



ADVENTIST
Review

December 1997

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION EDITION

**Why
Brenda
Wood
Is Different**

Without compromising her religious principles, she has become one of television's most respected voices in one of the country's largest metropolitan markets.

LETTERS

The Mormons

Our family is very saddened and dismayed at William Johnsson's "What Happened to the Mormons?" (October NAD Edition). My wife and I are products of the Adventist educational system from elementary school through Loma Linda University, and since we converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), we have become used to various popular misconceptions regarding LDS theology.

Our disappointment revolves around the rather hostile tone of the editorial and the mockery of other religions. We wish that Johnsson could have included other aspects of Mormon beliefs, such as the formal teachings regarding free agency and a solemn respect for other people's religious beliefs. In reading several years of the LDS periodical *The Ensign*, we have never encountered such a hostile portrayal of another religion. In fact, the LDS *Church News* has mentioned several Adventist disaster relief efforts that coincided with LDS relief programs—and in a manner that complimented the Adventist Church, highlighting the positive aspects of its beliefs and the common efforts of both churches to relieve suffering.

—John Carson, M.D.
YUMA, ARIZONA

Johnsson touched one of the issues that I have had in my heart for years: Why isn't the Adventist Church able to penetrate

the 70 percent of unchurched Americans? I have known many Mormons and admire how they are able to communicate their image and values.

Some may argue that we must reach out one by one. I have done so many times, and there is nothing like it in this world. But as time gets closer to the end, we must also take a more

Their Last Stand

With this issue *Take a Stand* concludes. But we couldn't let Gina and Loretta debate off into the sunset without proper thanks. Though sometimes controversial, *Take a Stand* challenged thousands of Adventists to read their Bibles and live their beliefs. And anyone who meets Gina and Loretta *themselves* quickly finds an unbridled passion for God. We've invited these women to continue in the ministry of the *Adventist Review*—through its pages, camp meeting appointments, etc. Again, our thanks for 20 months of lively discussion.

In next month's North American Division Edition we'll share our plans for 1998. To subscribe to the *weekly Adventist Review*, call 1-800-456-3991.



aggressive approach to reaching the masses. I guess that is what we must learn from the Mormons.

—Robert Espinoza
SILOAM SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

Ready to Rumble

Amen! Amen! to Andy Nash's "Ready to Rumble" (October NAD Edition). Thank you for the honesty.

As a youth leader I have learned that what he's talking about is true. I have seen local churches driving the youth out by trying to make them conform to the concepts. The problem did not start with the so-called Gen X. As a 39-year-old baby boomer, I saw most of my friends leave the church. We have many excellent people working in our youth department, but the majority of the church will struggle until it learns how Jesus treated young people.

—John Milton
CENTRALIA, WASHINGTON

Nash certainly challenged my thinking (to put it mildly). At over 30 and under 45, I find myself in the middle of the two groups he addresses. Maybe that qualifies me to respond.

I too am distraught when someone says, "The young people just want to be entertained." My perception has been that it is really *we* who want that. After all, it is much easier for one or two people to be assigned the job

of supervising a bunch who are "being entertained." To involve them in something requires much more effort.

Our world is changing more rapidly than ever. It isn't that "old people" are totally against change. It's just that the new ideas, methods, and situations are developing so quickly that they don't have time to catch their breath, evaluate a situation, plant their feet on something secure, and smile as the next wave hits them. Compounding this is the realiza-

tion (by both young and old) that not everything that comes along is good, even if appealing. How do we find the time to sort through each "gift" and make sure that it isn't a Trojan horse?

Maybe Nash and I have observed different conferences, but I see many that are very much involving the young people on the decision-making committees. Two things might be distorting the picture a bit. First, while 20 percent of our membership might be under 30, what part of that would be 10, 12, or 14 years old? Second, we often have a very hard time getting the academy- and college-age youth free enough to attend the committee meetings. So when a conference has 10 or 15 percent of its committee members in their 20s and 30s, I think they are doing quite well!

Somehow, no matter which age group we're in, we often find ourselves wrapped up in meeting our own needs, finding our own pleasure, and searching out our own excitement, no matter what it does—or doesn't do—for those around us. May God help next year's report to be more positive.

—**Homer Trecartin**
CALHOUN, GEORGIA

I have several friends who could be included in either the already-have-left or the hanging-on-the-edges categories Nash describes. It's great to see that there are people taking an interest in young people and trying to get them involved.

Involvement is the best outreach. It's a fabulous way to help us feel wanted!

—**Karen Hawkins**, STUDENT
NEWBOLD COLLEGE
BRACKNELL, BERKSHIRE, ENGLAND

I heard Elder Folkenberg's "piece of the pie" speech in Indianapolis. Based on the context in which he spoke, I did not understand his comments in terms of his recent clarification. I understood them as involving youth/young adults more in the decision-making processes of the church.

I agree with Elder Folkenberg that

youth/young adults must become more involved in the mission of the church. However, that is not likely to happen unless they become more involved in the decision-making process of the church. There will be little or no ownership of the mission plans unless they are involved in making them. So, as Nash accurately wrote, there are two different kinds of pie. Youth/young adults must be involved with both.

At its beginnings the Adventist Church was a youth/young adult movement. It seems we have forgotten that not only in the full-time work of the church but also in the local church.

—**Vialo Weis**, PASTOR
SHATTUCK, OKLAHOMA

Nobody thinks of making the "pie," but only of eating it. Those out there making "God's pie" are gaining experience, crucifying self, becoming converted in the wilderness of preparation for leadership.

Too many of those interested only in the "church's pie" want to be the upper crust. Someone has to be the obvious sour cherry filling; some the invisible sugar and thickening agent. Many of us were born Adventist and have been the useful bottom crust all our lives.

—**Edna Canaday**
COLLEGE PLACE, WASHINGTON

Student Debt

Thanks for the October NAD Edition Newsbreak, which reported on three of our colleges being among the best colleges and universities in the United States, as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report*.

The following week *U.S. News* published a list of institutions whose 1996 graduates left school with the largest and smallest average debt loads. Three Adventist schools were listed in the "largest debt" categories. There was no representation in the "smallest debt" category.

—**D. Lawrence**
VIA E-MAIL

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ADVENTIST Review

"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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The Law of Gravity

A century ago author Charles Sheldon taught believers everywhere to ask a provocatively simple question: *What would Jesus do?* The lasting merit of Sheldon's phrase and its power to transform lives is witnessed to by the millions of copies of *In His Steps* that still are read around the globe. In the haze of ethical argument and ambiguity, the example of Jesus brings clarity and focus.

If I propose a corollary question that believers today might ask themselves—and I do—it's not because I expect such worldwide acceptance. As I feel the wash of worship tides that roll from one end of Adventism to the other, I hear the pain and pathos of members of all ages for whom the hour of worship has now become the defining moment of Adventism. Again I'm caught by the power of a simple question: *What if Jesus were here?*

Our theology proclaims confidently the presence of the risen Lord wherever His people gather to worship Him. There's no more frequently quoted worship text in all of Adventism than Jesus' declaration "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Jesus has committed Himself, we say, as if in promising to attend, He gave up His right to comment on what happens. For many who gather on Sabbath mornings, Jesus is present just as the organ and the pulpit are present—a fixture guaranteed by structure and tradition.

Only such diminished expectation could explain the variety of things we do in this hour of so-called adoration. We hear jokes, sometimes from the pulpit; we announce meetings; we take votes; we promote magazines. We sing hymns—sometimes, happily, with understanding, but often with the reticence of seventh graders in a chorus. We listen to soloists and gospel choirs, instrumentalists and Christian bands who almost universally forget to tell us why what they are performing should be thought of as an act of worship.

Missing from most of this is any sense of what Martin Buber once called the "I-Thou" encounter—the belief that I as an individual Christian, or even that we as the gathered church are engaged in a real and substantive conversation with the Almighty. If He is here, then there is no one more

important to address in every word we speak and every note we sing. If He is here, then there is nothing more significant we could listen to than His Word ministered through a consecrated servant in the pulpit and by the Spirit to our hearts.

This is no call for any given worship style—for blessing Bach or banning Boltz—so much as it is a plea that whatever we do, we do it as "unto the Lord"—consciously, deliberately, and with a gravity appropriate to our estimate of who He is. When we worship, we can

soar beyond our time and space and blend our voices with the thousands and tens of thousands who bow continually at His throne. It's inconceivable to me that in that heavenly throng Gabriel would clear his throat to announce the Saturday night basketball tourney or call for volunteers to help repave the golden streets.

These are not bad things in themselves. Indeed, as a pastor for many years, I know the critical importance of encouraging the ministries, caring for the building, expanding the fellowship, and promoting the projects. But who will say that we are withering in worship because of work bees unannounced or votes not taken or projects unpromoted? More frequently than we care to say, we go home hungry Sabbath noon—not merely for the Special K loaf or that noodle casserole—but for the Bread of heaven. It's far too easy to lay the responsibility on those who minister at the front; they too have been conditioned by our expectations (or lack of them), by our responses, and by our failure to insist on higher, deeper, richer praise and worship.

The vital heart of Sabbathkeeping Adventism for 150 years has been a message about worship—on His day, in His way, with a joyful gravity that matches who we trust He is. As we begin with kindness and yet firmness to strip away from our worship that which is not worship, we'll again encounter the life-transforming power of His presence and prepare ourselves for an eternity in which we find our greatest joy in the light of His face.

*What if
Jesus
were here?*



Lonely at Christmas

I'm never happier than when our family is together at Christmas. Having our children and grandchildren home makes Christmas special. The house is full again, the kitchen is filled with great aromas, and we open presents together.

I treasure Christmas Sabbath, also. Our family takes up a whole pew at church. We pray together. We sing together. We read the Christmas story from the Bible. We talk about Jesus' love for us.

As I said, I'm never happier than when our family is together at Christmas.

It's ironic that as much as we now think of it in terms of "family time" and "togetherness," Christmas in fact commemorates the time when God's Family—the Godhead—was separated. That's what Jesus' birth meant, you know; the triune God was separated by a set of unique and remarkable circumstances. For the first time in eternity, God the Father couldn't hold face-to-face consultations with the Son. The Holy Spirit didn't have unobstructed communion with the Son. The angels had no Commander in Chief.

