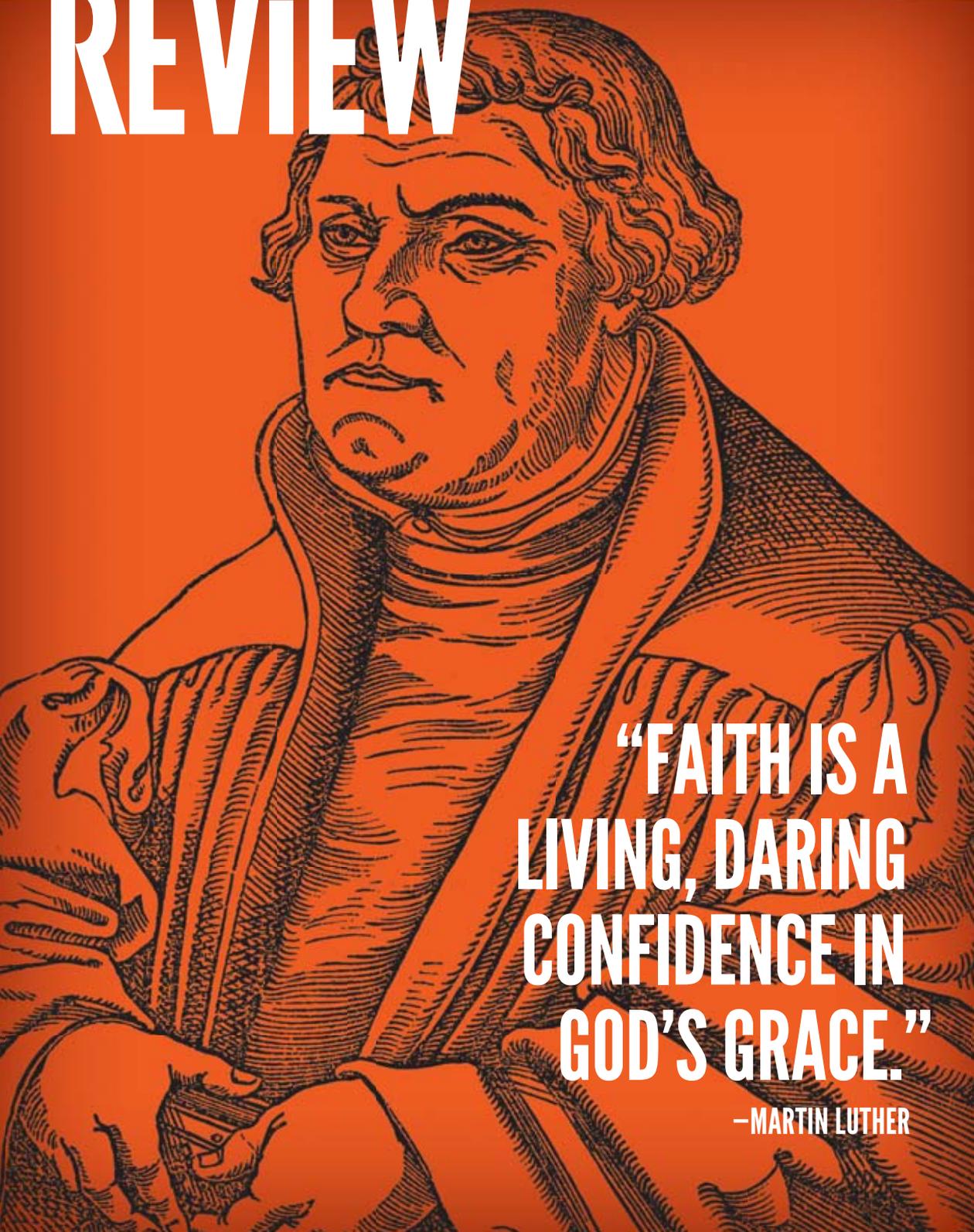


ADVENTIST REVIEW

OCTOBER 2017: TESTIFY SABBATH + BEASTS,
BLACKLIGHT, AND ETERNAL LOVE + JUSTICE AND
INJUSTICE+ MARTIN LUTHER AND ME + THE ONGOING
RELEVANCE OF THE REFORMATION



**“FAITH IS A
LIVING, DARING
CONFIDENCE IN
GOD’S GRACE.”**

—MARTIN LUTHER

SEASON 2

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Costa Rica

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TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:



- 1 Cliff's Edge: The Calculus of the Cross
- 2 "I Prayed for a Bible"
- 3 Newest Mission Boat in the Amazon Builds on Decades of Service
- 4 Who Is My Brother? Am I His Keeper?
- 5 Not Just a Cycle

VIDEO RESOURCES FROM ARTV



MARTIN LUTHER—THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

Early in his ministry Luther embarked on a trip that would change his life - and the world - forever. This and other episodes of the Lineage series, take short dynamic journeys to sites pivotal to the Protestant Reformation.



A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE

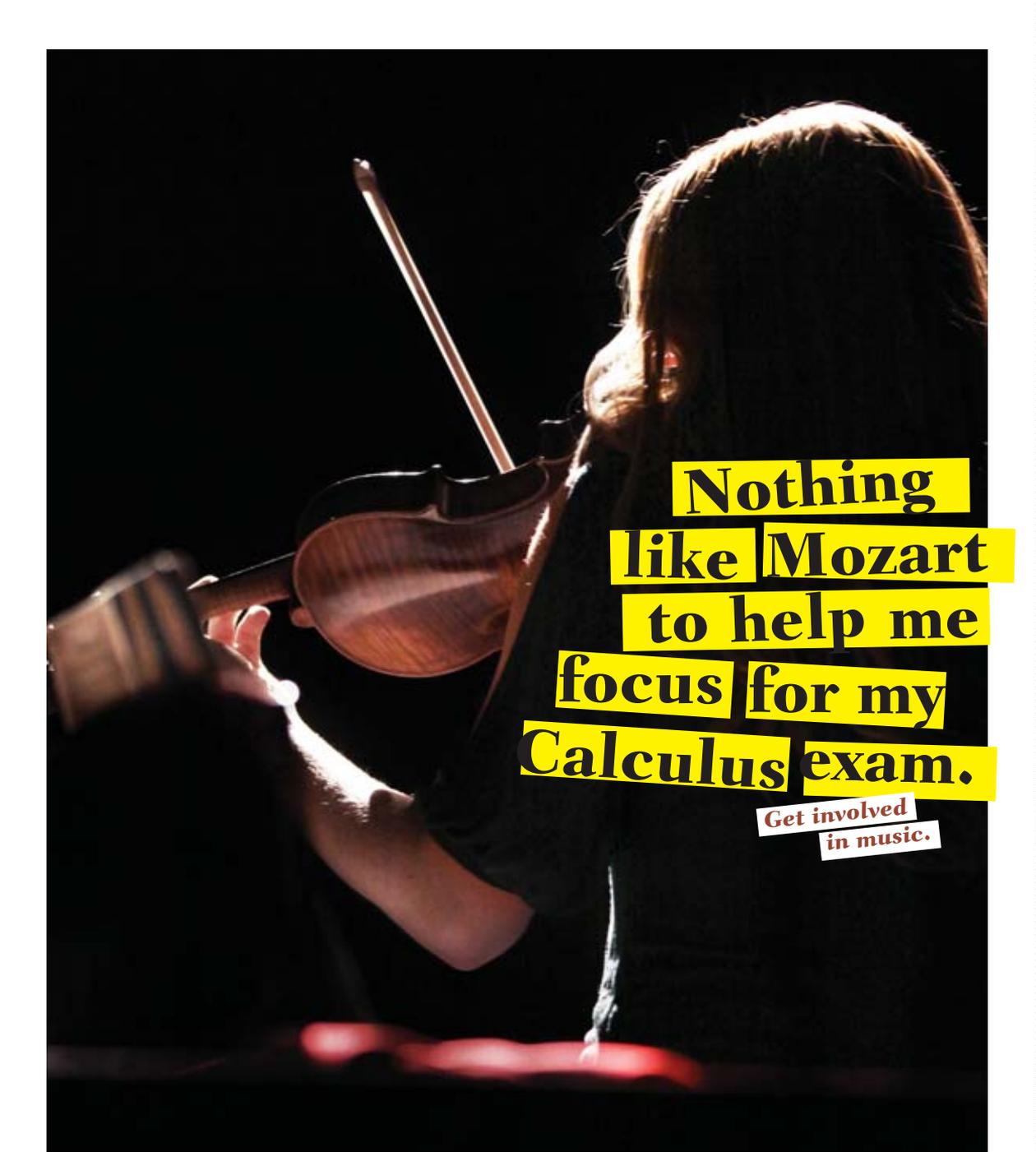
Enjoyed taking a look back on Reformation history and individuals who stood up for what they believed? You might also enjoy this documentary about a group of young men who followed their conscience during WWI.



THE CARE AND FEEDING OF CONSCIENCE

Are we convicted by conscience, or just feeling guilty? Licensed counselor Jennifer Jill Schwirzer explores the topic in this episode of her video series 13 Weeks to Peace.

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BILL KNOTT



Reformation Changes Everything

One of the most persistent misperceptions about the Protestant Reformation is that the movement now celebrating its 500th anniversary was only about recovering biblical truth.

Ask the typical Adventist to describe the core experience of the Reformation, and if they find words at all, they will likely murmur something about “salvation by faith” and *sola scriptura*—the only Latin phrase most Adventists know. But the world-changing events precipitated by Luther’s propositions 500 years ago this October 31 aren’t reducible to only the doctrine of righteousness by faith, and the authority of the Bible that teaches us to believe in it. Significant as they surely were—and are—if these ideas hadn’t dramatically reshaped—that is, re-formed—the daily lives, the work, and the worship of individuals and congregations, we would have likely never heard of the Reformation, let alone be celebrating its half-millennium.

All godly ideas have real-life consequences, and the rediscovery of the Bible’s teachings about how human beings are saved began immediately to change the structures of daily life. If accumulated and repetitive prayers no longer shortened one’s stay in purgatory nor vicariously freed another soul, the purpose of prayer itself in the believer’s life was “re-formed.” Slowly, haltingly at first, men and women whose spirituality had been enacted for them by robed clergy began to experience the

unspeakable joys of actually communing with a Father who heard and understood them.

If the focus of the church’s worship was no longer on the repeated and daily sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus on the altar, then worship could be “re-formed” as the expression of personal and corporate praise it was always intended to be. Creativity, once only for the “gifted” and the sponsored, now moved with grace among the pews. Western Christianity experienced an unparalleled explosion of hymnody, poetry, and musical composition.

If God’s ideal for human sexuality was no longer the celibate priest denying himself the full expression of his personhood as a symbol of consecration, then marriage as the God-ordained covenant between a man and a woman was dignified, elevated—and righteously enjoyed. Unbiblical traditions of male domination and female subordination began to erode as both women and men read for themselves the Word that proclaimed in its first chapter—“In the image of God He created them: male and female He created them” (Gen. 1:27, NRSV¹).

If God not only gave human beings meaningful work, but further gifted them to use their skills in the building of His kingdom, then labor became a means for godly self-expression, character development, and the wise use of well-earned money. The yearly and weekly calendars, for centuries invaded by more than 125 annual

The rediscovery of the Bible’s teachings about how human beings are saved began immediately to change the structures of daily life.

feasts and holidays, became the measuring rods for progress, innovation and social success: “Six days you shall labor and do all your work” (Ex. 20:9, NRSV).

The Reformation may have begun as an academic’s invitation to a scholarly debate, for that, in fact, was Luther’s purpose in nailing his 95 theses to the Wittenberg Castle Church door. But it escaped the limited vision of even its first hero to become, in God’s gracious hands, the instrument of social renovation and change that created the modern world.

The literacy that allows you to read and understand these words—by yourself, and for yourself—is the legacy of the Reformation. The job you hold—wiring houses as an electrician or “turning on the lights” for classroom students—was shaped by the Reformation. The hymn you sing—first softly, then with grateful tears welling in your eyes—was chorused by the Reformation. And if, in grace, you have come to know God as a mighty fortress in your life, “a bulwark never failing,” you can thank the Reformation.

This October 31, while children ply the neighborhood with cries of “Trick or Treat,” pause for a moment to offer your grateful thanks to the Lord who still says to His faithful church, “See, I am making *all things new*” (Rev. 21:5, NRSV). 🍂

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Thank you so much for the editorial “Greatest Common Denomination” (July 2017). What an eye-opener; what food for thought!

MARY ANN THOMAS JIMENEZ, VIA E-MAIL

QUOTABLE

Thank you all for the very-well-put-together issue in June (late partly because of our cross-border postal service, but also my slow reading!).

I happen to be a collector of quotes. It’s an odd hobby, but I do it because there are so many times I just can’t craft my words to express an idea in just the right way. So I am in awe of those whom God gave that talent and love to borrow from them. As I read through magazines or other literature, I mark the pages with quoteworthy sections for my collection.

As I read the June issue, I found I was marking almost every page! Thank you to all the writers, especially Costin Jordache, Randy Fishell, Andy Nash, William Johnsson, and Wilona Karimabadi, for blessing all of us with your special gift of writing.

In that vein I’d like to contribute a small quote that seems to align with the theme of the June issue and how our church reaches out to the world as we move forward in the twenty-first century: “It is acquaintance that awakens sympathy, and sympathy is the spring of effective ministry” (Ellen G. White, *Education* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903], p. 269).

Karen Lee

Calgary, Alberta, Canada



DIALOGUE

“Adventists just don’t dialogue!” My Muslim friend, who has frequent contact with Adventists, was expressing her frustration to me. In getting out our message, we have often had a monologue with the world. However, when I read that “the Savior mingled”

(Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905], p. 143), I hear a dialogue.

I appreciate Jon Paulien’s concept of “double exegesis” (“The Long View of Things,” June 2017). While we have done quite well with the first exegesis (God’s

Word), we have not much emphasized the second exegesis (understanding the cultures and religions around us). We will hasten the Lord’s coming to the extent that we engage these cultures and religions.

Erin Stone

West Hills, California

GREATEST COMMON DENOMINATION

Thank you so much for the editorial “Greatest Common Denomination” (July 2017). What an eye-opener; what food for thought! The way things are going in 2017, that is exactly what is needed. We have to wake up. This is not a rerun; this is for real. Let’s stop “playing church” and get serious. So many of us are just “going through the motions.” Don’t we all realize Jesus is coming soon? Yes, get on the phone, e-mail, text, and, I might add, send a card. God bless each of you.

Mary Ann Thomas Jimenez

Via e-mail

PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM

Last Sabbath I taught an adult Sabbath School class. The last paragraph of Stephen Chavez’s piece, “Putting ‘Christ’ Into ‘Christianity’” (July 2017), summarizes Paul’s message to the Galatians. It’s worth

While we have done quite well with first exegesis (God’s Word), we have not much emphasized the second exegesis (understanding the cultures and religions around us).

ERIN STONE, WEST HILLS, CALIFORNIA

repeating: “We’d like to think that living like Jesus is easy: you just read the Gospels and live accordingly. But living the principles of the kingdom cost Jesus His life. And in the two millennia since Jesus lived on earth, countless martyrs have risked their lives to live like Jesus. These martyrs were often persecuted by other Christians, people who thought they were being faithful to God.”

Andy Hanson

Chico, California

ADVENTISTS AND SPORTS

I read one of my all-time favorite magazines—*Adventist Review*, which I have done for nearly 80

IN A FEW WORDS...

JOURNEY INTERRUPTED

I was impressed with the film *Journey Interrupted*. Sandra Balckmer’s article did it full justice (AdventistReview.org/church-news/story5391-journey-interrupted-sandra-blackmer).

I initially went in to see it with skepticism. People were sobbing as the interviews played out. I heard voices whisper to their neighbors: “I’m not gay, but this speaks to me exactly.”

Nature or nurture, it really doesn’t matter. Satan has a counterfeit for everything good God has made. . . . Our entire church needs an honest conversation about being born again.

Greg Cox, via Web

MY MANTLE

This is a wonderful and encouraging topic (AdventistReview.org/church-news/story5393-my-mantle-lisa-poirier), true in so many ways, especially if your “field” is uninteresting or uninspiring and you yearn for more. Your heart tells you there is. Thank you.

