, comfort, and courage. In times of personal and professional perplexity I have remembered that God knows the details of my life and times. He still seems to wait until this disciple is completely aware of her extremity, and then and only then does He demonstrate His awesome love and caring.

Does God always answer prayer? Absolutely! It may be with a "Yes" or a "No" or sometimes with a "Wait a while." “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it” (Mal. 3:10, 11, NIV).

B. Lyn Behrens is president of Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California.
I imagine endowments of $3.1 billion for Seventh-day Adventist schools K-12, or $794 million for colleges and universities. Seem impossible?

In reality, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, through its local churches, conferences, unions, and the General Conference, gives annual operating and capital subsidies that equal the interest that would be earned on a $3.8 billion educational endowment. The church subsidy represents a form of an endowment not easily replaced if our schools and colleges functioned as private institutions.

Where do these funds come from?

Nearly half come from the generous contributions given by our members in the form of tithes and offerings. In addition, liberal donations from alumni, members, and philanthropic foundations provided $37.2 million to our colleges and universities and $7.7 million to Adventist academies.

Let’s add another “endowment.” Professors and administrators who serve on Adventist college and university campuses earn lower salaries than they could make in other public and private educational settings. This salary differential amounts to an additional $537 million, a “living endowment,” if you please. Add another $1 billion for teachers and administrators in grades K-12, and you have a total “endowment” of $5.4 billion. Aditional contributions made by parents, students, and benevolent church members in the form of tuition and fees, added to these subsidies and contributed services, reduce charges to students by as much as $7,000 per year in tuition.

Educational endowment required to equal the church’s annual subsidy to each Adventist college/university in North America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Endowment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Andrews University</td>
<td>$108,468,960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atlantic Union College</td>
<td>50,271,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian University College</td>
<td>16,225,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Union College</td>
<td>62,593,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Sierra University</td>
<td>46,472,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loma Linda University</td>
<td>218,006,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakwood College</td>
<td>90,204,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Union College</td>
<td>46,472,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Adventist University</td>
<td>48,041,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern Adventist University</td>
<td>24,151,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union College</td>
<td>35,788,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walla Walla College</td>
<td>47,850,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>794,547,020</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Some colleges with lower subsidies are running more efficient programs. A large medical-related university such as Loma Linda University requires larger subsidies than a college with a smaller enrollment. However, the subsidy per full-time equivalent student in a smaller college might end up being more than at a large university. Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences and Kettering College of Medical Arts are not included in these figures because their subsidies come from the medical institutions sponsoring them. Most of the subsidy for Home Study International/Griggs University is for the K-12 part of the program.

Basis for calculations: The “interest” representing these endowments is from 1996 operating and capital subsidies provided by the unions and the General Conference. At a meeting of the Association of Seventh-day Adventist College and University Business Officers (SDACUBO), they recommended using a 5 percent interest return as average for colleges across North America. While regular endowments earn much higher rates, money is reinvested in an endowment fund as a hedge against inflation.

“Living endowments” provided by faculty and administrators in Adventist educational institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower earnings of:</th>
<th>Represents an endowment of:</th>
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<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>600,000</td>
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<td>50,000</td>
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</tbody>
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Compared to public school or university pay scales, these amounts would represent a variety of differences, such as experience, degrees, rank, certification, teaching field, and region.

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1 These figures are based on the most recent annual study done by the North American Division treasury on education costs for 1996.

2 In 1997-1998 the average private college full professor of business management made $71,144. A mathematics full professor averaged a salary of $63,292. The average university president of a doctoral degree-granting institution earns $188,000 per year, with the average for all types of institutions being $124,432. This compares to Adventist professors, who average around $37,000 per year, and many Adventist college presidents, who make only slightly more. (Nonteaching staff in Adventist institutions are generally paid close to or slightly more than market rates.)