We can hardly imagine how it must've felt for Jesus, honored and exalted by all the unfallen beings of the universe, to live a life of relative obscurity in the small towns and dusty villages of an insignificant little Middle Eastern country. His birth was unheralded except to a few; His closest friends were mostly unsophisticated common people—many of them society's outcasts.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Heaven learned firsthand what lonely meant.

Lots of people today know what it means to be lonely. While many of us will celebrate Jesus' birth surrounded by family and friends, some will pass the day alone, their only company a pet or a television program. While the sights, sounds, and smells of the season assault most of our senses, some will "celebrate" alone with a meal for one, prepared straight from a can or from the freezer. But God understands loneliness.

That's the real message of Christmas: the Father loves us. Enough to be lonely. Enough to give His one and only Son. Christ's birth brings hope, the opportunity for eternal life. But it cost Heaven immensely. The apostle John wrote: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into

the world that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9, NIV).

For John, this love is demonstrated in particularly practical ways: "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (verse 11, NIV).

Christmas is a bad time to be lonely.

The Adventist Church does that by showing God's love to those in need. Is there a flood? An Adventist disaster relief team shows God's love in the relief it provides. When disease ravages a village in Thailand because there's no clean water supply, ADRA's development team shows God's love by drilling a well to provide potable water to people who may have never

even heard His name. Caring church school teachers show God's love, as do local church volunteers and people who regularly pray for each other.

"No one has ever seen God," John reminds us in verse 12, "but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (NIV). What a privilege: to be mirrors reflecting God's love.

We can reflect God's love collectively—as many congregations do—by feeding the homeless, teaching nutrition or stop-smoking classes, and opening our sanctuaries to satellite evangelistic events. Or we can reflect God's love individually under smaller, more intimate conditions by visiting the sick and elderly and inviting a new family home for Sabbath dinner. Until the Lord returns, there'll be plenty of lonely people to whom we can reflect God's love—not just during the holidays, but throughout the year as well.

Christmas is a bad time to be lonely. But God was willing to be lonely at Christmas so that you and I—all of us—could bask in the warmth of a love that cost Him all the wealth of heaven. I'm grateful for that love, because it gives us a reason to live, and something to reflect, until we're all in heaven with Him, part of one big, perfect family. Never to be lonely again.

Alfred C. McClure is president of the 850,000-member Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. This editorial is adapted from his devotional message on ADRA's World, a television program produced by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.



GIVE & TAKE

ADVENTIST LIFE

A class of 5-year-olds was singing Christmas carols, with each child naming favorite carols for the class to sing. In a corner of the room, at a Nativity scene, a little girl named Ava was toying with a shepherd figurine. The teacher asked Ava to name her favorite Christmas carol. Without hesitation she replied, "While Shepherds Washed Their Socks by Night."

—Name not given, Loma Linda, California

I overheard my 4-year-old grandson trying to comprehend the meaning of the "sleep in heavenly peace" phrase from "Silent Night." Talking half to himself and half out loud, he said, "That's a hard word to say: pea-ce . . . pea-ce . . . oh, peas! Food! That's all Baby Jesus had to eat was peas—just peas."

—Wilma McClarty, Collegedale, Tennessee

Our little group of believers worships in the small town of Fort Vermilion. Our Sabbath school does not often have visitors, but on this particular Sabbath one little girl who sometimes comes to Sabbath school with her grandma brought a friend who had never been to church before.

I steered the primary lesson to include a basic introduction to Jesus. At the end of Sabbath school the little girl said, "I believe in Jesus." I was elated and sent up a little prayer of thanks. But I was brought down to earth when she added, "I also believe in Santa Claus and the Easter bunny."

—Lorna Joch, Buffalo Head Prairie, Alberta, Canada



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

FACING HIS HEALTH

Recently on ABC's *Good Morning America*, former Los Angeles Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda was interviewed about his induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

From that subject the host jumped to Lasorda's health, specifically his heart problems. Asked about his diet these days, Lasorda said that he was eating pasta, nuts, fruits, and vegetables.

"What are you eating for meat?" the host asked.

"I don't eat anything that has a face," Lasorda replied.

—Virginia and Sam Remick, Palm Springs, California



PHOTO BY REUTERS/SAM MIRCOVICH/ARCHIVE PHOTOS

THOUGHTS ON THE TREE



GLAD TIDINGS: During the annual Union College Christmas tree lighting, students found some unusual ornaments—Christmas cards sent by their parents. Here Christine Rosette and Sylvia Cisneros hunt for greetings from home. The Union Student Association had written to parents requesting the holiday messages. *Photo by Erik Stenbakken.*

WE NEED YOU

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Why Brenda Wood Is Different

A turbulent childhood and her Seventh-day Adventist faith molded Brenda Wood into a sober, no-nonsense personality going against the grain in a world of TV fluff.

BY VINCENT COPPOLA

The following article, reprinted from Atlanta Magazine, September 1997, was prepared for a general audience, so you will find details not usually included in the articles we typically carry. But its core message is so strong and so affirming of the Adventist faith and lifestyle that we felt an urge to share it, in its entirety, with our readers.—Editors.

THE PHONE RINGS. IT'S BRENDA Wood agreeing to have lunch, not long after she's jumped from channel 5 to anchor channel 11's newscasts. "Let's meet at Neiman's restaurant," she says. "OK?" A half hour later it's Brenda. "Neiman-Marcus sounds too upscale," she decides. "How about the Bridgetown Grill? We'll sit outside." Sure enough, the phone rings a third time. It's Brenda. "It may [be] too windy. How about Veni Vidi Vici? Think it'll be crowded?"

Veni Vidi Vici it is.

She arrives—slim, attractive, 15 minutes late. She wears no jewelry; her clothes are modest, dark-hued, not the Easter egg pastels favored by many TV divas. No one in the restaurant seems to recognize her, but her presence is a soothing low-voltage hum, neither the doorbell jangle-Hello!—of WSB/channel 2's Monica Kaufman nor the electric chair jolt of former WXIA/channel 11's anchor Angela Robinson. Wood looks you right in the eye and shakes your hand. Her hands are rough, the hands of a working mom, not a \$500,000-a-year anchorwoman. "Don't write about my hands!" she pleads, and grins that mischievous school-girl grin.

Once seated, she fields questions carefully, speaking softly, with none of the rote, tip-of-the-tongue glibness typical of TV "personalities." The restaurant hopping is driven not by political correctness, she insists, but by a need to stay on top of things—all things, all the time. The site for the interview, for instance. ("Please," she grins, "don't write about my hands!" No writing about those hands!) "I've always been a control freak," she shrugs.

A devout Seventh-day Adventist, she eats no pork, drinks no alcohol, keeps a Saturday Sabbath. If WSB-TV's Monica Kaufman is effusive, warm, a cheerleader, Wood appears on air as cool, contained—the female version, some say, of the network anchors of old, guys like Eric Sevareid and Walter Cronkite, who steered viewers through the

Cuban missile crisis and the cold war.

On September 1, amid much fanfare—billboards, ads, promos—she steps up as lead anchor at WXIA and the linchpin in the station's drive to topple longtime powerhouse WSB-TV. In local TV news, where personality is a premium, her detached, cool style seems as much an anomaly as the fact that a deeply devout woman would choose to deliver news of the day's most heinous happenings. In Atlanta, where the gregarious Monica bubbles supreme, the reserved Brenda Wood, on first glance, seems to have as much chance of winning a ratings war as the Falcons do a Super Bowl.



But former channel 11 news director Dick Williams, who has watched WXIA's news teams flounder for 20 years, points out that the gap between WSB and the rest of Atlanta's TV news operations has begun to close in some time slots. Still, in the past six months WSB-TV clearly remains the dominant station; at the 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. slots, for instance, its ratings are often double those of WXIA and double those of WAGA. But WXIA and WAGA are often at least neck and neck, with WXIA claiming some important demographic gains.

Some of the credit for WXIA's momentum has to go to news director David Roberts, who, since arriving from Baltimore in January 1996, has raced

through the station like a tornado. Longtime weatherman Guy Sharpe retired, and Roberts fired the rest of the remaining weather operation. "Guy Sharpe was my first image of this station," he says. "Guy represented old Atlanta, and most of the people living here now ain't from Atlanta. I blew 'em out because nobody was watching. When there was severe weather, everybody went somewhere else!" Roberts has also brought in a team of hungry young reporters, Ernie Freeman and Tiffany Cochran, daughter of O. J. Simpson attorney Johnny Cochran, among them.

"Brenda Wood is the last piece of strategy in our drive to be number one," Roberts says. "The bottom line in this business is that you have to have

the best talent to win. It's like football: you can have Joe Montana as your quarterback, or you can have Jeff George."

Among the unanswered questions is how Brenda Wood will play at a news operation that over the years has showcased characters who'd make sitcom writers blanch. Among them a cocaine-snorting sports-caster and a weatherman accused of sexually accosting young boys; an all-White, all-male newscast ("The Four White Men") and its polar opposite, Angela Robinson, an ebullient Atlanta native determined to play up her *con-*

nection to the Black community. "Angela has talent, but it didn't work for me," says Roberts. "She was too down-home. An anchor has to reach out to the whole community."

Dick Williams, among others, is convinced that Wood, supported by the right team, will displace Monica Kaufman as the dean of Atlanta news. "Brenda is very smart, very professional, and very well respected," he says. "And she's unwilling to bring a phony tear for the sake of an extra ratings point." Atlanta *Journal-Constitution* TV critic Drew Jubera wrote in January 1997, "Wood could bring enough viewers with her from WAGA to gain ground on WSB in the early evening and seriously challenge WSB at 11:00 p.m. [where the two stations are 3.8 ratings

Perhaps her drive began incubating when at age 5 she saw the flashing lights and heard the shrieking sirens of the ambulance that took her mother away that last time.

points apart]. If WXIA can stake a claim in late night, momentum might carry into the rest of the day.”

In Atlanta a single ratings point (currently representing about 16,000 metro Atlanta homes tuned in to a particular show) is worth more than \$1 million in advertising revenue. With a \$250 million-plus annual advertising pie up for grabs, local stations are locked in a brutal hour-by-hour struggle for dominance, with egos, careers, and revenues on the line.