Imabong Faminu, via Web

YOUR TURN

We welcome your letters, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: letters@adventistreview.org.

years. It had a lot to say about sports. I hope someone in the *Review* office will prepare for publication what Ellen White had to say about competitive sports. I

also wonder if Adventist women engaged in sports wear modest clothing.

Donald Casebolt

College Place, Washington

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“We work with a vision of integrated evangelism, where all areas of the church, and all possible means, are used to their maximum potential.”

**Erton Kohler, president, South American Division
p. 14**

NEWS



The new, state-of-the-art Adventist HealthCare Washington Adventist Hospital is scheduled to open May 2019.

ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE

EXPANDING CARE WITH NEW HOSPITAL

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY CARRIES FORWARD 110-YEAR HEALTH MINISTRY

BY ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE WASHINGTON ADVENTIST HOSPITAL

A new hospital and health-care campus is rising in the White Oak area of Montgomery County, Maryland, United States, within 15 miles of downtown Washington D.C.

The state-of-the-art facility, scheduled to open in May 2019, is part of Adventist HealthCare’s longstanding plan to expand access to health care in the region. The hospital building’s exterior will be finished by late fall, and construction will begin on a medical office building and parking garage this winter.

“The hospital in White Oak will offer the high-quality and compassionate care you’ve come to know from Washington Adventist Hospi-

tal in Takoma Park in a new location,” said Erik Wangsness, president, Adventist HealthCare Washington Adventist Hospital.

Washington Adventist Hospital has served the community for more than a century, and will continue providing health-care services such as urgent and primary care in Takoma Park following the move of inpatient care to White Oak.

The new campus sits on 48 acres, not far from the Seventh-day Adventist world church headquarters. The hospital will be adjacent to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration campus, which already partners with Washington Adventist

Hospital on health research, and is at the center of the emerging White Oak Science Gateway, a developing life sciences community bringing together medical researchers, businesses, and retailers in eastern Montgomery County.

According to Stephen S. Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, the new hospital project will have a significant impact on the region. The hospital will create 7,500 jobs between construction and ongoing operations, and construction alone will contribute \$845.6 million to Maryland’s economy.

The new 170-bed health-care

facility carries on the health-care ministry that began 110 years ago with the founding of Washington Sanitarium, a place where people came to relax in nature. The hospital started with 40 beds and a staff of 12. In 1903 Adventists dedicated to a holistic approach to wellness bought a 50-acre tract in Takoma Park for \$6,000. An additional \$50,000 was raised by Adventists throughout North America to build the sanitarium. Proceeds from Ellen White's book *The Ministry of Healing* helped fund the construction.

A copy of the book and several other historic items from Washington Adventist Hospital were part of an artifact box that was embedded into the new hospital's wall this spring. The box included numerous other historical hospital documents (such as a copy of the first patient ledger), a current organization chart, and a letter to future discoverers outlining the time capsule's contents.

As Adventist HealthCare builds a hospital for the twenty-first century, it will focus on carrying forward its mission of providing whole-person health care in a healing environment. The new campus will feature a green roof, rooms with lake views, and additions to the natural landscape, such as a walking trail around the lake.

"This is a blessed time in our history," added Wangness. "I thank our employees and physicians who are enthusiastic about our future and committed to our mission." ▀

"TIME FOR TECHNOLOGY AND MISSION TO MARRY!"

GLOBAL GROUPS OF IT AND COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS GATHER TO DISCUSS MISSION.

COSTIN JORDACHE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATION AND NEWS EDITOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW

An historic gathering of Seventh-day Adventist communication and information technology professionals converged near São Paulo, Brazil, for a weeklong series of events to better understand technology, its current use in the church, and ways in which it can enhance mission effectiveness.

THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The week began on August 7, 2017, with the fourth annual meeting of information technology (IT) specialists from around the world. A record 336 attendees, from multiple countries, flocked to the Southern Hemisphere to grapple with the ever-changing technology landscape, and the even more dynamic landscape of global mission.

"Reaching the world through technology solutions and services' is our mission statement," explained General Conference administrator of ITS software development Stephen Filkoski. His words were reflected in nearly two dozen other presentations that peppered the two days of intense meetings: IT is a ministry function that provides tools for effective ministry.

"You have a unique ministry," said Mabio Coelho, chief information security officer for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "What you do is no less a ministerial work than pastors and those who physically baptize . . . people."

With that in mind, presenters from the world headquarters and the 13 divisions and attached fields shared various updates and tools that are being used or considered to further mission. Coelho discussed cybersecurity, Filkoski announced dialogue around a developing human resource management system, and an IT representative from the West-Central Africa Division revealed a digital records management system his division is working on that allows local churches to tap into a centralized database of church records.

"I was impressed with how the various church entities are integrating technology into propagating the gospel," said first-time attendee Abitana Hachamba, communication director in Midlands Zambia Conference, in the Northern Zambia Union.

Presentations were more than just show and tell, though. The greater purpose involves collaboration. "Find ways to share your resources with other parts of the world who may not have access to critical tools," challenged Nancy Lamoreaux, chief information



Williams Costa, communication director for the Adventist Church, leads a dynamic Sabbath morning song service. ITALO OSORIO-PEZO



A group of GAIN attendees stop for picture with the life-size logo on the campus of UNASP in Brazil. BRIAN STEPANEK

officer for the Adventist Church.

The IT meetings were hosted at IATec, the South American Division's Institute of Technology. Its new high-tech building houses dozens of employees, who have been brought together by the division to "optimize, standardize, and globalize procedures, data, and information flows," according to the organization's Web site.

GAIN 2017 SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD

August 9 launched the second set of record-breaking meetings on the campus of Brazil's Centro Universitário Adventista de São Paulo (UNASP), a university with more than 6,000 enrolled students. The Global Adventist Internet Network (GAIN) convened with more than 800 attendees from more than 80 countries, the most ever. The event, organized annually by the Communication Department of the General Conference, brings together multidisciplinary communication professionals to discuss best practices and industry trends while engaging in meaningful networking.

Organizers themed this year's event "Wired for Mission," to emphasize the greater purpose of media technology and communication within the Adventist Church. The first day of meetings featured presentations from Adventist Mission leaders and directors of the six

Adventist Mission centers, offering perspectives on current mission challenges.

"Today we're going to look into the mission mirror, but we may not like what we see," said Gary Krause, director of Adventist Mission. Krause outlined some startling statistics, including that 86 percent of Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists worldwide do not have even one friend who is a Christian. "We do not make friends with nonbelievers," he observed. Krause concluded by challenging communication professionals to harness the power of culture in reaching the world's population. "Study the culture. Look. Listen. Learn," he concluded.

Perhaps the most striking metaphor supporting the theme came early in the lineup from Gregory Whitsett, director of the Center for East Asian Religions. Whitsett, along with his wife, Amy, associate director, demonstrated how vastly different worldviews can contribute to a very different understanding of John 3:16. They advocated a multistep mission process and proposed a mobile app that would aid missionaries in their work, "It's time for technology and mission to marry each other!" concluded Whitsett.

"I am thrilled that the first day of GAIN was fully focused on mission," said Williams Costa, director of the Communication Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

and lead organizer. "The presentations, the discussions, the suggestions, the proposals, and finally the presentation from the university—everything was about mission. It's so meaningful that people attend GAIN, and their first and strongest impression is about mission."

PRESENTATIONS INFORM AND INSPIRE

As the technology conference progressed, organizers continued to offer a lineup of experts and practitioners to unpack the theme "Wired for Mission." "Our goal was to inspire all communicators to look higher and broader so as to see the whole world as their mission rather than just their own territory," said Sam Neves, associate Communication Department director for the Adventist Church.

"It is important for communication professionals to know the challenges and creative ideas that the Adventist Church uses in different parts of the world," added Rafael Rossi, communication director for the South American Division. "This exchange brings new prospects for local growth."

Among GAIN presenters were those who were given seven minutes to describe a project they are involved in. The segments, strewn throughout the daily proceedings,

Andrew Perry, from Australia's Collaboratory, discusses Adventist Passport, a developing and innovative app for Adventists around the world. ITALO OSORIO-PEZO



were called Project Slams and featured a variety of missional technology uses.

A Brazilian IT professional unveiled ShekinaStore.com, a centralized online store for Adventist media resources. Benjamin Seifert, from Germany, shared the development of Image, a social media network that builds a character profile for users. A communication professional from the Southern Africa- Indian Ocean Division showed a clip of a biblical game show. A professor at UNASP introduced WePray.mobi, a global repository of prayer requests. Hope Channel Inter-America debuted a new series about ministry to native Mayan people. Andrew Perry, from Australia, introduced Adventist Passport, an app-based personal aggregator of customized Adventist content to track involvement in Adventist events and groups.

Other Project Slams included Carole Saint-Louis, who, along with her husband, reproduces ANN newscasts in French. Jesse Johnson announced that It Is Written has a Daniel and the Lions' Den VR experience, and an app called Outreach, featuring comprehensive evangelism resources. Michael von Horsten introduced attendees to Adventist Help, a humanitarian organization working in partnership with ADRA in places such as Mosul, Iraq. Adventist Mission introduced a 30-second student film competition.

Several full-length presentations featured ongoing projects. The South American Division unveiled FELIZ-7PLAY, an online repository of video

content. Williams Costa announced the launch of ACT, the Adventist Communication Training initiative that aims to provide educational content to communication practitioners around the world. Brent Hardinge, assistant director of communication for the Adventist Church, reintroduced ALPS, the Adventist Living Pattern System, a globally coordinated visual identity system for developing Adventist Web sites and apps.

A CRITICAL REMINDER

Against this vast backdrop of mission-infused technology, Deborah Bonazzi threw the audience a curve ball. Bonazzi, who is head of Industry-Media and Entertainment for Google Brazil, reminded attendees to be fully conscious of their use of technology. While admitting that we need technology, Bonazzi explained, "We are not having deep conversation" because of our immersion in digital spaces. She informed audience members that Google has created intentional spaces for conversation among its employees in its headquarters.

Bonazzi then introduced a concept familiar to Adventists, though with a twist. She advocated a "digital Sabbath," a time during which every person commits to taking a break from technology. She relayed several examples of how those outside of the Adventist Church are discovering this concept and its benefits, quoting YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki: "If you're working 24/7, you're not going to have any interesting ideas."

A REFLECTIVE NOTE

GaIn 2017 ended on a reflective note. Guillermo Biaggi, a vice president of the Adventist Church involved with media ministries around the world, shared a message during which he affirmed conference participants. Citing a number of trends and statistics, Biaggi made a case for utilizing technology for mission, concluding that "GaIn is vital in fulfilling the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

Allan Novaes, a professor at UNASP specializing in the intersection of theology, communication, and culture challenged attendees with the notion that paying attention to pop culture can have a positive effect on mission. "God can communicate Himself through culture or everyday life," explained Novaes, pointing to biblical wisdom literature and the parables of Jesus as examples.

Karnik Doukmetzian, legal counsel for the General Conference, reminded communicators and technology professionals to pursue their calling within legal parameters. Doukmetzian outlined copyright and trademark issues relevant in the GaIn context, and cited multiple examples of the damage done by not following intellectual property law. He summarized the answer to every potential question with one solid principle: "Make sure you get permission" from the owner of the intellectual property.

Finally, Sam Neves reflected on the collective identity, or brand, of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Sam Neves, associate director of Communication for the Seventh-day Adventist Church (right), moderates a panel of Adventist mission center directors discussing the use of technology in mission. PAULO ARAUJO



He introduced attendees to the new Adventist visual identity package that included the slightly redesigned logo, a new font that “speaks more than 90 languages,” and a creation grid, a design approach that gives designers six sevenths of the space for custom design, while reserving the seventh for the global Adventist identifier.

A COMMITTED HOST DIVISION

For South American Division president Erton Köhler, hosting the GAIIn conference was a significant opportunity, since his division has defined technology as a primary emphasis for the five years leading to 2020 to strengthen commu-

nication actions in an effort to spread the gospel message more effectively. Digital communication is seen as strategic by the division, and as an ally in ministry. “We work with a vision of integrated evangelism, where all areas of the church, and all possible means, are used to their maximum potential. But the focus is on the preaching of the gospel,” explained Köhler.

That commitment to integrated and missional use of technology was visible to attendees throughout the conference. Organized trips to Novo Tempo (Brazil’s Hope Channel) and the division’s publishing house demonstrated the use of large-scale, cutting-edge technol-

ogy in mission. On the campus of UNASP, students and staff left an indelible impression on attendees with two media-rich showcase productions: the first about the university itself, and the second about the life of Paul, featuring choir, orchestra, and solos, all coordinated in a film depicting a modern apostle and the impact his ministry had on many different lives.

“You are here to change the future,” concluded Köhler during his keynote address. He encouraged the communication professionals to help the gospel message “go viral.”

The next GAIIn conference is scheduled for August 8-12, 2018, in South Korea. 🍀

THREATS TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CALL FOR DOUBLING ADVOCACY EFFORTS

IRLA’S WORLD CONGRESS APPEALS TO EXTEND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

Religion pours \$1.2 trillion into the U.S. economy every year,” said Brian J. Grim, social scientist and director of international religious resources at Pew Research. “That’s 50 percent more than America’s six largest oil companies.” Grim’s startling fact-sharing was



IRLA’s President John R. Nay officially opens the IRLA’s World Congress in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, on August 22, 2017.

MYLON MEDLEY/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

part of an introduction to an updated report on the state of religious freedom around the world. It came on the opening day of the International Religious Liberty Association’s (IRLA) World Congress in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, United States, on August 22, 2017.

Grim’s presentation came on the heels of the official opening of the event, which brought together about 600 religious freedom advocates, government officers, and church leaders from 65 countries.

“Religious freedom [is] a principle of dignity for humanity,”

Forty percent of the world's countries suffer high restrictions to religious freedom or freedom of belief.

explained Ganoune Diop, IRLA's secretary-general and director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "IRLA is committed to the task . . . of making this world a better place for millions, [a place where] people can experience freedom of conscience, freedom of belief, and freedom of expression."

As he briefly listed some of the organization's accomplishments over the past five years, Diop reminded attendees that IRLA has been participating in public discourses and debate, engaging in international forums on religious freedom and peace, holding meetings of experts from top universities, and helping people to understand better what religious liberty means.

"Every year we engage the academic world to help develop a religious culture of religious liberty, a culture of human rights," said Diop of the nongovernmental, nonsectarian, not-for-profit organization chartered in 1893, now with associations in 80 countries and correspondents in 172 nations around the world.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

Grim opened his slide show about the state of religious freedom around the world by sharing that 40 percent of the world's countries suffer high restrictions to religious freedom or freedom of belief. Since many of them are populous nations, this accounts for 5.9 billion

of the world population, based on a Pew Research study of 198 countries and territories.

"Compared with 2007, by 2015 1.1 billion more people were suffering a curtailment of their religious freedom," he said.

Grim explained that restrictions usually come from two sources: governments, on one hand, and society, or what experts call "social hostilities." Both are often connected, he said.

For example, some states in India have passed laws to prevent anyone from killing cows, which are considered sacred animals, said Grim. "While this is a government restriction, it often leads to social hostilities, as some people are ready to kill anyone who decides to raise cows."

Other startling facts derived from the Pew Research study show that the number of governments harassing or intimidating their citizens on religious grounds has gone up from 118 to 157. In the same period, government use of physical force has gone from 61 to 106, and government interference with worship from 112 to 146.

"In 54 countries the government had regulations on religious symbols in 2015, up from just 21 in 2007," said Grim.

In the area of social restrictions, Grim revealed that 27 percent of countries suffer high social restrictions, which affect 4.1 billion people, or 54 percent of the world population. Assaults on people accused of offending the country's majority

faith went up from being present in 48 countries in 2007, to 89 in 2015. On the other hand, coercive enforcement of religious norms were present in 73 nations (compared to 35 countries eight years before), and women were harassed over religious dress in 49 countries (compared to just 14 in 2007).

"Countries in which mob violence related to religion was documented went from 23 to 53, and religion-related terror—such as the one promoted by ISIS—went from 60 to 78," said Grim.

A SILVER LINING

Despite a rather bleak picture of religious freedom around the world, Grim said there are reasons to hope.

"Currently 83 percent of countries have initiatives to reduce religious restrictions, and 56 percent have interfaith initiatives," he said. "Moreover, 38 percent of countries have initiatives to combat religious discrimination, and 20 percent have educational and training initiatives."

Grim also highlighted a dozen private initiatives around the world that contribute to healthy social environments in which religious freedom can thrive. Among them he featured Abdo Ibrahim El Tassi, a Lebanese Canadian entrepreneur who sponsors and provides microloans to Muslim refugees; Y. W. Junardy, an Indonesian businessman and philanthropist who sponsors mass weddings for low-income couples of multiple faiths who cannot afford

the fees required for a legal marriage; and H. Bruce McEver, a Harvard theologian and venture capitalist who launched the Foundation for Religious Literacy, an organization that offers seminars that bring together business leaders with religious thinkers to promote religious understanding as a global, good business practice.

PART OF A WHOLE

Religious freedom is not an isolated right, but part of a wider network of human rights, said Grim, who shared how it aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Retired Harvard Divinity School professor David Little echoed Grim's words. Discussing the intersections of religious freedom and peace, Little said both are closely related. "There is empirical evidence of the strong connection between the two," he said. "Religious freedom thrives when other rights are also protected, [especially] in the context of constitutional democracies."

In this context of religious freedom as a road to peace, Little said efforts must be redoubled to support this fundamental human right. "The most important lesson [we can learn] is the importance of a commitment to religious freedom, because promoting peace by ensuring religious freedom has power in itself," he said. 📌

Additional articles about the IRLA World Congress can be found at AdventistReview.org.



Potomac Conference president William Miller (center), and Allegheny West Conference president William T. Cox, Sr. (right) comfort Susan Bro, mother of Heather Heyer. BRIAN PATRICK TAGALOG

ADVENTISTS COMFORT MOTHER OF SLAIN CHARLOTTESVILLE WOMAN

JOINT RALLY AND WORSHIP SERVICE CALLS ADVENTISTS TO COMPASSION.

CELESTE RYAN BLYDEN, COLUMBIA UNION VISITOR

In the wake of the violent Charlottesville, Virginia, attack that left one woman dead, 19 others injured, and a city in shock, Seventh-day Adventist worshippers made their way to the downtown promenade where residents and visitors gathered to post messages of comfort, love, and hope on giant chalkboards erected in the town square.

In front of a large chalk sketch of Heather Heyer, the 32-year-old woman who died after being struck by a car that plowed into a crowd that was protesting a White nationalist rally in her city, church members and leaders prayed and placed red roses and a handmade prayer chain for her family. Then they headed to Fourth Street, where they planned to sing, pray, and recite the Lord's Prayer.

"We planned everything so carefully, including to meet at the site

“What we didn’t plan is what happened next.”

where Heather was hit at the exact time of the incident, 1:42 p.m., and offer prayers for all who were impacted,” says Debra Anderson, communication director for Potomac Conference, who spearheaded the Adventist response. “What we didn’t plan is what happened next.”

As they rounded the corner onto Fourth Street, someone spotted Susan Bro, her husband, and the young adults they’d asked to lead them to the site where their daughter was killed. The group watched and waited in silence to give the family privacy.

When Bro noticed the group, many wearing red clothing, she beckoned them. “It’s OK; you can come closer,” she said. “I probably need you right now.”

It had been only a week since her daughter died.

Without hesitation they descended on the couple, enveloping them with hugs and words of comfort. “We love you,” someone said. “We’re so sorry about Heather,” someone else said. “Do you need anything?” asked another. The crowd grew as Adventists, city residents, and visitors from far and near surrounded the couple.

“Can we pray for you?” asked Daniel Xisto, pastor of Potomac’s Charlottesville church. With consent he lifted his bullhorn and prayed so the crowd could hear: “We thank you, Lord, that . . . love is stronger than hate. . . . At this moment, we just want to bring healing down upon this family. . . . I pray that You’ll be with them . . .

comforting and strengthening them in the days and weeks ahead. . . . Bring healing into this place, bring healing into our hearts.”

“AS A CHURCH, WE NEED TO RESPOND”

The need to come together compelled leaders from the Allegheny West and Potomac conferences, which have four churches and more than 250 members in Charlottesville, to collaborate with the Columbia Union Conference in releasing a statement and planning a trifecta of unity: a joint Sabbath worship service, prayer rally, and potluck.

“As a church, we abhor evil and stand against individuals and organizations who perpetuate hatred, violence, and discrimination,” they said in a statement released August 15, 2017. “God calls each of us to love, to be compassionate, and to show mercy to all people no matter their race or gender. We honor that call and stand in solidarity with those who seek peace and justice. We pledge to do everything in our power to end the scourge of racism, sexism, and discrimination whenever and wherever we see it.”

On Sabbath morning, members from all four churches gathered at Allegheny West’s Bethany church, and, despite the record heat index, marched three quarters of a mile to Potomac’s Charlottesville church singing and chanting “Love Wins.”

During the worship service that followed, each speaker echoed the sentiment, calling for love and unity

to prevail. “When they speak hate, we’re going to speak love even louder,” said Bethany pastor Nathaniel Drew.

“What you’re seeing on TV, that is not who we are,” said Wes Belamy, Charlottesville’s vice mayor. “Now, more than ever, we are unified, stronger together, and more than willing to deal with and address our issues, not in our own silos, but collectively.”

William Miller, president of Potomac Conference, which has two churches in Charlottesville, explained why he wanted to participate. “As the church, we need to respond,” he said. “This happened on our watch. This happened in our lifetime.”

Miller’s counterpart, William T. Cox, Sr., president of Allegheny West Conference, which also has two churches in the city, agreed. “When we pull together, God will heal all our wounds. . . . Trouble will not last always. God has put an expiration date on hatred, on fear, on prejudice. God has put an expiration date on death and dying.”

Fernando Muller, who pastors Allegheny West’s Central Hispanic congregation, shared one more reason for the turnout: “When we started talking about coming together today, there is one word in the Bible that started resonating with me: That word is ‘compassion,’” he said. “I hope that today we can show compassion, because that’s the reason God created the church, to show compassion in this moment.”



TWO NOTED ADMINISTRATORS PASS AWAY. W. Richard Leshner (left), former president of Andrews University, passed away on August 18, 2017, at the age of 92. Leshner also served as vice president of the General Conference, among other leadership roles. Former General Conference undersecretary Athal Tolhurst passed away on August 7, 2017, at the age of 82. He served as a pastor, evangelist, and administrator in Australia before being elected executive secretary of the South Pacific Division.



CHILDREN'S ORGANIZATION GOES GLOBAL WITH BRAND CHANGE. Asian Aid USA recently announced a brand change. As of August 1, 2017, the organization based in Ooltewah, Tennessee, became Child Impact International. The new name is expected to bolster the implementation of ongoing and future projects. The organization sponsors more than 3,500 children in Adventist mission schools in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Myanmar.



U.S. CHURCH MEMBERS STEP UP TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

Adventist members in the United States are gearing up to support initiatives fighting human trafficking in Kansas City, Kansas, and other U.S. cities. According to some reports, Kansas City, which sits at the intersection of three national highways, is a hub for sex trafficking. Adventists in the region are working to create greater awareness and support local initiatives that help exploited women. One initiative, Magdalene KC, provides a home for women escaping prostitution and sexual violence.



CONGRESS FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED OFFERS SUPPORT, RESOURCES.

More than 200 deaf persons, interpreters, and special-needs ministries directors from across Inter-America gathered for the first territory-wide Congress for the Hearing-impaired. The five-day event, held at Montemorelos University in northern Mexico in July, sought to reassure deaf members and friends that they are valuable to God and the church, and provided training to church leaders on strengthening special needs ministries in churches and communities.



HIGH-TECH "WAR ROOM" CENTERPIECE OF NEW CANCER CENTER.

A high-tech "cancer war room" is the centerpiece of the new Integrated Cancer Centre (ICC) at Sydney Adventist Hospital in Australia. The purpose-built multidisciplinary room is designed for specialists to simultaneously review a cancer patient's case. Technology in the room allows real-time sharing of a range of information, such as pathology results and radiology images, from multiple sources to assist in diagnosis and treatment.



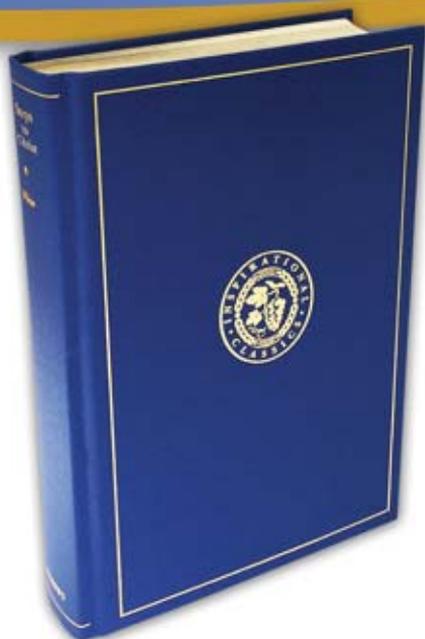
A DIFFERENT KIND OF BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. Dasebre Adjei Dwamena, a broadcast journalist and news editor in Kumasi, Ghana, celebrated his birthday differently this year. Dwamena decided that on his birthday he would collect, purchase, and present various items to the women's unit of Kumasi Central Prisons, including toilet paper, sanitary pads, clothes, washing powder, and soap. Dwamena noted that no one is above prison inmates, and he believes that under no circumstance should members of society underrate those in prison.



HATE MESSAGE TARGETS CHURCH BUILDING IN CANADA. Members of Guelph Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario, Canada, arrived for prayer meeting on August 9, 2017, to discover graffiti and a racist message spray-painted on their church building. Community organizations pledged to help clean up the damage, and member of Parliament for Guelph, Lloyd Longfield, denounced the act, saying that discrimination has "no place in Canadian society." Longfield praised the Adventist church in Guelph for its reputation for "inclusion and great faith."



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DISCOVER

Christ Himself is bringing the climax of the Reformation, which will be completed when He restores all things at His second coming.

The Ongoing Relevance of the Reformation, p. 30



*Love
to learn*

A person wearing a dark blue hoodie and sunglasses is shown in profile, looking out over a body of water at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow that silhouettes the person's head and shoulders. The background is a soft, hazy landscape with water in the foreground.

**HOW CAN
WE BE JUST
BEFORE
GOD?**

*The Reformation
heritage of
justification
by faith*

RICHARD M. DAVIDSON

In what is likely the earliest book of the Bible, the patriarch Job asked the penetrating question: “How can a mortal be just before God?” (Job 9:2, NRSV).¹ Down through the centuries this question of our standing before God, how one is justified by Him, has been viewed as the most crucial question faced by Christians, foundational to all other questions.

Martin Luther asserted, “If we lose the doctrine of justification, we lose simply everything.”² He believed that justification is “the article with and by which the church stands, without which it falls.”³ In the preface to his 95 theses, drawn up in 1517, Luther boldly declared that “the article of justification is the master and prince, the lord, the ruler, and the judge over all kinds of doctrines; it preserves and governs all church doctrine and raises up our conscience before God. Without this article the world is utter death and darkness.”⁴

Similarly, John Calvin considered the doctrine of justification to be “the main hinge upon which religion turns. . . . For unless you understand first of all what your position is before God, and what the judgment which he passes upon you, you have no foundation on which your salvation can be laid, or on which piety toward God can be reared.”⁵

In the wake of the 1888 General Conference session, Ellen White likewise affirmed the importance of the subject of justification by faith: “The light given me of God places this important subject [justification by faith] above any question in my mind.”⁶ At the same time she warned that this subject is liable to be confused and is the object of Satan’s attack: “The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people, false ideas of justification by faith. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point.”⁷

Luther had earlier given a similar warning: “Whoever falls from the doctrine of justification is ignorant of God and is an idolater. . . . For once this doctrine is undermined, nothing more remains but sheer error, hypocrisy, wickedness, and idolatry, regardless of how great the sanctity that appears on the outside.”⁸

BASED ON SCRIPTURE

The Protestant Reformation occurred largely in protest against the Roman Catholic understanding of justification, which Protestant theologians considered a gross distortion of biblical teaching.

Building upon the writings of Paul, especially Romans and Galatians, and their roots in the Old Testament, Luther presented justifying righteousness as the “alien righteousness” of Christ. This was in opposition to Augustinian understanding, in which justifying righteousness, although completely through the grace of God, was something inherent in humans. For Augustine, justification was God *making* sinners righteous by a conversion of their wills; for Luther justification was God’s act of *declaring* sinners righteous based solely upon the righteousness of Christ credited to their account.

Luther affirmed that justified Christians were *simul justus et peccator*, “at the same time righteous and sinner.” R. C. Sproul explains that Luther’s famous dictum “goes to the heart of the issue regarding forensic justification.” For Luther, in justification sinners are counted just forensically by virtue of Christ’s righteousness while they remain, in and of themselves, yet sinners.

Even though those justified “necessarily, inevitably, and immediately” are indwelt by the Spirit and begin the process of sanctification, “the grounds of that person’s justification remain solely and exclusively the imputed righteousness of Christ. By His righteousness and His righteousness alone that sinners are declared to be just.”⁹

For Luther, justification was not for the onlooking eyes of humanity, but *coram Deo*, “before the face of God,” or as his theological colleague Philip Melancthon put it: “before the heavenly divine tribunal.” Grace was not a holy substance that came down from God and became inherent in human beings; it was an attitude of divine favor. Melancthon further worked out Luther’s concepts using more precise language of imputation. Justification was presented as the divine act of *declaring* sinners righteous, based upon the extrinsic, imputed righteousness of Christ.¹⁰

Calvin’s doctrine of justification was deeply indebted to concepts developed by Luther and Melancthon. Calvin eloquently emphasized the forensic nature of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ as he summarized the doctrine in his *Institutes*:

“A man . . . [is] justified by faith when, excluded from the righteousness of works, he by faith lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and clothed in it appears in the sight of God not as a sinner, but as righteous. Thus we simply interpret justification as the acceptance with which God receives us into His favor as if we were righteous. And we say that this justification consists in the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.”¹¹

To justify, therefore, is nothing less than to acquit from the charge of guilt, as if innocence were proved. Hence, when God justifies us through the intercession of Christ, He acquits us, not on proof of our own innocence, but by an imputation of righteousness, so that although not righteous in ourselves, we are deemed righteous in Christ.¹²

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

For Calvin, justification and sanctification occur simultaneously and are inseparable, but must be distinguished. He compared justification and sanctification to the twofold attributes of the sun: “If the brightness of the sun cannot be separated from its heat, are we therefore to say that the earth

is warmed by light and illumined by heat?” Even though there is a “mutual and undivided connection” between heat and light, “yet reason itself prohibits us from transferring the peculiar properties of the one to the other.”¹³

While the Magisterial Reformers (especially Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Philip Melancthon in the sixteenth century) emphasized different aspects of the doctrine, and experienced their own personal growth in understanding its meaning,¹⁴ by 1540 there was general consensus regarding

We Seventh-day Adventists, as heirs of the Reformation, must clearly understand the truth about justification by faith.

its essential contours.

Alister McGrath summarizes three main points of the consensus, in contrast to Roman Catholic theology: (1) justification is the “forensic declaration that the Christian is righteous, rather than the process by which he or she is made righteous”; (2) justification is “the external act by which God declares the believer to be righteous,” while sanctification or regeneration is “the internal process of renewal by the Holy Spirit”; and (3) justifying righteousness is “the alien righteousness of Christ, imputed to the believer and external to him, not a righteousness that is inherent within him, located within him, or in any way belonging to him.”¹⁵

This basic understanding of justification was accepted by later Reformers, such as Jacobus Arminius,¹⁶ and became embodied in the major Protestant creeds in their treatment of justification.¹⁷

Ellen White affirmed that “the great doctrine of justification by faith” was “clearly taught by Luther,” but laments that within 100 years after Luther’s time this doctrine “had been almost wholly lost sight of; and the Romish principle of trusting to good works for salvation, had taken its

place.”¹⁸ She documented how John and Charles Wesley in the eighteenth century recovered this doctrine and faithfully proclaimed it.¹⁹

RESISTANCE

At the Council of Trent (1545-1563) the Roman Catholic Church, in its *Decree on Justification* (1547), not only systematically rejected the distinctive tenets of justification by faith alone as espoused by the Reformers, but anathematized (cursed and declared heretical) anyone who believed or taught such beliefs.²⁰

Within the past few decades, a number of evangelicals have engaged in dialogue with Roman Catholics on this subject. In a surprising turn of events, many evangelicals are now returning to Rome, reaching consensus with Roman Catholic scholars and proclaiming that the Reformation was a misunderstanding that should never have happened.