Wood will anchor the 5:00 p.m. broadcast with Kimberly Kennedy and the 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. broadcasts with Mike Landess, a journalistically solid, easygoing anchor who was basically drowned out by Robinson. David Roberts disputes the notion that the Wood/Landess tandem is a reconfiguration of the tried-and-true Black woman/White guy formula that works so well in Atlanta. (“The black widow syndrome,” some say: many of the white guys end up being devoured by their more talented female cohorts.) “This market has always been driven by strong female anchors, because they are better at it,” he says. “It has nothing to do with them being Black or female. It’s just better talent. Most of the male anchors in this town are as interesting as watching paint drying.”

By all accounts WAGA tried desperately to hold on to Wood, a highly recognized, trusted newscaster who anchored there for eight years. Similarly, perennial ratings champ WSB-TV made an eleventh-hour attempt to shanghai her and sew up their advantage. “The day she signed with us, WSB’s station manager was on the phone with her agent, looking to make a blank check offer,” says Roberts. “We were at a restaurant celebrating, and these guys were still trying.”

Both stations offered big dollars, perks, and privileges. “Monica called me,” remembers Wood. “We had a long conversation. She told me she was retiring in three years. She was very kind. WSB made me a very tempting offer: I could go there, assume Monica’s role, and be num-

ber one automatically . . . and live happily ever after.”

She holds up her hand like a school crossing guard, then blurts, “But maybe not!” She pauses, then adds, “Actually, I was waiting for the Lord to come sit on my bed and tell me what to do. After a while I said, ‘OK, Lord, if You’re not paying me a visit, don’t let me blow it.’”

As it turned out, she elected to be number one at WXIA, not number two and a lady-in-waiting at WSB. In her view the decision was in keeping with her lifelong work ethic. “I’ve always earned my way,” she says. “Sure, I’d like to be number one [in the market]. I want to be there on top of it. I want everybody to watch me. But I’m going to work hard—if that’s what it takes—to do it.”

Indeed, for most of her life she has worked hard—if that’s what it took—to make her way in a world in which success had no guarantee, in which clarity of purpose didn’t come readily. Perhaps her drive began incubating when at age 5 she saw the flashing lights and heard the shrieking sirens of the ambulance that took her mother away that last time. Or perhaps her determination was steeled when as a small girl she heard the violence that occasionally flashed like heat lightning between her struggling parents. She was born Brenda Bray in Washington, D.C. Her mother, Berniece Bray, died of alcoholism at age 32. “The night my mother died,” says Brenda, “my dad wasn’t there.” Her father, Herbert, wasn’t able to care for her. “I pray he’s still alive,” she says, “but I’d rather not know.”

Out of that pain may have blossomed the compassion that many viewers say they respond to in Brenda Wood, as well as the need to control, to keep from ever slipping back to those painful days. “I’m especially sensitive to children when they’re hurting,” she says. “I remember hurting as a child and how long it takes to get over hurt.”

Brenda was adopted by her mother’s brother, Henry, and his wife, Alma Blackmon, although Henry had moved

to the Netherlands to pursue his classical music career and Brenda never lived with him. Alma—an archetypal, churchgoing, devil-hating, iron-willed Black woman—became Brenda’s mother and the beacon in her life. Among other things, Alma Blackmon has been director of early childhood education programs for public schools in Washington, D.C., a college instructor, and a classical musician. On top of all that, she was Roberta Flack’s first piano teacher. “She [Alma] showered me with care, protection, and wonderful values,” says Wood.

When Brenda, a rebel at her strict, mostly White Seventh-day Adventist high school (sporting an outsized Afro and “very into my ethnicity”), wanted to become “a party girl at Howard University,” it was Alma, recovering from a battle with cancer, who made sure she kept the faith. The two wound up at Oakwood College, an Adventist school in Huntsville. “I thought I’d shrivel up and turn green in Alabama,” Brenda says. She finished college at Loma Linda, another Adventist school, in southern California, determined to become a filmmaker. “It was never my intention to be in front of a camera,” she insists. “I wanted to call the shots.” A friend set up a meeting for her at a studio.

“My mother absolutely forbade me to go,” remembers Brenda. “She reminded me that I was a Christian young lady: ‘If you go into film, who knows what they’d have you write . . . porno . . . bad language. Actually, Brenda was hoping to make “some biblical movie, like *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, with a great soundtrack.” She came back to Huntsville, furious that “my mother was running my life.” When the anger passed, she slowly came to another realization: “My faith is my life.”

Within a week she had job opportunities with two radio stations, two newspapers, and a TV station, all in Huntsville. At the TV interview, “I tell the guy, ‘I don’t work Friday nights, don’t work Saturdays, I’m leaving in January for graduate school, and I don’t want to do this.’ . . . He hires me.”

After a year she left Huntsville to take a job as a general assignment reporter at Nashville’s WSM, leaving behind Keith Wood, the Oakwood College associate professor of psychology she’d been dating. “I felt if I was going to get better, I’d better get to a bigger market,” she recalls. “Lonely . . . falling in love,” she says, she stayed in Nashville “a hot minute,” then returned to Huntsville, this time as a 23-year-old anchor.

Her “disjointed early childhood,” as she phrases it, made family utterly important. She married Wood (today Brenda, Alma, Keith, and daughters Kandis and Kristen all live together in Atlanta) and then jumped again, this time to Memphis, where her WMC-TV broadcast eventually dominated the market. She stayed eight years, successful but still unsettled. In 1988 she moved to Atlanta’s WAGA channel 5, then the CBS affiliate.

In 1995 Rupert Murdoch took over, and WAGA became a Fox affiliate. The lineup called for Brenda to solo anchor from 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. instead of co-anchor an 11:00 p.m. newscast; when that newscast became the highest rated prime-time newscast in the country at 10:00 p.m., it ultimately, because of the national attention she received, became the vehicle for her escape. “I’d be crazy not to acknowledge that much of this has nothing to do with me,” she says. “I’m very appreciative. I realize that my life didn’t have to turn out this way. There’s got to be a higher power at work.”

But her differences with Murdoch’s Fox—which officially took over ownership of WAGA early this year—were deep and troubling. “It bothers me that my leaving channel 5 was portrayed as a bidding war,” she says. “It was a very critical decision, but it was never about money.” Wood wanted NBC’s clout behind her, rather than Fox’s tinsel. It was also about *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Melrose Place* and the tabloid sleaze and schlock that Murdoch spews into the marketplace.

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. . . He
hires me.”*



"It never felt right," Wood says carefully.

Wood's day-to-day reality is not the "If it bleeds, it leads" context of television news: for Seventh-day Adventists—and Brenda is devout—both Christ and Satan are real beings. "I see the war of good and evil *in the news*," she says. "A redeeming force in battle with a very ugly force. The Bible tells us the world will get meaner. There will be all kinds of disasters and catastrophes."

She pauses, then shrugs. "My husband thinks I have a very skewed view of the world."

Yet as paradoxical as it may seem, Brenda Wood's very seriousness about her family and faith are qualities that insiders insist come across favorably on television and make her so marketable in Atlanta. Dick Williams, no spend-thrift when it comes to praise, remembers seeing Brenda and Alma singing Christmas carols together on a morning show. "I saw them, and I could literally feel family values—responsibility and virtue—being transmitted from one generation to the next."

For some viewers Brenda Wood communicates her conviction that this "meanness" will pass, that there's joy ahead, not an endless stream of Oklahoma City bombings. "Brenda has this soothing effect," says Kiss 104.7 radio's popular talk show host Melissa Summers. "In the

worst of times she lets you know that things are going to be OK, even if she doesn't say it. You sit there and think, 'Oh, *that's not so bad.*'"

To TV audiences wary of posturing politicians and preening media stars, Wood seems solid. "Brenda Wood is the genuine article, just as Monica is. You are getting the truth. You are getting the real person," says one television industry insider familiar with news marketing in Atlanta. "Brenda Wood's personal strength and presence come through on the screen."

On the job Wood is tough, driven, competitive. Where she can, she writes her own copy, fights for stories she thinks are significant; she's more than willing to send poorly written or underreported stories flying back in the faces of slackers. "Stingy with praise" is how one colleague describes her. "I'm more critical than complimentary," she admits, "because that's how I am with myself. I always feel I can do more."

She speaks softly in an interview, slowly, as if her thoughts are hidden somewhere in the back of her head and must be sampled like butterscotch candy before being revealed. "I'm not syrupy and soppy," says Wood, typically searching for the exact words to convey her meaning. "I don't like small talk or jabbering about meaningless things—on camera or in life."

Brenda Wood looks around the

crowded restaurant at the well-dressed young professionals eating their expense account lunches and drinking chardonnay and Ketel One martinis, at one with and yet always separate from them. A point driven home when one of the community affairs people at channel 11 wants her to make an appearance at a Saturday charity event, the kind of thing anchors love to do to "humanize" themselves. It's the Sabbath, so Brenda declines.

She gets up to leave. There are children to be picked up at school, a household to run, more meetings with David Roberts, who is plotting channel 11's victory as carefully as a general planning war strategy. The battle, unlike Wood's belief about the struggle between good and evil, is far from certain. She'll have a new anchor alongside her and a fickle audience that no anchor, save Monica, has ever held over time. "I was always looking for a mission," she says. "God puts us here for an express purpose. I've always wanted to work hard and make the most difference."

God and the ratings willing, she'll have her chance. ■

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Vincent Coppola is an *Atlanta Magazine* contributing editor.

Beyond the Platitudes

What happens when our claims about the Bible clash with the hard realities of our own lives?

BY JAN PAULSEN

The following is a condensation of a devotional presented at the October 1997 Annual Council of the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland.—Editors.

HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE POWER OF YOUR WORD. HEAR MY PLEA, O Lord: Wherein lies this power? And what, Lord, does all of this mean to me today?

The Word seems so far removed from the life I live and the issues I have to face and resolve today that I cannot but wonder whether, at this point in history, it is still able to speak to me clearly, strongly, reassuringly, caringly, and whether it is able to give direction to my life. My life is not just any life, Lord; it

is special, and it is mine. It is the only life I have, and it is mine to live.