Various joint declarations between Protestants and Catholics regarding the doctrine of justification have been released.²¹ But a close look at these developments reveals that the Catholics have not changed their views on this doctrine since Trent. Rather, many Protestants have capitulated and no longer see any need for ecclesiastical division between Catholics and Protestants.²²

We Seventh-day Adventists, as heirs of the Reformation, must clearly understand the truth about justification by faith in view of its central importance in our lives and in view of Satan’s special work to undermine and to confuse minds on this foundational biblical teaching. Ellen White carefully underscored the crucial difference between justification and sanctification, in harmony with our Reformation heritage: “The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted.”²³

She also stressed the centrality of this doctrine for the Advent message in these last days: “Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity.’”²⁴

¹ Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

² Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1-4*, vol. 26, of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1963), p. 26.

³ Martin Luther, *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, ed. Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), vol. 2, p. 704, n. 5. “Although Luther did not coin this famous formula himself, it is widely acknowledged that it nicely captures his sentiments concerning justification” (Paul Rhodes Eddy, James K. Beilby and Steven E. Enderlein, “Justification in Historical Perspective,” in *Justification: Five Views*, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy [Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2011], p. 24).

⁴ Luther, *What Luther Says*, vol. 2, p. 703.

⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559 ed.), trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), III.xi.1.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1979), p. 20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁸ Luther, *Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1-4*, pp. 395, 396.

⁹ R. C. Sproul, “The Forensic Nature of Justification,” in *Justification by Faith Alone: Affirming the Doctrine by Which the Church and the Individual Stands or Falls*, ed. John Kistler, rev. and updated ed. (Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2003), pp. 33, 34.

¹⁰ The mature Melancthon also grasped the concept of the human free will in which salvation was truly available to all human beings, unlike Calvin and Luther, who held on to a doctrine of predestination. See Gregory B. Graybill, *Evangelical Free Will: Philip Melancthon’s Journey on the Origins of Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹¹ Calvin, *Institutes*, III.xi.2.

¹² *Ibid.*, III.xi.3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, III.xi.6.

¹⁴ For more details and substantiation, see, e.g., Bruce L. McCormack, ed., *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges* (Grand Rapids: Baker; Edinburgh, Scotland: Rutherford House, 2006).

¹⁵ Alister McGrath, *Justification by Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p. 61.

¹⁶ See Jacobus Arminius, “Disputation 19: On the Justification of Man Before God,” in *Works*, vol. 1 (accessed at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/arminius/works1.v.xx.html>): “I am not conscious to myself, of having taught or entertained any other sentiments concerning the justification of man before God, than those which are held unanimously by the Reformed and Protestant Churches, and which are in complete agreement with their expressed opinions.” Arminius, however, as did the mature Melancthon, widened justification to include all who chose to accept it (and not just the elect, as for Luther and Calvin).

¹⁷ See John H. Leith, ed., *Creeeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine From the Bible to the Present* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963).

¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 253.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 253-259.

²⁰ See H. J. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (London: Herder, 1941).

²¹ For a collection of the main documents in the recent Protestant-Catholic rapprochement over the doctrine of justification, and a sympathetic assessment, see, e.g., Anthony N. S. Lane, *Justification in Catholic-Protestant Dialogue: An Evangelical Assessment* (London: T & T Clark, 2002).

²² See Thomas Schreiner, *Faith Alone: The Doctrine of Justification: What the Reformers Taught . . . and Why It Still Matters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), pp. 209-230; and Klaas Runia, “Justification and Roman Catholicism,” in *Right With God: Justification in the Bible and the World*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), pp. 197-215.

²³ Ellen G. White, in *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 4, 1895.

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 1, p. 372.

Richard M. Davidson is the J. N. Andrews professor of Old Testament interpretation at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

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LUTHER'S STRENGTH: FOCUS

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a lightning-rod and centerpiece of the Reformation. Five hundred years ago Luther boldly nailed 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. As a result, October 31, 1517, has become an anchor point in Reformation history.

Luther's heroic confrontation with the Roman Catholic Church became a flame that stoked the spiritual fires of reform. By so doing, Luther shook the foundation of institutionalized Christianity. Yet thoughtful students of history concede that the Reformation wasn't only about one man. Luther stood in a long line of Reformers, and was far from perfect. Many other groups and people were heroic in their protest.

Groups such as the Albigenses (c. 1100) and Waldenses (c. 1173) are two notable examples. Stalwart reformers such as John Wycliffe (1320-1384), John Huss (1369-1415), and Gerolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) courageously denounced error and advocated truth. They spoke out against the Papacy, confessionals, purgatory, pilgrimages, saint worship, relics, etc. Many were martyred for embracing the truth.

In spite of Luther's many and obvious flaws, weaknesses, and foibles, Ellen White highlighted some of his exemplary traits. She poignantly noted that we who are "living so near the close of time should emulate . . . [his] noble example."¹ She emphasized that he set positive examples for us in three distinct ways: (1) religious liberty: defending people's right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience; (2) Bible study: pursuing a deep knowledge of the Word of God and His righteousness; (3) truth proclamation: making it our highest

ambition to defend truth to "an unbelieving world and an ungodly church."²

Ellen White casts this challenge in an eschatological setting: "In the near conflict, thousands will be called to imitate Luther's constancy and courage."³

Three areas in Luther's life merit emulation:

First, he strategized truth by confronting the Catholic Church and the onlooking public with his 95 theses. He facilitated ways and means to give everyone access to the Bible, elucidated scriptural understanding, and drew attention to the need for reform in the church. Luther found the practice of selling indulgences particularly odious. He countered it with a strong denunciation and asserted that salvation, forgiveness, and repentance cannot be bought and sold. He famously affirmed that salvation is by faith through grace alone.

Second, Luther systematized truth with other Reformers, and contributed to the five theological principles that unify around common truths among the various and diverse streams of the Reformation: *sola fide* (by faith alone); *solus Christus* (through Christ alone); *sola gratia* (by grace alone); *sola scriptura* (by Scripture alone); *solī Deo gloria* (glory to God alone).

Third, he scattered truth to the masses by translating the entire Bible into German (New Testament, 1522; Old Testament, 1534). His translation was a major influence on the development of the King James Version of the Bible.

As we experience the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, let us be inspired and motivated with the best examples of Luther and the Reformers. 🍀

¹ In *Signs of the Times*, July 26, 1883.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

TRANSFORMATION TIPS
DELBERT W. BAKER



LUTHER STOOD IN A
LONG LINE OF
REFORMERS, AND
WAS FAR FROM
PERFECT.

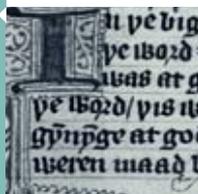
Delbert W. Baker is vice chancellor of the Adventist University of Africa, near Nairobi, Kenya.

TIME LINE OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

From Wycliffe to the Second Coming

SHAWN BRACE

1382



John Wycliffe, known as the “Morning Star” of the English Reformation, oversees the translation of the Bible into the language of the people. A group of Bibles, known as “Wycliffe’s Bible,” are translated into Middle English, setting the stage for the Protestant Reformation.

1415

Priest and philosopher Jan Hus, heavily influenced by John Wycliffe, is burned at the stake in modern-day Czech Republic for attacking the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

1517



German theologian and priest Martin Luther posts a list of disputations, now known as the 95 theses, on the door of All Saints’ Church in Wittenberg, Germany, criticizing the practice of indulgences in the Roman Catholic Church. It effectively starts the Protestant Reformation throughout Europe, emphasizing salvation by grace alone and a return to the Bible as the sole source of authority.

1521

Luther is called before the Diet of Worms to recant his views about salvation by grace alone. He refuses to move from his positions, declaring, “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason, I am bound by the scriptures I have quoted. . . . I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience.” As a result, he is declared a heretic.

1526

English scholar William Tyndale produces the first English New Testament taken from the Greek language. A decade later he is condemned as a heretic and burned at the stake.

1553



Over the span of five years, beginning in 1553, Queen Mary I of England, known as “Bloody Mary,” goes on a campaign to rid England of Protestants, executing nearly 250 heretics, including Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer together. Latimer famously says at their execution, “Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.”

1620

Fleeing persecution in Europe, the Pilgrims emigrate to the New World, setting up a colony in present-day Massachusetts.

1635



Roger Williams is banished from Massachusetts for promoting full religious liberty. He flees to present-day Providence and founds Rhode Island, becoming the first territory to guarantee complete separation of church and state.

1738



Englishman John Wesley, while attending a meeting in Aldersgate, hears Martin Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to Romans* read and converts to Christ, feeling his heart "strangely warmed." With his brother and hymn writer, Charles, he launches the Methodist movement, leading to great revival across England and America.

1816



New York farmer William Miller converts from deism to Christ, entering upon a deep personal study of the Bible, anchored in the Reformation principles of the primacy of the Bible, and that the Bible explains itself. He eventually concludes that Christ's second coming is imminent and proclaims the message in the northeastern United States.

1844

The "Millerites" experience great disappointment when Christ doesn't return on October 22, after concluding He would do so based on a reading of Daniel 8:14. A few despondent believers come to realize that Christ started His work of the investigative judgment on the date instead.

1845

Beginning in 1845, a group of "Adventists" that formed out of the Millerite movement, in continued commitment to faith in the Bible's unparalleled authority, begin studying the question of the seventh-day Sabbath, ultimately concluding that it is still an institution for Christians to keep and enjoy.

1863

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is officially organized in Michigan as a means of spreading "present truth" to "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6, NKJV)* around the world.

1888



Adventist prophet Ellen White declares that the "loud cry" of Revelation 18:1-4, which, as the ultimate continuation of the Protestant Reformation, would spread the message of God's love to the entire world, had begun in the message of justification by faith being proclaimed by two young preachers, Ellet J. Waggoner and Alonzo T. Jones.

SOON

The Reformation reaches climactic fulfillment when, consistent with His word in the Bible, Jesus comes to earth in splendor, and brings His people to His home of glory, along with the absolute end of evil, of sin and sorrow, death and pain.

*Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. all rights reserved.

Shawn Brace is a pastor in the Northern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, headquartered in the state of Maine.

Before

or After?

When did she say it?

1 “Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression. Jesus regained heaven for man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure; for He obeyed the law perfectly, and all who have a right conception of the plan of redemption will see that they cannot be saved while in transgression of God’s holy precepts. They must cease to transgress the law and lay hold on the promises of God that are available for us through the merits of Christ.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

2 “God has given us the rule of conduct which every one of His servants must follow. It is obedience to His law, not merely a legal obedience, but an obedience which enters into the life, and is exemplified in the character. God has set His own standard of character for all who would become subjects.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

3 “We may rest upon God, not because of our own merit, but because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

COMPILED BY TIM POIRIER, VICE DIRECTOR,
ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

Was 1888 a turning point in Ellen White’s understanding of righteousness by faith? Which of the following statements did she make prior to the Minneapolis General Conference session, and which were after? Check the word “before” or “after” as it relates to the 1888 session. Turn the page upside down for the answers, as well as to read a relevant statement from Ellen White.

4 “God requires perfection of character from His children. He demands that His law be remembered and meditated upon, that unswerving obedience be rendered to its requirements.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

5 “Implicit obedience is the condition of salvation. God’s law must be obeyed in every particular. It is our salvation to make His law our rule, His life our pattern, His glory our chief aim. To keep ourselves in the love of God, to be bound to obedience by His requirements, this is to be free in Christ.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

6 “In these dreadful hours we must learn to trust, to depend solely upon the merits of the atonement, and in all our helpless unworthiness cast ourselves upon the merits of the crucified and risen Saviour. We shall never perish while we do this—*never!*”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

7 “Man’s destiny will be determined by his obedience to the whole law.”

 BEFORE ↔ AFTER

8 “No deep-seated love for Jesus can dwell in the heart that does not see and realize its own sinfulness. . . . A view of our own sinfulness drives us to Him who can pardon. . . . As our substitute, He takes our guilt

on His own soul, and imputes His righteousness to the sinner. When the soul, realizing its helplessness, reaches out after Christ, He will reveal Himself in power.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

9 “Such is the infinite goodness of God that through Jesus Christ’s merits He not only spares but pardons and justifies us, and through the righteousness of Christ imputes righteousness to us, and exalts and ennobles us by making us children of His adoption.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

10 “The Lord requires at this time just what He required of Adam in Eden—perfect obedience to the law of God. We must have righteousness without a flaw, without a blemish.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

11 “The ministers must be converted before they can strengthen their brethren. They should not preach themselves, but Christ and His righteousness.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

12 “The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

13 “We are nothing, but Christ is all and in all. We may unite our ignorance to His wisdom, our weakness to His strength, our imperfections to His merits, our frailty to His enduring might. Oh, yes, He is our all. Upon His merits we may rely, and through His merits we may have access to our heavenly Father and thus be closely connected with heaven.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER

14 “We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves or to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour.”

■ BEFORE ↔ ■ AFTER



ANSWERS: 1. after, *Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1890. 2. after, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 523 (1898). 3. before, *Gospel Workers* (1892 ed.), p. 427 (1883). 4. after, *Signs of the Times*, Mar. 4, 1897. 5. after, *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 15, 1899. 6. before, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 309, 310 (1862). 7. after, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 498 (1898). 8. before, *Review and Herald*, Feb. 17, 1885. 9. before, *Our High Calling*, p. 17 (1873). 10. after, *Faith and Works*, p. 89 (1890). 11. before, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 469 (1869). 12. after, *Patritarchs and Prophets*, p. 372 (1890). 13. before, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 40 (1874). 14. before, *Faith and Works*, p. 39 (1883). “I have had the question asked, ‘What do you think of this light that these men are presenting?’ Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years—the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been trying to present before your minds. When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas in Minneapolis, it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversations between myself and my husband” (*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, pp. 116, 117).

THE ONGOING RELEVANCE OF THE REFORMATION

Core principles that sustain our Adventist hope

GANOUNE DIOP

To capture the multiple facets of the Reformation, it is helpful to identify the intrinsic principles shared by several Christian traditions. Many of these principles capture the issues at stake. They also indicate what was understood as the gospel, or the good news, of the new covenant. As a result of searching Scripture, Martin Luther discovered the fundamental truth of God's unconditional love. God's provision for salvation sparked a reformation in Luther's life, one that is still felt today.

The principles of the Reformation, including the five "*sola*"s and other insights and changes in belief, were adopted to restore what was understood as new covenant revelations. They were all grounded in a deep experience of the sufficiency of God and the need to rely completely on Him.

"Luther's breakthrough had a dazzling, corrosive simplicity to it. The power of those twin principles, 'faith alone' and 'Scripture alone,' lay in the word 'alone.' There is nothing and no one else other than God incarnate in Jesus Christ worth our attention. Being a Christian means throwing yourself abjectly, unreservedly, on Christ's mercy. Living a Christian life means living Christ's life—that is, abandoning all security and worldly ambitions to follow him 'through penalties, deaths and hell.'"¹

The core tenets of post-Reformation Christian beliefs were based on the following:

1 *Sola scriptura* (Scripture alone as the foundation for faith and practice, not Scripture along with tradition). The "Scripture principle" is the conviction that the Bible is the only absolute source of authority and that all believers are equal before it. It is Protestantism's central, unifying idea.²

2 *Sola gratia* (by grace alone, not grace along with merits when it comes to salvation). The principle of "grace alone" highlights the depth of God's love manifested in unmerited favor toward those He created in His image. Those who receive God's grace are called to be gracious people.

3 *Sola fide* (by faith alone, not faith with works to earn salvation). The nature of justification was at the root of the Reformation. The righteousness of Christ is the ground of our hope. As Ellen White put it: "Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that [righteousness] wrought by His Spirit working in and through us."³

4 *Solus Christus* (Christ alone, the only mediator between God and humanity). This principle presupposes that only God can lead us to God. Only God can forgive offenses to God. Only God can save and offer eternal life. The whole purpose of the Christian life is to become a Christ-centered life.

5 *Soli Deo gloria* (to God be all the glory; only God is worthy of worship). Instead of seeking popularity, prestige, or power, pastors and other leaders are called to validate their ministry by embracing the humility of Christ, who, even though He was the only one worthy of glory, did not seek His own glory.