So, Lord, I am asking You—I who live in an age of post this and post that, and who have seen it all and have become somewhat jaded by it—is there life in Your Word to meet my difficult moments when I am tired and a bit cynical of it all?

I who have more defeats than victories, is there power in the Word to turn things around for me?

I who, as You well know, struggle at times with my faith, who find that the events of Christ's life happened so long ago that (forgive me, Lord) I at times wonder whether they are still true. Does Your Word bring to me a reality that is timeless? God, can You hear me, and do You understand what my struggle is?

I who am broken by illness, can I still find healing in Your Word?

I who am bewildered by both the world and "the brethren," does Your Word lift my sights to a better future?

I who have failed my spouse and whose personal life is in disarray, does Your Word have anything to say to my troubled life?

Or am I on my own? Is there somewhere for me a "balm in Gilead"?

I who have been given an office and an assignment that is so much bigger than I am, can Your Word carry me beyond my own limits?

Lord, as You can see, I need very much to discover for myself the power of Your Word. Help me, O Lord. Let it happen.

God, can You hear me, and do You understand what my struggle is?

The power of God's Word lies, it seems to me, essentially in two areas: (1) in its ability to find a person wherever they are and (2) in its ability to create and make something new. Let's take each of these in turn.

First, the Bible as the Word of God finds me, as no other book does,

timeless and quite relentless, and only the persistent hardness of my heart will silence it. It's this searching and probing reality that is at the heart of the conviction that the Bible is uniquely the Word of God. It finds me wherever I am.

From the very beginning of time the Word spoke in search of humanity: "Adam, where are you?"

"Well, God, I am here, but I am not very presentable; I feel ashamed, so I hid" (see Gen. 3:9).

The incident testifies to the uncanny quality of the Word to search and expose and to force me to face up to reality. The inspired Book describes it as the "light that shines in the dark-

ness," and, it says, the darkness is unable to put it out (see John 1:5).

As the Word finds me, it probes relentlessly my inner being. It puts me on a "guilt trip" that later becomes a journey of healing and recovery. As the Word finds me, it challenges my confusion and forces me to admit that on my own I don't know where, how, or what. I am without answers.

But as I see the pointlessness and emptiness of it all, and as I allow the Word to speak to me, I

find that the Word is not the tormentor of my soul. Quite the contrary, it is the voice of Someone who is at once reassuring, friendly, understanding, forgiving, and full of hope. And I am drawn to Him who speaks, saying: "Come to me . . . and I will give you rest" (Matt.

wherever I am. Then, uncannily, it probes and searches into the depths of my life—bringing up to the surface whatever it finds. And whatever it brings up to the surface, I must face and deal with.

In this respect the Word of God is



11:28).* “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. . . . When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned. . . . For I am the Lord, your God, . . . your Savior. . . . You are precious and honored in my sight. . . . I love you. . . . Do not be afraid, for I am with you”^o (Isa. 43:1-5).

That is the reality the probing Word brings to me. And that is what I want more than anything.

The Word of God is neither philosophical nor hypothetical. It finds its meaning in the practical life that has to be lived each day. In doing so, it brings stability into something that is terribly fluctuating and at times fragile and uncertain. The Word of God is about life—today and in the future. What is going to happen to my life? Where will it take me?—questions from which we cannot run away, questions without answers, except in the Word.

Second, the power of the Word is confirmed in its ability to create.

Without any introduction or explanatory comment, the gospel writer simply asserts: “Through him all things were made; and without him nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:3). And in the words of the psalmist: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth” (Ps. 33:6). Such words are reminiscent of the scene when time began: “Darkness was over the surface of the deep,” and the Word spoke: “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:2), and light there was!

The “deep,” covered by darkness, contains the world of chaos. The Word creatively removes chaos and confusion from my life. It is like stepping out of darkness into the bright light of day. Creative forces are released in my life. It is a breathtaking discovery to find that these bleached, bloodless, meatless bones of mine are coming to life again, in the symbolism of the writer of old, who said: “I will put my Spirit in you and you will live. . . . Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord” (Eze. 37:14).

The Word of God, whether written or spoken by Him who was the Word, is the one single element that resolves the tension between faith and unbelief. We see this illustrated magnificently in the Gospel of John. We see it particularly in incidents in which the Word of life is alone with the individual to whom it is being spoken, and the powerful way in which the Word explodes into faith:

■ Jesus to Nicodemus: “You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again’” (John 3:7).

■ Jesus to the woman at the well: “I who speak to you am he” (John 4:26).

■ At the empty tomb: “Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher).” Then followed her confession of faith: “I have seen the Lord” (John 20:16-18).

It is that personal confrontation with the Word that draws me and compels me out of my own world and values into a life of discipleship. It arrests me, provokes me, and will not let me go.

And out of this, lives of faith and obedience are born, created by the Word, testifying to the truth of Isaiah’s words that those who hope in

the Lord “will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isa. 40:31).

What can God do for me? If it pleases the Lord of the Word, of course, He has power to heal my illness, to find me a job, to sell my house, to balance my budget, to have a word with “the brethren” to ensure my reelection. There is no end to what God can do, if it pleases Him.

But let me not hold God hostage to my private collection of wishes and to my definition of how His power should be used. I in my little world must remember that the creative power of the Word is primarily and preeminently seen in making a believer of me, and in giving me, who otherwise has none, a future to look forward to, filled with hope and joy. ■

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

Jan Paulsen is a vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland.



The 12 Ways of Christmas

Visualizing the Baby in the manger as a personal Messiah inspires our holiday activities.

BY MARY LANE ANDERSON

AS THE END OF THE YEAR approaches, our lives begin to revolve around Christmas—the number of shopping days, musical concerts, gift lists, and Christmas bonuses. Decorations that used to appear in store windows after Thanksgiving scarcely have the courtesy to wait until after Halloween. With such an assault on our dollars and “senses,” how should we respond? Why do we celebrate Christmas?

The most obvious reason for observing Christmas is to celebrate Christ’s birth. We know December 25 isn’t the birthday of our Lord, but Christmas is a holiday that focuses the attention of the whole religious and secular world on a tiny baby in a manger, who is our Saviour. Hearts are softened. It’s all right to talk about Joseph, Mary, and Jesus the Messiah. What a perfect setting in which to share the gospel.

The second reason we celebrate Christmas is to create memories for, and with, those we love. Warm Christmas memories center around the atmosphere of love experienced, and the more closely we intertwine *family* time with *Christ* time, the more precious our holiday season will become.

What makes this atmosphere of love? It is a look of warmth when exchanging gifts, the sharing of family traditions, the glow of

lights, the aroma of cinnamon, carols, specially prepared dishes, laughter, and much more.

In our home it was the sprig of spruce Mom put on the hot stove, jigsaw puzzles, a box of “Christmas” oranges wrapped in green tissue paper, colored lights on the blue spruces along the driveway that made the snow-covered branches look like puffs of red, blue, green, and yellow whipped cream.

Decorations often set the stage for this special atmosphere of sight, sound, and smell. Your home doesn’t have to be a Nordstrom’s window to be considered “decorated.” With a wise use of time and money, there are many ways to create an invitingly warm and festive cocoon of love.



Use the gift itself (i.e., linens) as a wrapping around an appropriate-sized container.

1. Focus on the Christmas story

Replace Santa and his reindeer with a Nativity scene.

All aspects of our Christmas activity should reflect this Christ focus. Visualizing and accepting the Baby in the manger as a personal Messiah inspires our practicing, organizing, cooking, and shopping with love and tranquility. In everything we do and say we join the heavenly choir in celebrating Christ’s birth by giving “glory to God in the highest” and extending “peace and goodwill” to coworkers, neighbors, friends, and family.



Frame a white lace antique handkerchief as a gift.

2. Clean

Cut off the lower limbs of your Christmas tree, or thin out some branches, to make bow-tied swags for the front door or table center. Almost any greenery can be tied into a swag or wired into a wreath. If your neighbor has a holly tree, perhaps he or she would share a branch or two. Large pinecones—natural, spray painted, or dipped in colored wax—display beautifully in a basket on the floor or as a centerpiece. Smaller cones, nuts, or berries can be glued to a cardboard wreath for the door, a styrofoam ball for a topiary, or a cone shape for a “tree.” Poke cloves into an orange as solidly as possible and hang with a ribbon. As the fragrance of pine, citrus, and spices permeates your home, mix it generously with the fragrance of the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley.

Almost any greenery can be tied into a swag or wound into a wreath.



3. Invest for lasting enjoyment or double duty

If your landscaping really needs an evergreen tree, buy a live potted one to decorate inside, then replant it in the yard in spring. Instead of fresh-cut flowers, purchase potted blooms.

4. Choose a theme (color, style, etc.)

Theme decorating can be simple and create a dramatic feel. One of the most beautiful trees I've seen was covered with red velvet bows laid on the branches. Nothing else. A tree with a Victorian theme might have tiny white lights, white tulle tucked into the branches, streamers of wide white lace, lace balls, and nosegays of dried flowers.

5. Use what you have

Cut strips of fabric to the desired width and length, and paint them with thinned white glue or spray with fabric stiffener to make your own ribbon. Tie red ribbon and bells around the necks of your children's stuffed animals and sit them on the ends of the stairs. Display collections—a grouping of candles or candleholders with a mirror behind, odd pieces of pretty glassware grouped together as candle receptacles, an old musical instrument hung with a bow and sprig of evergreen, an antique silver piece as a base for a pinecone or berry tree or topiary, an old sled and skates in the front hall.

6. Remember Jesus

Give a special thank offering, assist a specific mission project, make a commitment to evangelism, or plan some other worthy project.



Pinecones, displayed in a basket, make a festive centerpiece.

7. Be a good steward

Gifts don't have to cost money to have value. My sister-in-law gave her husband 12 coupons, one per month, each one redeemable for a favorite pie. Their daughter dug up and potted fox-glove plants for each family. If you sing, record a tape for your friends. Use your talents and money wisely.

8. Promote Christian values

Your son might want, beg for, or cry for the latest TV action hero, but try to picture the boy Jesus receiving that particular gift. Substitute another coveted toy instead.

9. Wrap creatively

Use colorful, recyclable fabric instead of paper (always on sale after Christmas). Ask for a roll end of plain newsprint from your local newspaper office and let your children use crayons to decorate or write messages. Recycle

store bags by spray painting over the names or gluing on pictures from old Christmas cards. Cover small shoe boxes permanently with new or salvaged wrapping paper and reuse as you do gift bags. Sew cloth gift bags. Iron wrinkled tissue paper; save reusable bows, ribbon, and paper. Above all, wrap with love.

10. Take time to enjoy the process of giving and receiving gifts

Picture the pleasure and adoration of the kings kneeling with their gold, myrrh, and frankincense. Picture also the wonder and heartfelt gratitude of Mary and Joseph. Children especially need to learn to appreciate each gift they receive and to be patient with the gift giving and receiving of others. My in-laws choose one person to pick a gift from under the tree. We all wait while that gift is opened, oohing and aahing over it. Then the receiver goes to the giver, across the room if necessary, to give a thank-you and a hug. Pleasure and appreciation can't be rushed.

Gift giving makes Christmas special too. It is an opportunity for us to show our tender regard for friends and family.

11. Plan ahead and share your treasures

Throughout the year, as you associate with friends and family, tune in to comments they make. If you really care about someone, there is no room for the "I-couldn't-think-of-anything" box-of-candy routine. Our weekly church offerings are to be planned ahead. Why not the yearly tokens of affection exchanged in special honor of our Lord's birth?

Perhaps you are a collector, or love garage sales or antique stores. One day you find a delicate white lace handkerchief. Frame it for a gift! Besides the three gifts mentioned in Matthew, I imagine the Magi pulled priceless family heirlooms and gems from their camel bags, so check your attic or trunk.

12. Reach out to others

You could present a food or gift basket to a needy family. You might invite a lonely student home for the day. Give



Recycle store bags by gluing on pictures from old Christmas cards.

a loaf of fresh bread to the neighbors, or serenade them with carols.

The only childhood gift I remember was the can of sweetened condensed milk my brother gave me one year—my own can to stash in the closet with a spoon and drink whenever I wanted. I *loved* sweetened condensed milk! It was better than candy. Writing about it now, 40 years

later, I can still taste it! Why do I remember that particular gift? Because it emphasized to me that my brother had thought about what I liked and wanted to please me.

As you prepare for this holiday season, picture the first Christmas.

* You are the innkeeper . . .

Can you make room for one more lonely person in your circle of warmth and friendship?

* You are a shepherd . . .

Are you willing to spread the good news of His birth?

* You are a Wise Man . . .

Have you planned long in advance for the gifts that are just exactly right for the occasion—a part of you and a complete expression of your love?

* You own the stable . . .

Would Christ feel welcome in your home, with your decorations, food, gifts, and entertainment?

* The song peals forth . . .

Are you anticipating the tidings of great joy? ■

Mary Lane Anderson writes from Redwood Valley in northern California.



We're Outta Here!

GINA SPIVEY BROWN and
LORETTA PARKER SPIVEY

There is a time for everything," said the wise man (Eccl. 3:1, NIV). Incorporated into that time is the reality that Take a Stand, as it's presently known, will no longer be a part of the *Review*. We thought that as a proper farewell we'd let you, our faithful *Adventist Review* family, know why we did what we did for the past two years (there really was a method to our madness).

We're on a mission to make God's people *think*. Jesus really is coming soon, and this "religion thing" has to be real. It has to be real enough to be willing to suffer and die for. What we wear, eat, drink, and watch, the Holy Spirit will work on, if He is allowed. Whether or not you truly believe God's Word and trust Him 100 percent will decide your ultimate and eternal future.

Our purpose was and is to encourage, force, and even enrage you to do the following:

1. Think! God speaks to us through our minds. It's important to think critically and ask questions. Read the Bible! Memorize it; love it; draw it into the crevasses of your mind; seek God's guidance, and watch yourself grow.

2. Pick up the "red books." Ellen White's writings are still valid. Delving into the inspired books and articles, understanding the context and the background, is pleasurable, enlightening, and a real blessing. At this moment in earth's history, we *mustn't* water down or invalidate Ellen White's gift, but instead we must read, read, read. We must realize that her writings *support* God's holy Word.

3. Know Jesus for real. For Seventh-day Adventists it's very important that we not only know the Bible and the points we use to "beat people down," but we must know the God of the Bible, His precious Son, and the ever-present Holy Spirit. There's but one way to do that: to seek God in daily prayer and Bible study.

We can't begin to tell you just how much we've been blessed by this process as we wrote this column month after month. Our purpose was to challenge you to know for yourself what you believe and why. In this battle there are no conscientious objectors, no noncombatants, and no spectators. We must all, in the final analysis, "take a stand"—either for God or for Satan.



Loretta

Gina

If you disagreed to the point of grabbing your Bible to prove us wrong (or right), or searched Ellen White's books and articles to gain a deeper understanding; if you had a discussion in Sabbath school, Adventist Youth Society, or even at the dinner table, then we did our job.

At times you got upset enough to write and read us the riot act; other times you wrote to let us know we were on the right track. You wrote the *Adventist Review* and, in some cases, the General Conference president. We've had the pleasure of meeting you in person and via the CompuServe forum. We have been blessed by this process, and we'll still be around in one way or another, challenging you to take a stand—not for Gina or for Loretta, but always for Jesus!

Parting Thoughts From Gina:

Thank you to those of you who were a constant encouragement to Take a Stand. Loretta, God is always surprising us with His infinite goodness, but He just got "out of control" with this! It was beyond our wildest prayers. Though your thinking process is slightly off, I still love you. A final question for you to think about: "What do you think about eating out in restaurants on Sabbath?" (*Not!*)

Parting Thoughts From Loretta:

Gina, even though your perspective is sometimes confused and off-base, you're still the best friend and sister-in-law a girl could have. It's been a blast! I still can't believe that you really believe some of that stuff, but I love you and look forward to continuing these conversations in private.

By the way, what do you think about business partnerships between Adventists and Catholics? (H'mmm.)

From both of us to the *Review* staff: Steve, you're the best. To Bill, Chitra, Jean, Andy, and all the rest: We love you guys, it's been real! Love, Gina and Loretta.

What do you believe? And why? Gina and Loretta challenge you to read your Bible, know what you believe, and take a stand . . . for Jesus.

New Opportunities in Battle Creek

Adventist Heritage Ministry seeks to create Historic Adventist Village

BY HERBERT E. DOUGLASS, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADVENTIST HERITAGE MINISTRY

Civic leaders in Battle Creek, Michigan, have extended the Adventist Church a rare opportunity. The city is inviting the church to retell its Battle Creek story in a proposed Historic Adventist Village. Administered by Adventist Heritage Ministry, the village site will contain several properties significant in Adventist history.

The invitation comes as the Kellogg Corporation prepares to open an \$18 million cultural theme park, Kellogg Cereal City U.S.A., in 1998. This tourist attraction will tell the story of how John Harvey Kellogg changed the way America eats.

The link between the Historic Adventist Village and Kellogg Cereal City U.S.A. has significant implications for the church. It is estimated that one third of the anticipated 400,000 annual visitors to KCC will visit the village. At the site, tourists will discover the distinctive history that formed the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church today.

In Battle Creek most of the great decisions of the early Seventh-day Adventist Church were made. Battle Creek was where:

- The church's name was selected and the denomination formally organized.

- The first Adventist college was founded.

- Thirty-two General Conference sessions were held, between 1863 and 1901.

- Ellen G. White wrote out the great controversy vision.

- Church pioneers decided how to determine the beginning and

end of the Sabbath.

- The first health reform institution was established.

- The church's worldwide publishing ministry was launched.

Visitors' Center

One of the village sites will be a state-of-the-art visitors' center that introduces the village and its features. A time line corridor will graphically display the historical roots of the main doctrines of the Adventist Church, and a film will depict the church's contribution to Christian mission, a contribution that is uniquely Adventist. The overall focus will encourage visitors to prepare for Christ's return.

Buildings to be restored include the homes of James and Ellen White and Deacon and Mrs. John White (the parents of James White), and the Parkville church (to be moved in), where Ellen White had her remarkable 1861 Civil War vision.

Buildings that will be accurately replicated will include the first sanitarium, the Western Health Reform Institute, precursor of the world-famous Battle Creek Sanitarium; the first publishing house, which soon grew into the largest publishing house in Michigan; the 1857 meetinghouse; and the general store owned by the Adventist father-in-law of W. K. Kellogg, with a "Closed on Sabbath" sign displayed each weekend. The *Morning Star* exhibit will feature James Edson White's boat, made in Battle Creek, which led the way in bringing the Adventist message to Southern Blacks.

Each site will feature some aspect of Adventist beliefs, mission, history,

and values, and the human interest stories that are significant in communicating Adventist beliefs and mission to each generation.

Visitors to the village will have a better understanding of early Adventist life, with its emphasis on healthful living and education. Many will gain a new respect for the Adventist Church and its strong Christian roots.

"The Adventist Village probably has more potential in evangelistic outreach than any other single project in the Adventist world," says Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference president.

"Nowhere else do we have the potential of personally contacting hundreds of thousands of people of all ages annually, people who will arrive with questions, but leave with a winsome picture of Seventh-day Adventists. All this with relatively little cost to the general church program," Elder Folkenberg adds.

"In addition to the evangelistic opportunities, I can't think of anything that will more fervently grip the hearts of young and old in a fresh grasp of the mission and message of the Adventist Church than the restoration of the Adventist Village," says retired GC president Neal C. Wilson.

The projected opening for the Historic Adventist Village is September 1998. However, volunteers are needed to help in the development of the project and also to be trained as tour guides. All inquiries should be directed to Jim Nix, Adventist Heritage Ministry, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, or phone (301) 680-6544.

Rwandan Adventists Seek Reconciliation

BY JONATHAN GALLAGHER, NEWS DIRECTOR, GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Despite continuing violence, Adventist Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda are actively working toward reconciliation.