6 *Presbyterii fidelium* (priesthood of all believers). The new covenant is characterized by free access to God. The premise of this principle is direct access to all who come to faith in God. In the new covenant God graciously grants access to us through faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

7 *Ecclesia semper reformanda* (the church is constantly being reformed). The church is in a continuous process of reformation until God makes all things perfect again. This principle is consonant with the sufficiency of Jesus Christ, who alone will complete the Reformation, given His prerogative to renew all things at His Second Coming. Every Christian ought to be a reformer.

8 *The sacraments*. From the Reformation on, the seven sacraments of the Roman Church are reduced to two: baptism and Communion. Obvi-

ously, the latter was and is understood differently by Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists. This principle also invalidates putting church leaders on a pedestal above church members. Leaders are no more sacred to God than His other children.

9 Equality. This principle is based on the fact that God makes no difference among God's children. He does not practice favoritism among His redeemed. His love extends to all.

The principle of human rights recognized by the international community in declarations and treaties is grounded on the premise of equality. This equality is beautifully captured in the words of the apostle Paul: "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

10 Freedom of conscience. The famous declaration of Martin Luther on the pivotal role of conscience is in order: "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason . . . my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything; for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me, Amen."⁴ Lack of conformity to this principle has tarnished the tremendous legacy of the Protestant Reformation.

11 A biblical worldview. Such a perspective should inform Christian beliefs and practice. The Reformation set limits to every authority and tradition, and opened the door to a deeper movement of restoration that now seeks to restore what God intended. This restoration is deeply ingrained in Seventh-day Adventist self-identity and mission. Love is the ultimate expression of human dignity.

12 Implications of the love of God. God's love reveals human dignity and humanity's infinite worth through our creation in God's image. The love of God for humans created in His image undergirds every other principle of the Reformation.

The Reformation irreversibly changed the world of the Christian faith. These 12 principles, characteristics, and insights into the post-Reformation give us perspective about how the initiatives of Luther and other Reformers changed the world.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EMPHASES

Adventists claim to be entrusted the whole chain of truth. This claim presupposes that whatever is justifiably and genuinely biblical in other Christian traditions should be embraced in Adventism. Adventists are part of the nineteenth-century reform movement that insisted on the following:

- restoration of biblical truth
- affirmation of Christ's high-priestly ministry
- preparation for Christ's second coming
- God's righteousness revealed in Christ
- transformation of our characters into Christ's likeness

Key to Seventh-day Adventist self-understanding is the importance of Creation. It legitimizes the Sabbath and human dignity by virtue of the belief that humans were created in the image of God. This aspect is present in the name Seventh-day Adventist.

The other aspect in the name refers to the Second Coming as the climax to the history of salvation and restoration of all things. Before this coming of God, the Son, a critical phase in the history of salvation is Christ's priestly ministry.

In highlighting the heavenly, high-priestly ministry of Jesus Christ as an integral part of God's salvation, Seventh-day Adventists show an undergirding attachment to the restoration of justice as only God can do it.

Justice is due in favor of countless people persecuted, discriminated against, and murdered. Christian martyrs and other victims of injustice require a work of vindication. Seventh-day Adventists' broader understanding of the atonement is a distinctive feature of its identity.

In Adventist understanding, the cross is inseparable from the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ. Martin Luther's declaration "The cross alone is our theology" (*crux sola est nostra theologia*) is fully embraced as a crucial aspect of atonement, followed by Christ's heavenly, high-priestly ministry.

Christ Himself is bringing the climax of the Reformation, which will be completed when He restores all things at His second coming. 

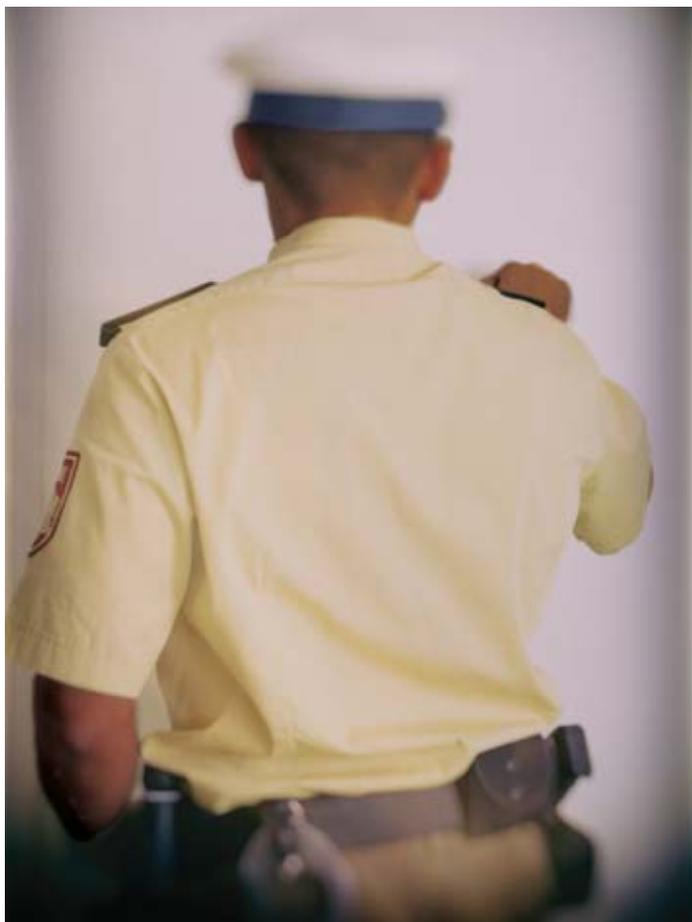
¹ Alec Ryrie, *Protestants: The Faith That Made the Modern World* (New York: Viking, 2017), p. 23.

² Alister E. McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea* (London: SPCK, 2007).

³ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), p. 63.

⁴ April 1521.

Ganoune Diop, Ph.D., is director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department at the General Conference and secretary general of the International Religious Liberty Association.



JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE

How an innocent request led to a visit from an officer.

LAURICE K. DURRANT

As a young nissionary nurse in my early 20s, I was naive and trusting. My job responsibilities were many: supervision, teaching, and secretarial work. In addition, because of my knowledge of such languages as French and Arabic, I was on call day and night to interpret for non-English-speaking patients.

The capital city where the hospital was located was the seat of

embassies, as well as a major seaport and airport. Patients from various embassies, ships, or airlines needing medical attention came, and I was called to translate their complaints/needs to the doctors. I met and befriended a number of important representatives of various countries, as well as ship and airline captains and their crews.

A STRANGE REQUEST

One day an embassy employee whom I had assisted on several occasions called. He was going on business to a town approximately a two-hour drive from the capital, and he wondered if I would like to join him for some sightseeing and lunch. I asked if I could bring along my friend Dorothy. He agreed.

He was an older gentleman in his early 50s. In those days, I considered anyone past 40 “old.” Dorothy was a young woman with whom I had a lot in common. She was head nurse on one of the hospital units I supervised. We attended church together and became fast friends because of our similar backgrounds, education, and religious experiences.

The day arrived for our outing. A chauffeured car picked us up. We had an enjoyable time visiting and sightseeing on the way to our destination. Following lunch the embassy attaché asked me to deliver some phonograph records to his friend in prison. Surprised by the strange request, I agreed. I was to wish his friend happy birthday and tell him that I’d brought him a gift. I remember objecting to taking credit for the gift, but the man gently insisted.

The chauffeur drove us to the prison gate. I showed the prison

guard my pass, and he led me to a small room. A man dressed in a suit and tie rose from the chair and greeted me. He was young and stood more than six feet tall. I said something like “Happy birthday! I hope you enjoy the classical music on these records.”

We shook hands and made small talk. He thanked me, and I left with the guard who took me back to the gate. I was puzzled: no prison bars, no jail clothes, a private room. What kind of jail is this? To my inquiry my embassy friend said, “He’s a political prisoner; they are treated differently,” or something to that effect. We did some more sightseeing, then drove home.

UH-OH

A couple weeks later I was in my apartment with Dorothy when the doorbell rang. I opened the door to find a stern-looking police officer. He asked if I was Laurice Kafrouni. I nodded yes. “Come with me,” he said.

Dorothy, who had followed me, recognized the officer and spoke his first name. Turning to me, she said, “It’s my cousin.”

Simultaneously they both said to each other, “What are you doing here?”

Sensing something wrong, Dorothy said to me, “Go finish your lecture preparation.” She went out and closed the door behind her. I wondered why a police officer would come to my house. How did he know my name? And why did he want me to go with him?

I couldn’t concentrate on my work. Waiting seemed like an eternity. After about 30 minutes, Dorothy came in with a reassuring look and told me “the rest of the story.”

The records I delivered to the political prisoner were not musical records, but messages from his supporters who were planning a plot of some kind. I was implicated because I had delivered them and my name was on the pass. She shared with her cousin exactly what had happened, and that I was just a nurse, definitely not a spy. I had been set up.

Dorothy told the officer that if he arrested me, he’d have to arrest her, too, because she’d come along for the ride in more ways than one. Because of their family ties, and (I presume) in order not to jeopardize his reputation, he accepted her account and left, satisfied that I was innocent of any wrongdoing.

SERVING OUR SENTENCE

My rather astonishing experience dims into insignificance compared to the injustices to which Jesus was subjected. He was betrayed by a so-called friend. Even the high priest misrepresented Him before Pilate’s tribunal, falsifying His character while professing to be a follower of the God of Abraham. Jesus was treated as a criminal, mocked, reviled, humiliated, and, ultimately, condemned to death.

It’s extremely difficult to read the account of Jesus’ arrest, trial, and crucifixion without shedding tears for the inhuman treatment He received. Ellen White wrote: “Christ suffered keenly under abuse and insult. At the hands of the beings whom He had created, and for whom He was making an infinite sacrifice, He received every indignity.”¹

Jesus had earlier healed the sick, opened the eyes of those who were blind, cleansed those with leprosy, raised those who were dead, and performed many more wonderful miracles. For which of those good deeds was He tried and condemned to death? It’s hard to fathom or understand such cruel behavior on the part of those He had come to save.

But praise God that Jesus’ story does not end with His crucifixion, death, and burial. He is alive today, sitting at the right hand of God. He will soon return to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will judge the world in righteousness. “Justice is the foundation of His throne,” wrote Ellen White, “and the fruit of His love.”²

IMPLICATIONS OF OUR REDEMPTION

In our present fallen world, injustices abound. I’ve often wondered what would have happened to me had not Dorothy been there when an officer came to my door. Was this just a chance happening? I think not. We can take heart, realizing that we are only pilgrims in this world. Although difficult circumstances assail us, we will never be called to endure what Jesus went through. He did that for us.

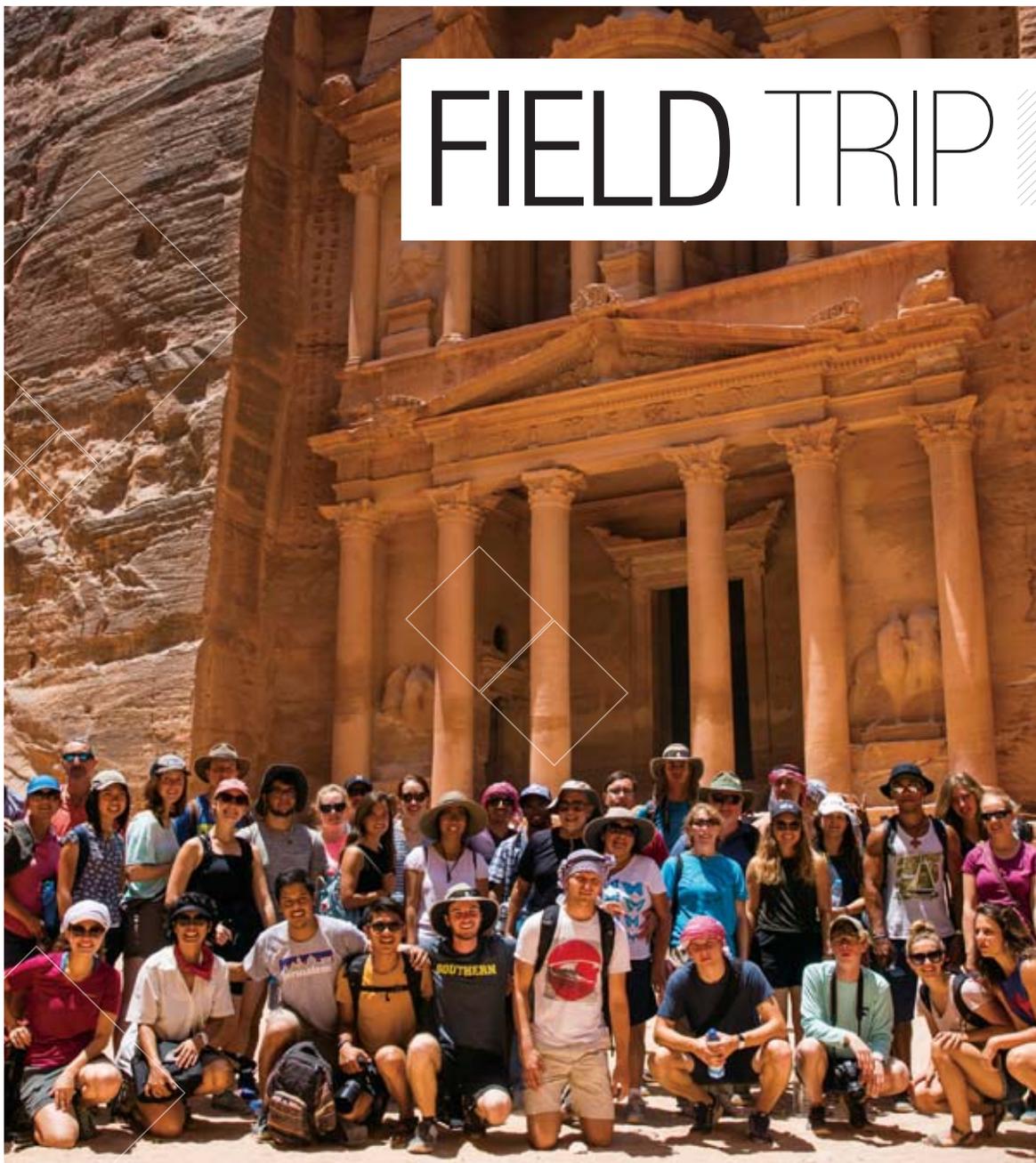
Judgment day is coming. In the meantime we can rely on God’s unfailing promise: “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Heb. 13:5). What blessed assurance! 🌿

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 700.

² *Ibid.*, p. 762.

After serving as a professor of nursing at several Adventist colleges, **Laurice K. Durrant** lives in Hanford, California.

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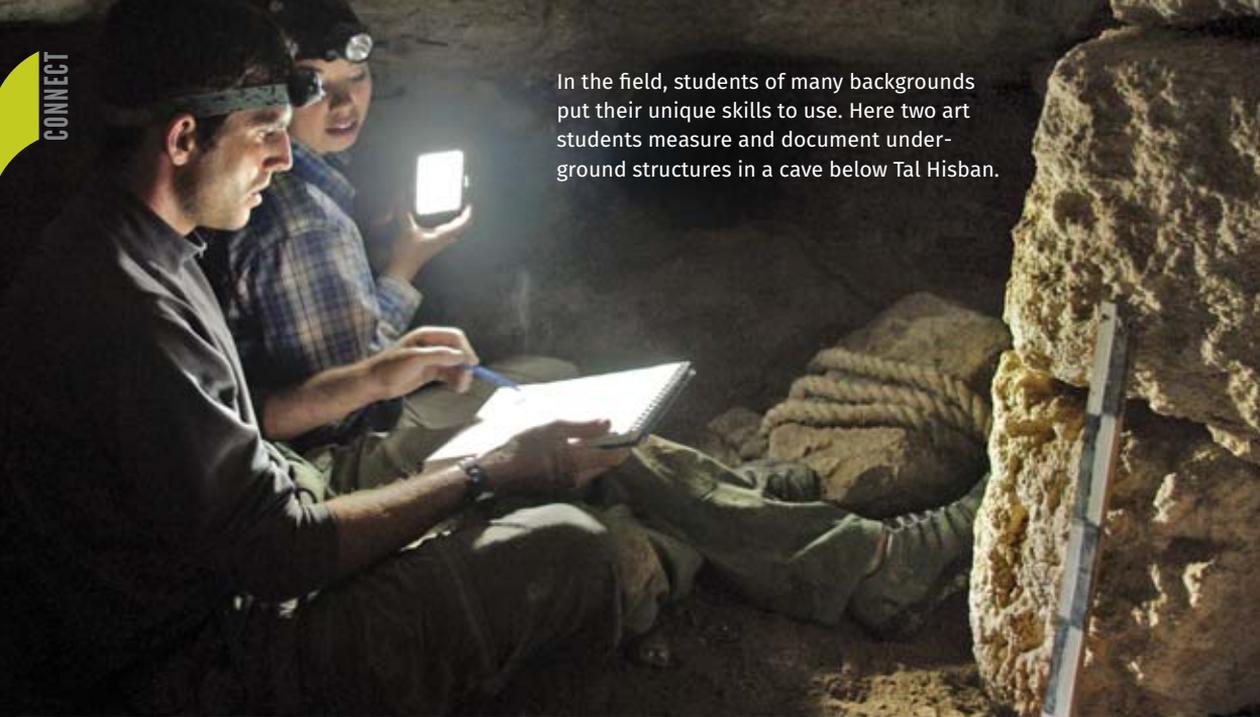
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CONNECT

THE HESHBON EXCAVATION {FIVE DECADES LATER}

A drone's view of Tal Hisban's summit reveals the ruins of a Byzantine Church, Umayyad Bathhouse and perimeter wall that may date to the Iron Age.