Recovery seminars conducted by church leaders and specially appointed counselors target the whole country and include the entire church membership, reports Samuel Bimenyimana, treasurer of the Rwanda Union, based in Kigali. Adventists number some 320,000, among a population of 6.9 million.

Led by retired pastor Esdras Mpyisi (who served as an advisor to the former king of Rwanda), the recovery and reconciliation seminars began

February 1 with a weeklong program for 500 church leaders and members. During the program individuals were encouraged to speak specifically about their offenses of the past and to give their vision for the future of the country in the wake of the atrocities that have left up to 1 million dead.

"There were prayers, forgiveness, and recognition of guilt and wrongdoing in a special brotherly and sincere atmosphere," said Bimenyimana. "The ceremony culminated with individual written commitments to forget about the past and to start afresh with God. All of these commitments and confes-

sions were set on fire as a symbol of starting a new way of life for the Adventist Church in Rwanda. The event concluded with prayers of consecration," he said.

"Three Adventist leaders in Rwanda accompanied Pastor Mpyisi in five three-day reconciliation seminars throughout the country in May," reports Jean Emmanuel Nlo Nlo, communication director for the Africa-Indian Ocean Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The reconciliation program continues, and despite the recent killing of an Adventist leader and rebel attacks in the northeast border area, the church leaders expressed their desire to maintain and develop "the peaceful atmosphere that is developing in the church as a result of the recovery seminars."

NEWS BREAK

GC Signs Agreements With Two Satellite Broadcasters

General Conference officials recently signed cooperative agreements with two Adventist-operated satellite broadcasters—Safe TV (KSBN) and Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN). The agreements are expected to increase the Adventist Church's global ministry.

Operating since 1995 on KSBN, Safe TV will begin uplinking its signal on digital satellite in the first quarter of 1998, and beaming to North, Central, and South America, as well as parts of Africa.

While not a religious station, Safe TV targets a secular audience with weather, news, business reports, health, and parenting programs, along with 16 hours of Adventist programming weekly.

Under the satellite arrangement, the Safe TV signal will be packaged with 10 other channels and offered by subscription throughout North America.

Under this arrangement the Adventist Church will get six hours a week of free airtime to broadcast major evangelistic meetings.

"The concept of safe television for all ages is to provide programming that anyone can watch without having to worry about content ratings," says Carlos Pardeiro, president of Safe TV. "You can be guaranteed that there will be no violence, sexual content, or bad language. Our programming is supportive of family values, children, the environment, and religious beliefs.

"We are happy to receive guidance from the General Conference in the area of cultural appropriateness. We want to move the mission of the church forward," says Pardeiro, expressing his willingness to take the advice of church leaders.

"We are delighted to work together with media ministries led by laymembers," says Philip Follett, a General Conference vice president. "We appreciate Safe TV's cooperative spirit and look forward to a beneficial and productive relationship."

The agreement is nonexclusive and does not preclude other broadcast network relationships in the future. For

more information about Safe-TV's satellite package, call 888-SAFETV-1.

After lengthy discussions, GC officials signed a "Joint



NEW BEGINNING: GC president Robert S. Folkenberg (with pen) and KSBN president Carlos Pardeiro (seated, right) have agreed on a plan for their respective organizations to work together to spread the church's satellite outreach.

The Nuclear Family

BY MYRNA TETZ, MANAGING EDITOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW

Have you heard about how one nuclear family spent its vacation? In a recent *Washington Post*, Art Buchwald described the experience of Fred Albertson.

Buchwald describes how Fred picked up his children from a previous marriage and flew with them to their vacation home. His present wife sent her children to their father's (her ex-husband's) home.

Fred had a crisis in his company and left his children with his current wife. His ex-wife heard about this and demanded that the children come back immediately. The children did not want to go home so Fred's mother came to stay with the children.

However, Fred's current wife had invited her mother to stay with her while Fred was gone and his mother and her mother did not get along.

Now, Fred had two children by his second marriage but he also had two children by his first wife which meant he also had grandchildren. They all came to stay during the

vacation. But Fred's current wife got mad at Fred saying this was typical of the way their marriage was going and suggested that they consider separating.

Fred returned home without solving his business crises. His mother and his current wife's mother told him what a

NEWS COMMENTARY

lousy father he was. His children by his first marriage wanted him to play golf.

The offspring from his second marriage wanted to go fishing so Fred divided his days between golfing and fishing. And his current wife's children kept calling because their father's new wife was a wicked witch.

And what about the Adventist family? Seventh-day Adventists have about the same divorce rate as the general population. Mixed and blended families are increasingly common in the churches where we worship.

The father image is crucial. Two parent parenting is crucial. Marriage commitment is crucial. For the sake of the little ones.

NEWS BREAK

Declaration of Commitment" with Illinois-based 3ABN, reports GC president Robert S. Folkenberg. In the statement both 3ABN and the GC affirmed each other and the vital importance of efficiency in the proclamation of the three angels' message to the world.

The document also describes an issue resolution process by which representatives of 3ABN and Adventists in the territories they serve can resolve any differences that may arise.

NAD Colleges Set New Enrollment Record

Adventist colleges and universities in North America set a new enrollment record this fall with a full-time equivalency (FTE) enrollment of 16,784, up 2.2 percent from last year (see table).

The enrollment count represents 12 consecutive years of FTE increases and breaks the previous record of 16,561 set in 1979, reports Dallas Kindopp, an associate director of the

Comparative Enrollment Report

College/University	FTE			
	1994	1995	1996	1997
Andrews University	2,349	2,441	2,522	2,534
Atlantic Union College	552	514	498	534
Canadian University College	331	316	269	279
Columbia Union College	641	773	828	779
Florida Hospital College	160	175	187	229
Kettering College of Medical Arts	395	392	387	369
La Sierra University	1,357	1,442	1,442	1,455
Loma Linda University	2,932	2,968	3,080	3,136
Oakwood College	1,320	1,390	1,449	1,561
Pacific Union College	1,459	1,552	1,475	1,534
Southern Adventist University	1,360	1,331	1,382	1,456
Southwestern Adventist University	722	778	836	860
Union College	496	480	475	540
Walla Walla College	1,564	1,583	1,585	1,518
TOTALS	15,638	16,135	16,415	16,784

Source: NAD Data Management Service.

North American Division Education Department.

Oakwood College led all schools with the largest numeric FTE increase, up 112, or 8 percent, to 1,561. However, with an FTE increase of 42, Florida Hospital College logged the



NET '98 Pre-Events

Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University, uplink site for NET '98, launched 12 concurrent seminars on September 30 for *Tuesday Night Live*, designed to reach community members and help them get used to being in the church when NET '98 begins October 3.

More than 250 people attended, most of them non-Adventists. The five most-attended meetings were:

	People Attending
Digging Up King Solomon's Ruins	90
Surfing the Internet	35
Nature Nuggets for Kids and Parents	35
Discipleship Through Bible Study	25
Conversational Russian	20

—Kermit Netteburg, assistant to the North American Division president for communication

For Your Good Health

Spare Tire Prevention

An expanding waistline—that “spare tire” look—can be headed off by eating at least 19 servings of vegetables per week and walking four or more hours a week or jogging one to three hours per week. People who eat more than seven servings per week of beef, pork, and lamb were most likely to have abdominal weight gain. Excess abdominal fat is a strong risk factor for many major diseases.—*HealthNews*.

Applying What You Know

A new study shows 80 percent of parents are aware of sound nutritional practices as depicted in the Food Guide Pyramid, but only 37 percent use that information in planning their children's meals. And most parents surveyed (72 percent) say they're not concerned about their children's consumption of soft drinks and junk food.—*American Medical Association*.

—Compiled by Larry Becker, editor of *Vibrant Life*, the church's health outreach journal. To subscribe, contact your ABC, or call 1-800-765-6955.

N E W S B R E A K

largest percentage increase, up 22 percent to 229.

“These totals are an expression of confidence by Adventists in the higher educational system to prepare Adventist young people for service,” Kindopp says.

Rocky Mountain Conference Terminates Experiment

On November 2 the Rocky Mountain Conference executive committee voted to discontinue endorsing Christ Advent Fellowship (CAF) as a recognized conference company, and encouraged CAF members to transfer their membership to churches within the conference.

The split between the conference and CAF centered on differences in theology, Adventist lifestyle, church process, and governance.

Conference officials also terminated CAF pastor Clay Peck's employment as of November 5, after he indicated his desire to stay with the congregation and after he expressed an unwillingness to be reassigned to any other conference church.

News Notes

✓ NET '98 evangelist Dwight Nelson is requesting 100,000 volunteers to participate in intercessory prayer to prepare for the global satellite evangelistic series convening

in October. The recruitment of volunteers will begin on January 3. For more information, call your conference NET '98 coordinator.



Adventist Communication Network Broadcasts

Here are a few of the programs planned by the Adventist Communication Network for the month of January 1998. Call 1-800-ACN-1119 for complete program listings, time, and channel information. All times shown are Eastern time.

- Jan. 3 **Day of Prayer Uplink**—worship service, 8:30-9:25 a.m., 11:00-11:55 a.m., Noon-12:55 p.m., 1:00-1:55 p.m., 2:00-2:55 p.m.
- Jan. 7 **First Wednesday**—church news, 7:30-8:30 p.m.
- Jan. 24 **Creating Health**—educational series, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

What's Upcoming?

- Dec. 1 Monthly Focus—Christian Hospitality
- Dec. 6 Ingathering Sabbath
- Dec. 13 Special Offering to Build Churches in Russia

IN DEFENSE OF RAHAB

*Sometimes we're confronted with two or more bad options.
When that happens, what should we do?*

BY ROY ADAMS

This article is extracted and adapted from a larger manuscript by the author on the book of Joshua, now at the Pacific Press awaiting publication.—Editors.

IMAGINE YOURSELF A CHRISTIAN IN NAZI GERMANY IN THE 1940S. AGAINST THE LAW, you've decided to give asylum in your home to an innocent Jewish family fleeing death. Without warning, gestapo agents arrive at your door and confront you with a direct question: "Are there any Jews on your premises?" What would you say? What would you do?

The issue is far from theoretical. And in what follows, I want to explore what we might learn from an Old Testament incident, the story of Rahab.

As Israel prepared to enter Canaan, their first challenge was Jericho, a fortress city—strong, well defended, and of critical strategic importance. A failure here would spell psychological disaster for the invading forces. But a decisive victory would send shock waves throughout the entire area, unnerving less-protected leaders.

Taking no chances, Joshua dispatched two spies into the city for an on-the-spot assessment. Sometime toward evening¹ the men are spotted entering the house of the town prostitute, which, as an avenue of lucrative intelligence, was no doubt carefully watched by Jericho's counterintelligence agents.

Word of the strangers' presence quickly reached the king of Jericho, and a royal delegation appeared at Rahab's door with a message from His Majesty: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land."²

So the king's messengers are at the door. How would Rahab respond? How *should* she respond? Were you in her place, what would you do?

With all the cunning that years in her business had taught her, Rahab emerged with a concocted answer on her lips: "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them."³

Much discussion has ensued in Christian circles over the years about the rightness or wrongness of Rahab's response. Unable to dodge the fact that her answer clearly was out of sync with the plain truth of the situation, many Christians have settled the question by suggesting that we should not judge a woman of such questionable morality by our high Christian standards. "To a Christian a lie can never be justified, but to a person like Rahab light comes but gradually. . . . God accepts us where we are but we must 'grow in grace.'"⁴

The clear implication here is that as Christians we'd have done better. So what, indeed, would we have done under similar circumstances?

I want to make it clear at the outset that *truth is and should remain the watchword for the Christian*. Amazingly, however, even this high principle can be turned on its head. One encounters the argument in some quarters, for example, that it's wrong to leave on the lights or the radio in your



house to scare off a potential thief; for to give the impression you're home when you're not is deceptive. I once encountered a church elder who believed that to take your telephone receiver off the hook while you're busy or are praying amounts to a lie, since it gives the caller the impression that the line is legitimately engaged. This kind of irrational overenthusiasm caricatures the ninth commandment and trivializes the whole issue of truth and falsehood.

Interestingly, it never dawns on those who hold such extreme positions that by her behavior, Rahab had committed treason against her country and had betrayed all her neighbors. I've not met a single Christian who has called that aspect of her behavior into question, but we go berserk over her misdirection of the Jericho police!

Nor have I heard any Christian question the basic idea of sending out spies in the first place. Isn't concealment the fundamental strategy of spying? Often the spy must represent himself/herself as being someone else. At the very least, intentions must be disguised, appearances camouflaged, and half truths must be spoken.⁵ Was it, then, an act of deception for Joshua or

Moses to send out spies?

To come to that conclusion, however, is to run up against the fact that the spy mission—under Moses, at least—was at the express command of God.⁶

Moreover, the Old Testament is saturated with examples of undercover activity in the accomplishment of the divine purpose.

Jochebed's strategy to protect the baby Moses might be cited as a case in point. One can argue that every day the lad was kept concealed, Jochebed lived a lie as she went about her regular duties in the community. For, in effect, she was representing herself as standing in compliance with the Egyptian edict when, in fact, she was not.

And when, unable to keep the baby hidden any longer, she placed him in a basket in the Nile, didn't little Miriam play her role well? When she offered to find "one of the Hebrew women"⁷ to assist the princess in rearing the child, didn't she do the right thing? Or should she have said: "Mind if I get *the child's mother* to help you, Your Royal Highness?"

And do you imagine the princess was unaware of the plot? Can't you almost see a wink in her eyes at Miriam's suggestion? And would it have been a commendable act for the princess to announce throughout the royal court that she had, as a matter of fact, found a Hebrew child in the Nile that morning? Was it not a cover-up *not* to announce it?

So, to return to the original question: What would you have done were you in Rahab's place? Would you have said to the agents: "I'm devastated you asked, but as a Christian I have to tell the truth. They're on the rooftop. Look under the flax; you'll find them there." Is that what the ninth commandment is about?

The excesses of situation ethics notwithstanding, Christians (and

everyone else, for that matter) are sometimes forced to choose between two or more evils. In those cases, we are not condemned by God for choosing the best of the bad options. Rahab could have remained silent, of course, refusing to utter an untruth. But that would have been fatal to the spies, for it would have triggered an exhaustive search of the premises. On the other hand, to have disclosed the whereabouts of her visitors would have led to their certain imprisonment or death at an exceedingly critical time in Israel's history.

Thus, Rahab chose what she considered the best of the bad options facing her—she prevaricated, sending the murderous pursuers on a wild-goose chase. We find an almost exact parallel to this story in 2 Samuel 17:15-22, in which the wife of an Israelite farmer saved the lives of David's spies during Absalom's attempted coup, a critical decision that saved the day for David and his regime.

The writer of the book of Joshua, says Dale R. Davis, "is not very interested in picky ethical questions . . . endless wranglings . . . about whether it was right for Rahab to lie to the Jericho police and so on. It is tragic when people snag their pants on the nail of Rahab's lie . . . and never get around to hearing Rahab's *truth* (verses 8-13 [of Joshua 2]), which the writer has conspired to make the center of the whole narrative."⁸

Yet Davis himself felt the need to distance himself from Rahab. Thus he argued in a footnote that "it does not mean that the biblical writer approves of Rahab's lie or that he authorizes us to go and do likewise."⁹

So the question remains: What should the Christian do under similar circumstances? What should the Christian do, when telling the naked truth can result in the direct loss of innocent human life?

If a lie is the simple utterance of an untruth, then the student who writes on a test paper that London is the cap-

*To lie, as I see it,
is to make a
false statement,
with wicked or
malicious or
selfish intent
to deceive
or mislead.*

ital of Japan is lying. Common sense would dictate that *intent* and *motive* must come into the equation. To lie, as I see it, is to make a false statement, with wicked or malicious or selfish intent to deceive or mislead.

Under this definition Pharaoh's midwives were not culpable, even though their report to the monarch was not in keeping with the facts of the case.¹⁰ Nor should the defenders of the innocent during the Nazi atrocities be faulted in any way. Nor should the Israelite farming woman in David's time. Nor should Rahab.

Having dispatched the Jericho counterintelligence agents on their fruitless mission, Rahab ascended the roof of her house for what was perhaps the most critical conversation of her whole life.¹¹ "I know," she said to the spies, "that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you."¹²

Rahab's assessment of the political, psychological, and spiritual realities of the region constituted a major breakthrough for the spies, and must have galvanized the courage of Joshua and all Israel to receive it.¹³

The tacit condemnation of this great woman (as she turned out to be) is unwarranted. The Bible does

not condemn her. Says the author of Hebrews: "By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient."¹⁴ James went even further: "In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?"¹⁵

She protected them, said Ellen G. White, "at the peril of her own life."¹⁶ And it is "astounding, isn't it, that the shady lady of Jericho should be the ancestress of Jesus the Messiah (Matt. 1:5)?"¹⁷

We should not use the ninth commandment to offer simplistic solutions to complex issues of human existence. A wooden interpretation of the commandment could have resulted in the slaughter of additional thousands of Jews during the Nazi pogrom in the 1940s. The brave Christians and others who sheltered them from their butchers broke no valid law—human or divine. Indeed, so far as divine law was concerned, they acted in perfect conformity to its spirit. ■

¹ See Joshua 2:2.

² Verse 3.

³ Verses 4, 5.

⁴ *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 183.

⁵ Cf. 2 Sam. 15:32-36; 16:15-19.

⁶ See Num. 13:1-3. Cf. Deut. 1:22, however, which appears to make the sending a result of the will of the people.

⁷ Ex. 2:7.

⁸ Dale Ralph Davis, *No Falling Words . . .* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 26.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See Ex. 1:15-20.

¹¹ See Deut. 22:8.

¹² Joshua 2:8, 9.

¹³ See verses 23, 24.

¹⁴ Heb. 11:31.

¹⁵ James 2:25.

¹⁶ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 483.

¹⁷ Davis, p. 29.

Roy Adams is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*.





Getting Real

THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS

Weeks of traveling, teaching, preaching, and healing must have exhausted Jesus (Matt. 9:35). So did His 12 assistants—they were never much help. But now it was time to send them out for practical experience in sharing His burden of ministry. Before they left, Jesus shared with them many vital principles of outreach. Here are three:

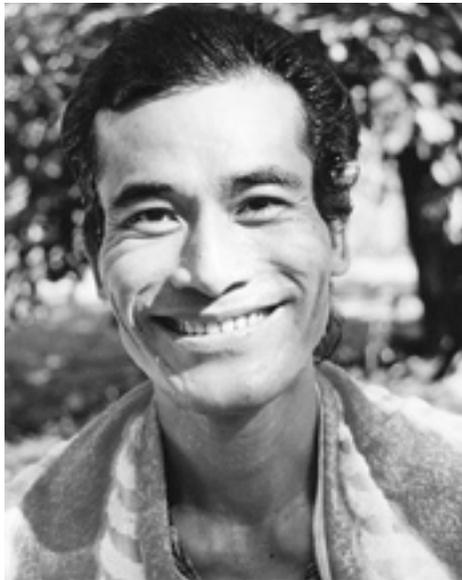
1. Be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves (Matt. 10:16). We need God's guidance to adapt our message to different people in different circumstances. We need to shape the good news into a language that people can understand (see also 1 Cor. 9:19-23). We mustn't needlessly offend.

2. Proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 10:7). Sure we're waiting for Jesus to come—the blessed hope. But we're not offering people something that's only in the distant future. The good news is that even *now* we can follow Him. *Now* we can see how His kingdom operates. *Now* we can be part of that kingdom.

3. Minister wholistically (verses 7, 8, 42). The good news isn't just a set of propositions to which we nod our heads. It touches all aspects of people's lives. The good news offers hope for the future and justice for the present. It's our precious gift of eternal salvation, but it's also good news for the poor, the prisoners, the blind, the sick, and the oppressed (verse 8; see also Matt. 11:4, 5 and Luke 4:18, 19).

The disciples went out for their practical training, and it worked. When Jesus left earth, they were well prepared to continue His ministry. In fact, they began to turn the world upside down. "When [the rulers and elders] saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13, NIV). —Gary Krause, *Global Mission communication director*.