In the field, students of many backgrounds put their unique skills to use. Here two art students measure and document underground structures in a cave below Tal Hisban.



ØYSTEIN S. LA BIANCA AND JEFFREY P. HUDON

Longtime readers of this magazine will likely remember a series of articles reporting on the discoveries of the Andrews University-led archaeological expeditions to biblical Heshbon in Jordan from 1967 to 1976. Written by Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary professors Siegfried H. Horn and Lawrence T. Geraty, these articles covered not only discoveries illuminating biblical history but also the people, the goals, and the scientific procedures that were integral to the Heshbon expedition.

As a member of the original expedition, who now leads research teams to the same site, my colleague Jeff Hudon and I (OSL) will share some highlights and accomplishments as we mark the fiftieth anniversary of archaeology at Tall Hisban, as the site is known in Jordan today.

We owe a great deal to the founding directors of the expedition, Siegfried H. Horn, Roger Boraas, and Lawrence T. Geraty. The original Heshbon team routinely and enthusiastically adopted innovative practices for data collection and analysis, even pioneering new methodologies themselves. The expedition became a leader in introducing multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of Jordan's long-term past, including studies of animal and plant remains, groundbreaking research on

the material culture of the Islamic centuries, studies of life in the present-day village and, most recently, community archaeology. Scores of Jordanian and foreign archaeology professionals have started or grown their careers by working at Tall Hisban.

POWER AND PRESTIGE AT HISBAN

Hisban (or Heshbon in the biblical text) played a significant role in biblical narratives, and continued to do so in later periods as well. Located at 2,900 feet (885 meters) above sea level along the edge of the highland plateau overlooking the Jordan River valley from the east, Hisban's summit provides panoramic views of storied biblical landscape. To the southeast, across the plains of Madaba, known in the Old Testament as the "tableland" of Transjordan, is a highly contested region. Here King David (1 Chron. 19), Israelite rulers Omri, Ahab, and Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25), and kings Uzziah and Jotham of Judah (2 Chron. 26:8-10; 27:5) fought against neighboring nations for control over this strategic and agriculturally valuable plateau. Ammonites and the Moabites were Israel's most notable adversaries in the region (Isa. 15; 16; Jer. 48; 49).

To the southwest of Hisban lies Mount Nebo, a prominent ridge ending in two peaks. From this vantage point God showed Moses the entire sweep of the Promised Land, then buried this great Isra-



Andrews student Noël Harris works with teachers and students from the local primary school to build a rooftop garden as part of a community development project.



TOP: From riding camels to digging in the dirt, for 50 years the Hisban Project has served not only as an introduction to Archaeology but also as many students first experience in a different culture.

BOTTOM: Our best way of understanding the past is often through looking at the little things, even trash left behind by generations of the past. Bones, shards of ceramic and broken pieces of glass all tell a story to the trained eye.

elite leader in an unknown location somewhere in the vicinity of Nebo when he died (Deut. 32-34).

Because of its commanding location, its natural endowments in terms of annual rainfall amounts, fertile valleys and slopes, and construction-quality limestone, Hisban has been a place for the demonstration of power and prestige by various rulers going back more than three millennia. Thus, excavations at the site have uncovered traces of a long succession of regional and imperial powers that have influenced the material culture and daily life at Hisban over time, including Egyptians, Assyrians, Neo-Babylonians, Ptolemaic Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Umayyads, Abbasids, Ayyubids, Mamluks, Ottomans, and British.

The earliest biblically attested ruler of Hisban and the person most often associated with this biblical site, was Sihon, king of the Amorites (Num. 21:21-34; Deut. 2:24-32). Sihon famously attempted to block Moses and the Israelites from traveling through his domain, which he had conquered from the Moabites. Despite Israel's message of peaceful intentions, Sihon marched his army out from Hisban to fight against Moses and Israel at Jahaz near the desert to the east. Sihon and his army perished by the sword, and the Old Testament preserves the poetic "Song of Heshbon" (Num. 21:27-30), which memorializes this Israelite victory

over the Amorites and their sacking of Heshbon.

Perhaps the first person to fully exploit Hisban's potential as a capital and administrative center was King Solomon of Israel. First Kings 4:19 seems to indicate that Hisban functioned as the capital of Solomon's twelfth district, governed by one of Solomon's officials, Geber, son of Uri. Ecclesiastes (2:4-6) and Song of Songs (7:4) hint that Hisban also served as one of Solomon's royal estates. In 1971 Professor Horn and his team began to excavate an enormous rectangular reservoir cut from the bedrock high on Hisban's southern slope. Archaeologist Larry Herr, who oversaw the excavation of this monumental installation, estimated that the reservoir's capacity was an astounding 2.2 million liters of water!

An extensive labyrinth of subterranean caves and cisterns beneath Hisban may attest that an on-site spring once provided water for Hisban's inhabitants. Since such a huge quantity of water far exceeded the needs of Hisban, a primary purpose of the reservoir may have been that of an enormous holding tank for irrigating, via gravity-fed channels, an extensive array of gardens and orchards.

Although not specifically mentioned in the New Testament, Ebus (as Hisban was known in the Early Christian period) played a prominent role in the territory of Perea, governed by the Hasmonean and Herodian dynasties, and boasted a Roman temple and plaza. After the rise of Christianity Hisban became an episcopal seat, and bishops from Ebus attended important Church councils. The original Heshbon expedition identified and partially excavated three Byzantine-era churches at Hisban. Members from our team are now conducting focused research on religious aspects at Hisban during the New Testament, early church and later Islamic periods.

ARCHAEOLOGY FROM BELOW

We must note, however, that our excavations at Hisban have not provided direct archaeological confirmation for any of the famous individuals listed in the sidebar. In fact, archaeology rarely provides direct evidence for or against the existence of any one particular ruler.

While our research shows that Hisban was a place for the demonstration of power and prestige by conquerors and kings, it also reveals the daily lives of their local subjects—the farmers, artisans, and merchants that occupied the site throughout time. Their story is best preserved among Hisban's many discoveries.

These local inhabitants built and maintained dozens of cisterns, terraces, and other water installations throughout the site. They enlarged and dwelt in nearby caves and built houses and sheep pens on its slopes. Hisban's inhabitants fashioned many of the thousands of ceramic vessels and other household artifacts found during our excavations. Bones recovered at Hisban reflect that people populated Hisban with horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, chickens, doves, and, yes, pigs.

The local population terraced the hillsides, planted olives and grapes, and used oxen to plow the surrounding plains to harvest wheat, barley, and other grains. They accomplished all this by clinging to the institutions of hospitality, honor and shame, and tribalism as a means for security and solidarity in the face of outside threats. By following these time-tested formulas, their way of life survived, outlasting their many conquerors and continuing to the present day.

THE FUTURE OF HISBAN

Decades of excavation at the site have resulted in a new challenge: how to preserve and protect Hisban's exposed ruins from natural and human threats. As archaeologists, we have to assume some of this responsibility and provide a sustainable future for it. This concern led to the most recent phase of our work, namely, collaborating with the local community to help them benefit from Hisban as a tourist destination, even as they also help us care for it. This practice is known as community archaeology, and our Hisban team has been a pioneer for this type of archaeology.

With the local community's help, we turned Hisban into an archaeological park where three dozen signs in Arabic and English guide



FAMOUS INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH HISBAN

The following persons, representing various ancient kingdoms and empires, brought widespread notoriety to Hisban and influenced the lives of its inhabitants.

■ **Sihon (c. 1400 B.C.; Amorites):** An Amorite king attested 37 times in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Num. 21:21-34; Deut. 2:24-32; and in various other contexts), Sihon utilized Hisban as the epicenter of a domain that stretched from the Arnon to the Jabbok rivers, but was defeated in battle by the Israelite tribal confederacy at Jahaz.

■ **Solomon (c. 970-931 B.C.; Israelites):** The most famous person associated with Hisban, King Solomon followed his father David as ruler of Israel. First Kings 4:19 appears to designate Hisban as the capital of Solomon's twelfth district, and the more celebrated texts of Ecclesiastes 2:4-6 and Song of Songs 7:4 associate Solomon with Hisban and its reservoir.

■ **Mesha (c. 840 B.C.; Moabites):** In the well-known Mesha Stele, Moabite king Mesha boasts about his conquest of the land of Medeba (the Madaba Plains; the biblical *mishor*). While he mentions the nearby towns of Madaba and Nebo, Hisban is absent, but Mesha's reservoir repairs at other sites are noted and a Moabite presence at Hisban is likely.

■ **Amminadab (c. 600 B.C.; Ammonites):** An inscribed bronze bottle unearthed in Amman probably served as a votive object honoring the Ammonite king Amminadab. Scholars offer various interpretations, but the crux of the message seems to boast about Amminadab's royal estates, possibly including the hewing of reservoirs. This message may allude, at least in part, to the prosperity reflected at Hisban during this period.

■ **John Hyrcanus (164-104 B.C.) and Alexander Jannaeus (c. 127-76 B.C.)** were two Hasmonean leaders who controlled Hisban. While historical sources are silent, John Hyrcanus apparently captured Hisban during an incursion into Transjordan, which also netted the cities of Medeba and Samaga. His son, Alexander Jannaeus, consolidated Jewish rule over Perea and the King's Highway and seized northern Transjordan.

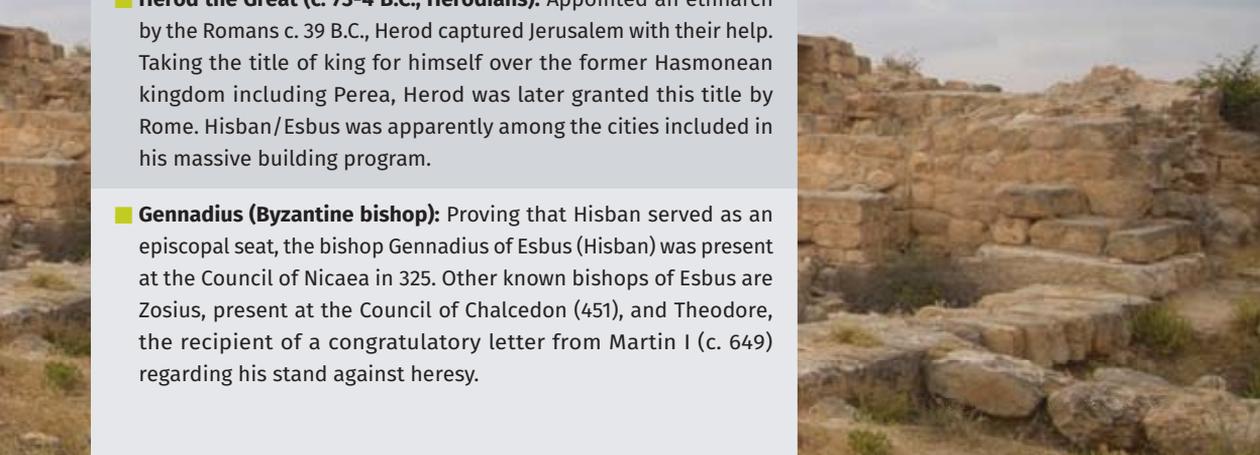
■ **Herod the Great (c. 73-4 B.C.; Herodians):** Appointed an ethnarch by the Romans c. 39 B.C., Herod captured Jerusalem with their help. Taking the title of king for himself over the former Hasmonean kingdom including Perea, Herod was later granted this title by Rome. Hisban/Esbu was apparently among the cities included in his massive building program.

■ **Gennadius (Byzantine bishop):** Proving that Hisban served as an episcopal seat, the bishop Gennadius of Esbu (Hisban) was present at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Other known bishops of Esbu were Zosius, present at the Council of Chalcedon (451), and Theodore, the recipient of a congratulatory letter from Martin I (c. 649) regarding his stand against heresy.

locals and tourists along well-groomed interpretive paths. A local ironsmith made the metal signs on which a local school-teacher then inscribed explanatory texts, and a site steward is responsible for the upkeep of the park. Such partnerships with the local community are a win-win for all parties and essential for small business development and jobs that will undoubtedly result from developing the archaeological park.

At the conclusion of our next field season in July 2018 we look forward to celebrating 50 years of friendship and cooperation between us and the local community at Hisban. Our experience with scientific endeavors, united to collaboration with the local community in helping care for the site, has allowed us to appreciate the many and varied ways in which we may be blessed by and be a blessing to our local friends and neighbors, as well as to the wider academic community. 🌱

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“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

GALINA STELE

Bridges have always fascinated me. From when? I must have been quite young. And why? I'd probably offer too many reasons to sound reasonable.

BRIDGES AND ME

Every time I see a bridge I have a strong desire to take a picture of it. I have photographed lots of bridges. I now have a wonderful variety of their pictures to share with you: pictures of small wooden bridges, stone bridges, metal bridges. Some of them speak of ancient history, having stood in place for centuries, as indicated by their darkened grayish or greenish stones. Or it could be modern reality, more recent and more complicated. There are bridges that move: swing bridges like one I remember from the place of my youth. There are simple wooden bridges composed of narrow boards; and powerful concrete bridges, massive and solid.

The purpose of a bridge is to connect: banks of a river; buildings; two or multiple streets or highways. No wonder that during times of war bridge units are often very busy: building bridges over rivers or ravines for troops to cross over; or restoring bridges that were blown up by the enemy; often the first to arrive to facilitate their troops' entry into fields of future battle; the last to leave, destroying, blowing up the road behind them—burning bridges so that none may follow in their track.

A MIGHTY BRIDGE

When I look at bridges, I always think of another Bridge, the Bridge that connects this world and the universe. Unlike bridges on earth, this Bridge

was not built by human hands. Its going forth may be from the days of eternity (Micah 5:2), but it cannot be dismissed as mere ancient history. It has borne the brunt of anger and hostility from millennia of enemy attacks. But it bears no darkened gray or green discoloration from the passing of the centuries, nor will it ever be burned down or blown up. My Bridge is a Person, and He joins us to eternity, humanity to Infinity, earth to glory. His name is Jesus Christ: “With His human arm, Jesus encircled the race, and with His divine arm He grasped the throne of the Infinite, connecting man with God, and earth with heaven.”¹

On the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, I think of the Bridge. The Reformation did not build this Bridge. But because of the Reformation friends and enemies of the truth have focused the world on its reality: My Bridge is the Word of God incarnate, to whom “the law and the prophets,” God’s written Word, bear witness (John 1:45). Before the Reformation, generations of human tradition and satanic truth distortion obscured the Bridge from the eyes and minds of people. Pretended representatives of its ownership privatized the Bridge, and even denied access to some people.

But in the voices of the Reformation proclaiming *solo Christo*, the Bridge once obscured emerged from under its burden of misguided human tradition and distorting supernatural confusion! When the voices of the Reformation cried out *solo Christo*,

THE BRIDGE

Crossing over into saved

it destroyed generations of barricades to the Bridge, and showed the world the route to heaven.