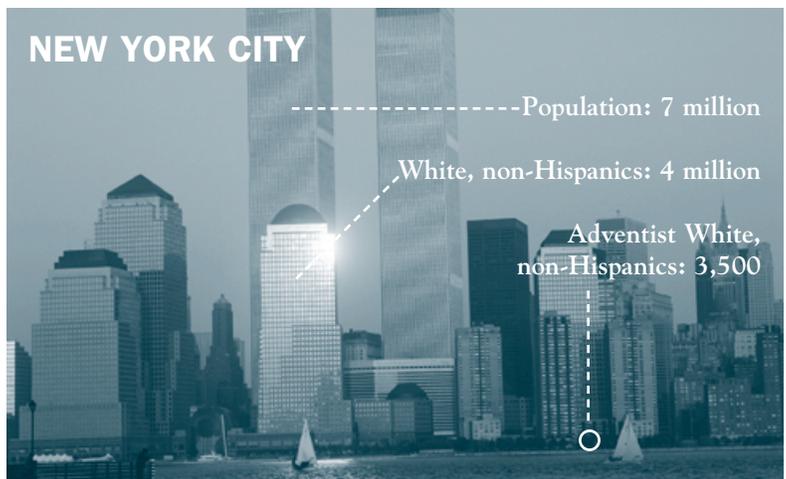
NEW LIFE IN MYANMAR



HIS BIG DAY: Pictured just moments after being baptized, a villager from Paukone, Irrawaddy, Myanmar, can scarcely contain the joy he has found in Jesus Christ. A highly respected practitioner and teacher of Buddhism, he has now found new hope in Jesus Christ. He and six other Buddhists were baptized earlier this year. Adventist World Radio and Global Mission workers brought the good news about Jesus to their village.

Our Front-Yard Global Mission

"I cannot drive through or fly over New York City—this capital of the world, with its enormous influence on people around the globe, a city with millions and millions of people who have never heard this last-day message—without crying out, "How can we make a difference, Lord? What can we do to penetrate the barriers to the proclamation of Your message to a dying world?"—*Alfred C. McClure, North American Division president*.



Evangelists of Enthusiasm

Over the past year I've used this space to remind you that in a world that seems to model chaos and disharmony, our all-wise, all-loving, and ever-present God presides unseen, to accomplish His purposes. His dreams for His people will soon be fulfilled.

While this piece of information may not lessen sin's effects, it does give us a reason to keep our faces turned toward Christ and stay on the path to His eternal kingdom.

God's people have always endured tests and heartaches. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33).^{*} But in His next breath He encourages us, saying: "Take heart! I have overcome the world."

To those yet unacquainted with Jesus as Lord and Saviour, this world is indeed a threatening and confusing place. But we who know that we're part of God's inscrutable plan have nothing to fear. Instead of living preoccupied about passing concerns, let's join with the faithful of all ages who have joyfully proclaimed: "Prepare the way for the Lord" (Isa. 40:3).

Today's difficulties are a mere backdrop against which the peace of sins forgiven, the transforming power of the gospel, and the assurance that our names are in the book of life stand in contrast. While we are able to create sophisticated technological marvels, we fail miserably at such human basics as self-control, moral accountability, and unselfishness. Even avowed secularists, agnostics, and atheists recognize that our technology can't save us from inevitable self-destruction.

Such recognition within secular society provides each of us an opportunity to share the gospel with those among whom we live, work, and socialize—individual efforts certain to yield a harvest for the kingdom. And even greater impact is made on our communities, countries, and world when we place our strengths and resources under the banner of Christ's body—the church.

I know it's popular, in some quarters at least, to criticize the church. Some criticism is well-founded; even at our best, we fall short of God's ideal. But should you travel with me around the globe, you'd be proud of the work accomplished by Adventist laity and leadership in Christ's name and for His glory.

You'd meet Barrie, a Global Mission pioneer on the island of Malaita, in the Solomon Islands of the south Pacific. He and

his family enter a village, present a simple drama, and sing to the people. Then they preach the Word. They've established three groups of believers in formerly unentered parts of the island's mountain regions.

You'd meet Miguel Tapasco, a 19-year-old pioneer from Tennessee, who worked for a year in Wickenburg, Arizona, helping to build up a struggling church. Miguel put his college education on hold in order to share Jesus' love in that community.

With me, you'd thank God for the dedication of Tim and Wendy Maddocks, who, with their children, live in Seim Reap, Cambodia. They live at a most basic economic level.

Their aim is to reach into 50 unentered villages with the gospel and form 10 new Adventist congregations.

Such people work with little or no earthly recognition. They serve in conditions that many can't begin to imagine. But they have this in common: they're supported by a worldwide fellowship that takes seriously Christ's commission to carry His gospel to the *entire* world. They have a message of good news, and they share it with enthusiasm.

A knowledge of such people can only reinforce Ellen White's observation that as "enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 12). And I especially like the next sentence: "It [the church] is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts."

Transformations do occur when we enthusiastically support God's work; hearts are transformed among those who've never heard the gospel. And our lives too, as we lift our gaze from local to global needs—cosmic needs, known only to the One who claims our allegiance.

^{*} Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

They have a message they share with enthusiasm.

Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



Get Ready



ROSY TETZ

Have you ever taken a spelling test? Usually before you take a spelling test you get a chance to prepare.

Maybe your teacher gives you a spelling list on Monday; then you study all week and take the test on Friday.

There are different ways to study for a spelling test. Maybe you write each word three times. Maybe you write the words in a sentence. Maybe your mom tells you the word and you spell it out loud.

But on Friday morning, when your teacher tells you it's time to take the test, it is too late to study anymore. If you are not ready, too bad.

Have you ever been in a music recital? Before you play in a recital,

you have the chance to prepare. Maybe you and your teacher pick out a nice piece of music, and then you practice and practice. Maybe you learn it by memory. Maybe you practice playing it for your grandma.

But on the day of the recital, when it is your turn to go up front and perform, it's too late to practice anymore. If you are not ready, that's tough.

Once Jesus told a story about 10 girls who got ready for a wedding. There was going to be a procession from the bride's house to the groom's house, and the girls wanted to join in. This wedding was going to be at night, so the girls brought oil-burning lamps so they could see.

If you've ever been to a wedding, you know that they don't usually start

on time. Evidently weddings didn't start on time back in Bible times either, because the girls had to wait so long they fell asleep. When someone called that the procession was coming, they woke up and saw that their lamps were going out. Five of the girls had been smart—they had brought extra oil for their lamps in case this happened. They poured the oil into their lamps and were ready to go. But the other five girls didn't have extra oil. They had to go look for some. By the time they got back, the procession had passed them by. They missed the wedding because they weren't ready.

Jesus says, "So always be ready" (Matthew 25:13, ICB). He told this wedding story to help us see how important it is to be ready. Jesus wants us to be ready when He comes to take us to heaven. Jesus wants you to choose to follow Him now.

You need to get to know Jesus now. Don't wait to get ready.



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BY LINDA SMITH-KINNE

Receiving His Everything

She is Black; I am White.
 She is well educated; I am not.
 She has two children; I've had seven.
 She is a well-off, solid, middle-class American; I am poor.

She sent me this marvelous Christmas letter. It was in reply to my tentative remarks about the possibility of going to California the next summer. I'd hoped to be camping, I explained, with my girls and another mother and daughter.

"You come stay with me," she invited warmly, "and I'll take you to Marine World, U.S.A.—my treat! We'll have such fun!" She chatted on. In the lovely warmth of her letter she assured me, "You are like family."

Jesus said, "The greatest among you will be your servant" (Matt. 23:11, NIV).

Servanthood. What can it mean? Is it to care and share across socioeconomic and racial boundaries? Is it to call all God's children "my family"?

I received a beautiful letter from a single mother. She explained that she had given up a rare evening of fun and fellowship to stay home with her teenagers. She went so far as to declare that she even preferred to be with her children.

Servanthood. Is it love that so transcends self-sacrifice as to make the servant's lot a joy?

I watched my youngest, a curly-top redhead of 7 years, disappear out the front door. "I am going over to Aunt Kate's to get some wood," she declared. Aunt Kate is a 98-year-old Seventh-day Adventist neighbor who is mostly confined to her wheelchair. The arms and legs of Victoria and the other neighbor children became indispensable to her before she went to her new home.

Servanthood. Is it the very young caring for the very old? Is it the budding spirit learning to give, while the well-worn servant learns to receive?

This Christmas I told my parents, "You have Christmas with my brother, then with us. I just can't give to him and his boys the way he gives to us! It's so painful to give them a box of chocolates and barely afford that! His gifts are so

generous. It's embarrassing." Underlying all this is the fact that I owe my brother money I cannot repay at this time.

Mother talked to my brother, then sent me a card. "Yes, because of other circumstances we'll have separate

Christmases this year. However, your brother has his own feelings, and you must understand . . ."

Christmas! The joy of carols and a warm friendly love; the good food and jolly exchange of thoughtful gifts; the remembrance of that one true Gift of all gifts. And my brother? Though absent because of circumstances, he gave us gifts. They were substantial gifts to each member of the family.

Servanthood. I am learning that it is not only sacrificial giving; it can be sacrificial receiving as well.

Servanthood is sacrifice—self-sacrifice. Jesus, commander in chief of the universe, sacrificed His very being for us. More than this, He relinquished the one relationship He valued most, the oneness with His Father. And we . . . what can we bring for such love?

Our feeble mortal gratitude?

Our puny self-besotted love?

Our pathetic attempts at obedience?

Nothing!

We can only accept the wrapping of Christ's righteous robe!

Servanthood. Sacrificing our pride to *receive His everything!* His love, His forgiveness, His acceptance, His obedience, His righteousness to cover our filthy rags!

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16, NIV).

Servanthood. Let us make 1998 a year of servanthood to God and all humanity. ■



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Linda Smith-Kinne, a full-time mother "employed by the Lord," lives with four of her children and her artist husband in the beautiful hills of Washington State.



Adventist Health Ministry

The *Adventist Review* on-line is made available free through the sponsorship of the North American Division Adventist Health Ministry Department—coordinators for “The Year of Health and Healing.”

During this year, Adventist Health Ministry invites each Adventist congregation to reaffirm the church’s health principles and share them throughout their communities.

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