Here on earth some bridges have a financial cost: you pay a price to procure a ticket to cross the bridge. The Bridge to heaven also has its cost. You need a ticket or pass to step on the bridge that leads to heaven. In the days of Reformer Martin Luther, earnest humans believed that the purchase of indulgences provided their ticket. The church sold indulgences that took sin away, even the sin of people already dead, and made heaven accessible to them. So people tried to secure their way to glory by paying money, or by other means, such as good deeds done or other penances performed. Luther himself tried hard to earn his ticket by his good deeds. Many people today still try hard to pay their own way across the Bridge.

FINDING THE BRIDGE

But then Luther's study of the Bible disclosed a wonderful truth to him. It was like Jesus' story of finding an incomparable jewel in a field (Matt. 13:44). The pearl that changed the world for Luther was the truth that Jesus has already paid for all access to the Bridge. Salvation is *solo Christo*—by Christ alone, and *sola gratia*—by grace alone. The metaphors break down because divine truth is more than all the pictures we have ever seen, and all the metaphors that human language can generate: Jesus is the ticket to the Bridge, and Jesus Himself is the Bridge: He is the way to God, the truth of God, and the life of God (John 14:6). He gives everyone a free pass to the Bridge.

He is the Bridge that takes us across to glory.

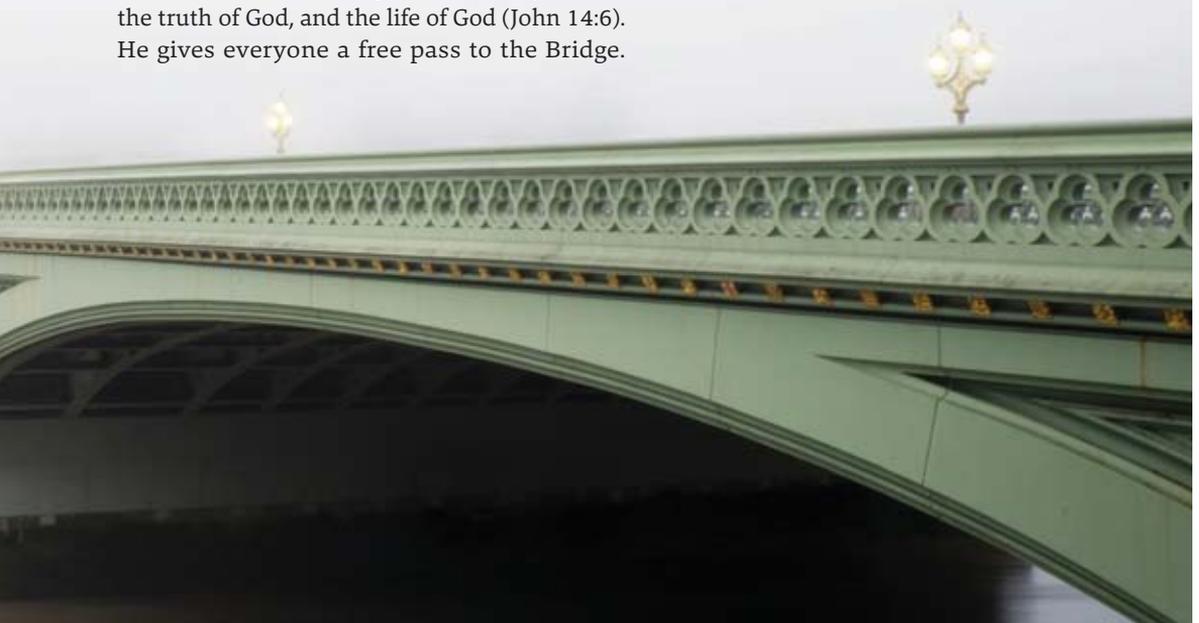
So, sister, brother, sinner: step on the Bridge. Just step on! Believe in Jesus and step on. Faith is what we need to know that He has brought us across; and He gives us the faith to believe (Rom. 12:3): Luther and other theologians call this "justification by faith." But don't fret about the theologians. That's just what the Bible calls it to let us know that accepting it puts us on God's side: being "justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1, NKJV).²

So cross over the Bridge. Go all the way. Finish the journey: it's a lifetime journey. Theologians call it sanctification, but don't fret (we know the rest—John 17:17-19). Walking this journey is a different reality. We need to always move forward. As we do, our vision and understanding keep expanding "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18, NKJV). Stepping on this Bridge changes us forever. We can thank God and Luther for that. 🌟

¹ Ellen G. White, "How to Meet a Controverted Point of Doctrine," *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890, p. 98, <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH18900218-V67-07.pdf>.

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TAKING A STAND

Words matter! Words literally created the universe and our world. Five hundred years ago words launched the momentous religious revolution called the Protestant Reformation, when a stubborn but brilliant thinker named Martin Luther posted his 95 theses of complaints against the Roman Catholic Church.

Words matter in our world, where an epidemic of harsh rhetoric all around challenges and exposes the fallacy that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Today, as we continue to long for and pray for reformation and revival in our denomination, careless words can undo rather than strengthen our unity in the community of faith.

The end result of violent words in a speech-poor world may be described in the timeless confession of Daniel: “We have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your [God’s] commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land” (Dan. 9:5, 6). Their disobedience and rebellion brought them in the end to the banks of Babylon’s rivers. And there they report:

“By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ How shall we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?” (Ps. 137:1-4).

The words “by the rivers of Babylon we sat” paint a vivid portrait of disillusionment in people who once enjoyed divine

blessings (Deut. 30:19, 20). When they chose life, they settled in the Promised Land. But decades of disobedience found them far from their beloved homeland. What did they do? They sat down!

They fell into a pit of doubt and darkness, shocked, numbed, and immobile, as if taken by surprise. Psalm 1 details the slow spiral into spiritual disaster. First we neglect the assembly of the righteous, then walk in the counsel of the wicked, and stand in the path of sinners when we should be worshipping God and serving Him only. Exiles in Babylon, when overcome by their circumstances, threw up their hands and sat down, forgetting that God was with them, even in captivity (Isa. 43:1-7).

As God’s people today, we are faced with a similar situation as discouraged twenty-first-century captives. Many of God’s people have simply given up and sat down! Sitting down rather than singing Zion’s song against prejudice and the denial of civil rights. Sitting down instead of singing Zion’s song for temperate living even as U. S. surgeons general announce war against promiscuity and cigarettes to change public attitudes about AIDS and smoking. We have divine insights that can make a difference in the battle. We cannot afford to stay seated and silent.

Thank God, He is still with us. As we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the beginning of our Protestant heritage, we must rise up and prosecute the reformation the Spirit wills to inspire among our own. 🌱

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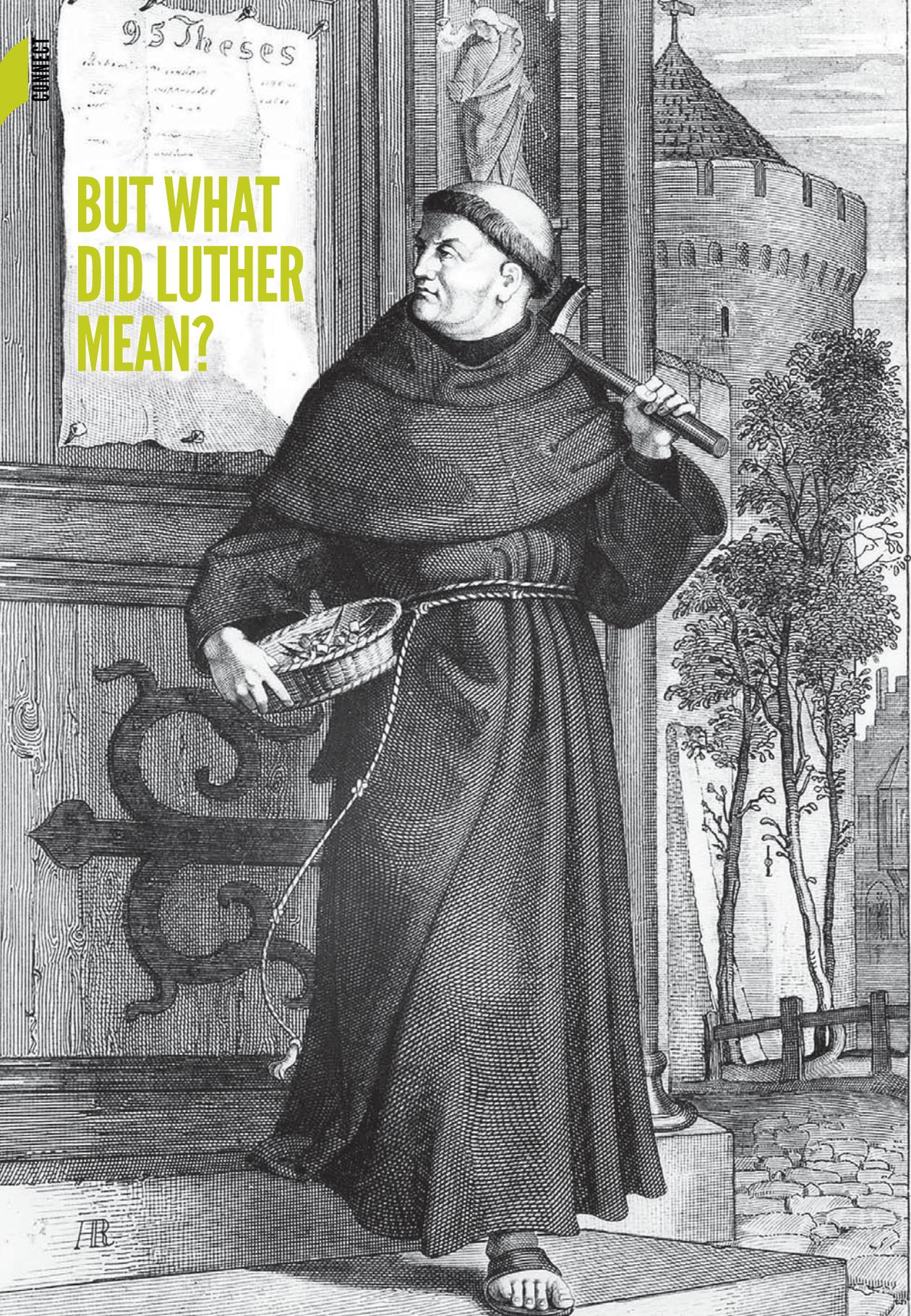
**CURE FOR THE
COMMON LIFE**
**HYVETH
WILLIAMS**



**MANY OF GOD'S
PEOPLE HAVE
SIMPLY GIVEN UP
AND SAT DOWN!**

95 Theses

BUT WHAT DID LUTHER MEAN?



The light of salvation that Jesus brings

BY SILVIA SCHOLTUS DE ROSCHER

The story of a German monk nailing theses to a church door on October 31, 1517, is the story of the start of the great theological debate that brought us the Protestant Reformation. Paul's epistle to the Romans bears fair blame for this.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Texts such as Romans 1:17 and 5:1, 2 were key to Martin Luther's theological understanding, of vital importance to his theological argument. In the preface of his commentary to Romans, Luther points out the need to apprehend certain key terms such as *justification*, *faith*, *peace*, *grace*, *hope*, and *glory*, before tackling a study of the epistle.¹ These terms, all found in the passages mentioned above, are just so many key words for describing the process of salvation from beginning to end.

According to Romans 5, God can make us different people: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1, 2, KJV). Believers can be at peace with God, though for some, finding peace may take a lifetime.

Luther's wondrous new light that he was driven to shine upon the whole world was how sinners may access grace: not by circumcision; not by our meritorious works; but just by faith in Jesus Christ.

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S GRACE

Why the focus on Jesus Christ? Because He makes all the difference: we are "justified freely . . . through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24, KJV).

Justification is a judicial term. To be justified is the opposite of being condemned. The gospel message is that though sin condemns us, accepting Christ's sacrifice by faith absolves us. The final judgment permits only two possibilities: justification or condemnation. Without Christ all stand condemned; but everyone who is in Christ is justified. For them there is no more condemnation; they are at peace with God (Rom 5:1; 8:1). This is our understanding from the Bible, which explains itself, and whose

explanation is self-sufficient. God would have us apprehend from His Word everything related to our salvation, including such key terms as:

Propitiation—a cultic term, the sacrifice God offered to satisfy justice: God sacrifices His Son as "a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Rom. 3:25, KJV).

Redemption—a business term, the price God paid for our ransom: we are "justified freely by his [God's] grace through *the redemption* that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24, KJV; see also Col. 1:14).

Justification—a judicial term, God's legal defense that declares us innocent (as above, Rom. 3:24).

Reconciliation—a family-based term, God's embrace to restore us to a relationship with Himself: God has "*reconciled* us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18, KJV).

Understanding God's use of these biblical terms is reason for profuse thanksgiving: we can thank God for His sacrifice; for the price He paid for our ransom; for declaring us innocent when we know we are not, and for His restoring embrace.

In Jesus' parable about the prodigal son, we hear, in the story of that father's embrace of his once lost son, Jesus' narration of the story of our salvation.

LUTHER'S 95 THESES

Luther was not the only one interested in the topics discussed in his theses. But he was a masterful interpreter of the pervasive feeling among other scholars of his time. Others had attempted to introduce changes,² often through church councils, but also through individual and collective efforts.³ Luther's theses impacted the society of the late Middle Ages the way they did because they embodied the sentiments of many Germans of the day.

Religious motivations powerfully influenced Luther's internal journey and external action; the Augustinian monk had experienced distressing anxiety about securing his salvation. But then Paul's categorical declaration, "the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17), brought him out of his deep crisis. He understood that a merciful God justifies us through faith. In light of this principle, all Scripture took on a new meaning. Everyone—indul-

Faith had become a mere commodity linked to purchases of righteousness and shortened stays in purgatory.

gence salespeople, indulgence purchasers, preachers (in fact, especially preachers)—was interested in the “how” of salvation. Luther was “scratching where it itched.” His writings spread.

Starting in 1514, Luther preached against the abuse of indulgences, and how they made grace cheap instead of leading to true repentance. In 1517 his parishioners were returning from buying Tetzel’s indulgences, believing that they did not need to repent and change their lives to receive forgiveness of sins. Luther deepened his study on the topic, and sought expert advice. He preached on the topic several times in 1517, explaining that true repentance was better than buying indulgences. He even taught that buying indulgences presupposed true repentance and confession, otherwise it was useless.

Between April and October 1517 Luther stopped preaching these sermons, perhaps because he was preparing himself for writing his theses.

WHY OCTOBER 31?

On November 1, at the Church of All Saints in Wittenberg, many relics collected by Frederick III, elector of Saxony would be distributed. People who visited the church on November 1, “All Saints’ Day,” had been promised indulgences, something the church offered as “a way to reduce the amount of punishment one has to undergo for sins,”⁴ or even a system of convertibility.⁵ October 31 was the eve of a day when the church would be full of people attending celebrations, seeing and procuring holy relics, and, in exchange, dispensing with sins.

With much hesitation and anguish, Luther posted the theses. A few friends encouraged him. The theses were an academic proposition expressed in Latin, not German. Luther intended for them to be discussed at the University of Wittenberg, where he taught. Initially, he had nothing else in mind. The document began:

“Out of love for the truth and from a desire to elucidate it, the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and ordinary lecturer therein at Wittenberg, intends to defend the following statements and to dispute on them in that place. Therefore, he asks that those who cannot be present and dispute with him orally shall do so in their absence by letter.” His introduction concluded, “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.”

Then followed the 95 theses. After the document was printed in Latin, fixed on the whiteboard of the university, and sent to the authorities, people began to make and share copies of Luther’s theses.

THESES TOPICS

The theses first address the biblical basis of forgiveness. Discussing the value of indulgences, they probe the grounds on which human beings are forgiven their sins. What does the Bible say about it?

Second, they focus on indulgences and the authority to administer them; also, on the possibility of doing favors for those who have already died, and on the efficacy of such means. God’s granting of complete freedom and forgiveness to the truly repentant Christian makes it a blasphemy to consider indulgences as a gift from God.

Third, Luther addresses the relations of these indulgences to Christian ethics, exploring the possibility of abuse from religious leaders.

Of his 95 theses, two in particular, 1 and 62, express Luther’s thought. Both are brief statements. In the first thesis he writes, “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent’ (Matt. 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.” Luther quotes Matthew 4:17 from the Vulgate [Latin version]. He insists that the true repentance Christ requires for experiencing the forgiveness of sins is an inner, spiritual action rather than an external sacramental confession. Indulgences led Christians to avoid true repentance and pain for sin, believing that purchased indulgences could replace true repentance. Indulgences discouraged Christians from giving to the poor and performing other acts of mercy, since they believed that indulgences were of more spiritual value.

Luther’s own struggles with penance gave him clear understanding of the anxieties and worries of his audiences. In his own life he had fought

hard to distinguish between contrition and sincere repentance, a contrition born of fear of hellfire. Following years of torment in which faith had become a mere commodity linked to purchases of righteousness and shortened stays in purgatory, he found the gospel renewing, refreshing, liberating, incomparable. His thesis 62 declares, “The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of God’s glory and grace.”

Luther quotes Jesus, who begins His ministry by saying, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17, KJV). In true Christianity the solution to the problem of sin implies repentance. But in the Middle Ages, other elements were added: spiritual efforts, material substitutes, monetary sacrifices. And there were abuses of the system that Luther felt were affecting priestly service. Some people stopped confessing their sins, mistakenly thinking that indulgences had solved their problems.

But living a Christian life requires us to change the wrong course that leads us to sin, turn back to God, and accept His effort to embrace and restore us. It is impossible to purchase entrance into Christ’s spiritual kingdom, or experience “no regrets” about our previous status and conduct in life. Jesus says that entering His kingdom begins with repentance—regretting our past—itself a gift from God, along with His forgiveness of our sins (Acts 5:31).

Another striking point of thesis 62 is that the church has a treasure. Luther discusses merit theology, the treasure chest of merits that could be offered. He writes, “Do not forget that the greatest treasure of the church is the holy gospel of glory and grace.” The treasure of the church is the gospel, that is, the good news of Jesus Christ. There is no other treasure besides Christ and the good news of His grace—the undeserved favor He extends to us to extract us from our disastrous state and condition, and offer us the security of His forgiveness, peace, and hope of eternal glory. In His parable of the treasure, the man who finds it sells everything to purchase the field where the treasure is buried. The treasure of the gospel is worth more than anything else on earth.

LUTHER’S THESES AND US

Are Luther’s theses from 1517 relevant for us, 500 years later? Can we learn from them a thing or two about salvation? Yes, we can: Luther’s

theses explain how Christians can achieve forgiveness, justification, and salvation by faith in Jesus. Even more, they lead us to a better understanding of the God of the Bible.

Luther’s reflections continue to point to the importance of individual study of Scripture. Study of the Bible on its own terms introduces us to the unique God of love who offers forgiveness and eternal life through Christ. Meeting Him through Scripture eliminates all those barriers erected by false teachers and twisted doctrines that stand between God and us, children of His selfless, all-sacrificing love. Hearing His Word tell how He feels about us helps us to respect and value ourselves and each other as God values us.

Luther’s mission continues far beyond his time. His work made the Bible more accessible; religious freedom became important; and many discriminatory social structures were abolished. But too many people still do not know that “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1, KJV).⁶ Many have yet to be inspired by this foundational text so important for Luther and the Reformers. We who have heard now share his duty of spreading the gospel’s light so that men and women everywhere may savor peace from God that passes all human understanding. The privilege of such work is a debt we owe to the medieval messenger God used to bring us the truth of our own reconciliation. 🌱

¹ “Vorrede auff die Epistel S. Paul: an die Romer,” in Martin Luther, *Die ganzte Heilige schrift Deudsch 1545 aufs new zurericht*, ed. Hans Volz and Heinz Blanke (Munich: Roger & Bernhard, 1972), vol. 2, pp. 2254–2268. See <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/luther/romans/1.html>.

² Events leading up to Luther’s break—ultimately both a theological and political revolution—included conciliarist doctrines, political factors such as the conflicts between popes and emperors, and other causes derived from the German state of affairs—moral decadence within the clergy (especially of the episcopate), the monopoly of the nobility, the weakness of sovereign power in an empire fragmented into an endless number of principalities and cities, and especially, resentment against Rome.

³ Consider John Huss, Jerome, John Wycliffe, Girolamo Savonarola, the Waldenses, the Cathars, Francis of Assisi, and others.

⁴ Edward Peters, *A Modern Guide to Indulgences: Rediscovering This Often Misinterpreted Teaching* (Mundelein, Ill.: Hillenbrand Books, 2008), p. 13. See also <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07783a.htm>.

⁵ Martin Luther, “Disputación acerca de la determinación del valor de las Ingulencias: Las 95 tesis,” Spanish translation by Rodolfo Olivera Obermüller, Chile, 2011. In <https://es.scribd.com/document/142485872/Las-95-Tesis-Indulgencia-y-Gracia-1517-Adap-2011>. Accessed Aug. 2, 2017.

⁶ Even the faith to believe in His love is a free gift from Him (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 2:8).

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PHOTOS AND TEXT BY
GERALD A. KLINGBEIL

“A picture is worth a thousand words,” they say. This pictorial introduction to the Reformation highlights five key principles as articulated by the German Reformer Martin Luther. His 95 theses changed the world forever.

Gerald A. Klingbeil is an associate editor of *Adventist Review* who was born and raised in Germany, where Luther is always not too far away.

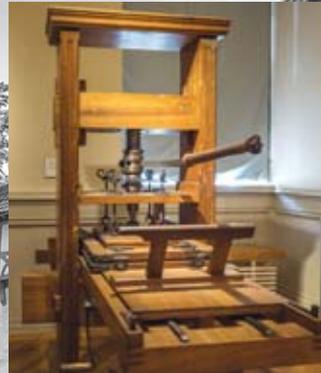
REFORMATION 101

THROUGH A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LENS

SOLA SCRIPTURA

“by Scripture alone”

Martin Luther became Knight George in 1521 when he was kidnapped by the henchmen of a friendly prince and hidden for his own safety in the Wartburg Castle above Eisenach. He spent this time giving the German people one of the greatest gifts possible: a German translation of the Greek New Testament.



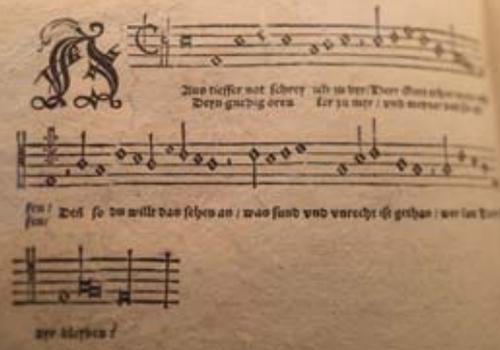
Replica of the printing press of Johann Rhau-Grunenberg, who was the first to print Luther's writings between 1508 and 1525. Luther and the early Reformers realized the power of the printed word and used cutting-edge technology to spread the good news of the gospel—sola scriptura.

SOLA FIDE

“by faith alone”

Stairway in the Luther house in Wittenberg. As a conscientious monk, Luther tried for many years to find peace and a quiet heart through prayer, fasting, confessions, and even a pilgrimage to Rome. In Rome he saw many a faithful crawling on hands and knees in order to gain grace. Through the careful study of Scripture Luther finally recognized that by faith alone we have direct access to Christ and His grace.

Faith is more than a doctrine. Martin Luther realized that music was a powerful way of teaching and remembering. As in Old Testament times, composing new music and finding new words became a way to bolster faith—even in difficult times.





Wir sind Bettler,
"We are beggars,
das ist wahr!"
this is true."

Martin Luther 1546

CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

"We are beggars; this is true." Luther's quote, on the wall in his Wittenberg home, reminds us that an honest look in the mirror of God's word tells us that we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

**SOLA
GRATIA**
"by grace alone"

Grace knows no boundaries. In a small cell in the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt Luther finally realized that grace is an unearned gift.

Putting Christ back in the center of Christianity became Luther's passion and purpose. In the Wittenberg city church the place usually reserved for the images of saints is now replaced by the central focus on Christ crucified.

SOLO CHRISTO

"through Christ alone"



The salesmen of religion promised immediate forgiveness through the purchase of indulgences. Johann Tetzel, the Dominican friar engaged in selling indulgences for the pope, is said to have used this ditty: "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings / the soul from purgatory springs." Luther challenged this mechanical notion of unlocking forgiveness by focusing on Christ, faith, and divine grace.



The Protestant Reformation was more than a powerful social or political reform movement. Its renewed focus on Scripture also paved the way for many innovations in the arts, sciences, and humanities. One of the most famous expressions of soli Deo gloria can be found in the works of Protestant composers Johann Sebastian Bach (who, incidentally, was born in Eisenach, below Wartburg Castle) and Georg Friedrich Händel, who regularly dedicated their works to the glory of God.

HIS WE ARE AS HYMN WE SING

BILL KNOTT

Writing anything about anniversaries is daunting work, which is why so many of us opt for the crafted verse of greeting cards. With pen in hand we pause above the page, doubtful that our added words will do justice to the significance of the occasion. Writing anything about a 500th anniversary is even more challenging, for the meaning of that event has unfolded through a dozen biblical generations and continues to unfold to this day.

So when the minister of music challenged me to write a hymn for our congregation's celebration of Reformation Day (October 31), I initially quailed at the thought. What words of mine could somehow encompass the enormous and enduring contributions made by Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, John Knox, and so many others to the history of Protestant Christianity?

As with so many other pieces that I write, it was a place that helped me regain my courage and accept my friend's challenge. On Sabbath, July 1, I was standing within sight of John Knox's home church in Edinburgh, Scotland, when the first line of the hymn on the facing page emerged: *God of truth unmixed with error, Guide Your people to Your Word.*

As a child I was fascinated by the bold and remarkably successful reformation of the Scottish Church accomplished by Knox, whose confrontations with Mary, Queen of Scots, likely turned the tide for Protestant Christianity in that nation. The challenges and persecutions endured by Knox and his successors for another century lodged in my faith and helped me understand the words of Jesus: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24, NKJV).*

From that simple line about the reliability of God's Word unfolded the first two verses of the hymn, celebrating the Reformation principles of *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide*. Expressed in the Latin of the era, they underline that only Scripture is ultimately reliable as a source of truth, that only grace saves us, and that only through faith do we receive the gift of Christ's righteousness.

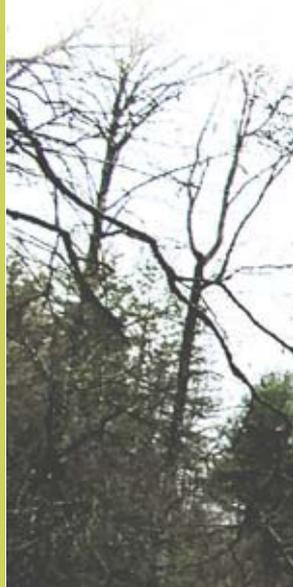
The third verse calls to mind the foundational principles of love and peacemaking in the church of Jesus. The fourth verse celebrates the unique contributions of Adventism to the Protestant movement—the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, and the reality of Christ's soon Second Coming.

It is impossible to trace the significance of the Protestant Reformation in prose or verse without acknowledging the heroic sacrifices of the millions of Christians who gave up their lives because of their commitment to Jesus and the truths of His Word. Their stories moved me deeply as child, and they continue to fire my faith today.

The final verses are a reminder that the work of the Protestant Reformation is never complete—that the church of Jesus continues to need revival and change if it is to "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Rev. 14:4, NKJV).

All of this is encompassed in a prayer, offered in the opening line of each verse, that the connection between God and His faithful people will grow stronger and deeper as we move toward the culmination of human history.

*Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



SPIRIT OF TRUE REFORMATION

A Reformation Day Hymn

God of truth unmixed with error,
Guide Your people to Your Word.
Give Your preachers timely courage;
Let Your righteousness be heard.
Father, keep us from all doctrine
Fashioned by the will of man;
Save us from our hallowed structures
Not prefigured in Your plan.

God of grace, in faith receiving,
May we trust in Christ alone;
All our works are less than nothing
As we kneel before His throne.
Keep us from our self-absorption
Lest we come to love our fame.
Let the blood of Jesus wash us:
We are righteous in His name.

God of kindness, lead Your people
To the primacy of love;
Give us deep, connected living,
Mirroring Your courts above.
Let our words be full of caring;
Let our hands be full of peace;
May the gentleness of Jesus
In Your church each day increase.

God of hope, restore our longing
For a future shared with You;
May the coming of Your kingdom
Make our hearts beat quick and true.
Shape us to the task of heralds,
Joining angels in their cry;
Pointing tribes and tongues and peoples
To the truth that cannot die.

God of all who died for Jesus,
Fiery saints who shared His pain;
Beaten, broken, stoned, and martyred—
Make their deep resolve our gain.
Teach us how to bear our sorrow,
Wrestle doubt, and conquer fear;
Nerve us with the deep conviction:
In all trouble, Christ is here!

God who far exceeds our worship,
Lend Your people heaven's song;
Let Your angels teach an anthem
That will drown out noise and wrong.
Spirit of true reformation,
Flame up bright—revivals start!
With the coals from heaven's altar,
Light the altar of our heart.

Adventist Review readers may wish to use this hymn in worship services on Sabbath, October 28, as the world nears the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation on October 31. The hymn may be sung to several tunes in The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, including "Hymn to Joy" (no. 12), and "Austria" (no. 423).

Bill Knott is executive editor and director of Adventist Review Ministries.



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ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- » FASTING
- » MARTIN LUTHER AND ME
- » BEASTS, BLACKLIGHT, AND ETERNAL LOVE
- » WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THE REFORMATION
- » MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

TESTIFY SABBATH

It's not just for the early church!

Has your congregation ever tried to have a testimony-based worship service, in which volunteers share personal testimonies as the basis for the worship hour? This kind of worship service often goes well, but can also be a less-than-edifying experience when the congregation feels uncomfortable or pressured to speak, or when the testimonies get out of control and the implicit messages distort biblical principles.

In 1 Corinthians 14:26 the apostle



ROB ERWIN



Paul warns against worship services that miss the mark: “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.” What if the structure and lead-in to such a testimony time could be planned in such a way as to cultivate the best features of testimonies and reduce the negative features? There are, in fact, some effective ways to facilitate this kind of testimony time.

A LONGTIME TRADITION

Testimony sharing has a long history within Christianity, particularly within Seventh-day Adventist churches. In the early years of the Adventist Church in the United States—in the late 1800s—believers were frequently invited to publicly share experiences and testimonies of God’s leading. During that early period congregations had to be less dependent on pastors because each pastor had many congregations. Therefore, laypeople frequently led the worship services. Along with more lay leadership of worship services, testimony services were used frequently and were common in other Christian traditions, as well. When part of the church service, these testimony times were sometimes called “social” worship, and Ellen White had insightful comments and guidance for these services.²

BENEFITS OF PUBLIC TESTIMONIES

These testimony, or social worship times offered significant benefits to the participants, benefits that continue for contemporary participants. They cultivate a sense of community among believers in which people learn the names and personal spiritual experiences of others. Participants are also reminded of God’s providence and real presence, and are encouraged to pursue an active prayer life.

Public testimonies have additional and important impacts on the congregation’s faith. Although it’s essential and appropriate for the pastor to share experiences that encourage the congregation in their faith, the influence of testimonies by laypeople is also important and needed. When laypeople share personal experiences, it validates the availability of God and His Spirit to every believer, and encourages listeners that a life of living faith is also possible for them.

FACILITATING THE EXPERIENCE

What are some specific ways to facilitate an effective testimony sharing time, a “Testify Sabbath”? Based on principles embedded in the guidance of Ellen White, as well as practical lessons gained by facilitators of such services, here are some suggestions.

The testimony facilitator can encourage participants with such guidance as: “Please consider sharing briefly [three minutes or less] an experience of . . .”:

- God’s leading and presence
- God’s instruction and insight
- God’s comfort and strength
- God’s empowerment for service
- God’s answer to prayer

The facilitator should also minimize the following behaviors that dampen participation and potential blessings:

- Allowing a few individuals to dominate the testimony-sharing time, especially across multiple testimony services.
- Allowing participants to speak on monomaniacal or pet topics, to speak in a judgmental tone, or to promote nonbiblical thinking.
- Allowing the testimony period to extend too long for audience attention or engagement.
- Allowing the congregation to feel pressure to contribute to the testimonies.

By contrast, the following facilitator behaviors will typically encourage beneficial testimony time:

- Informing the congregation ahead of time regarding the testimony Sabbath or meeting time.
- Cuing participants to give their names as they share, as a way of helping members and participants to know one another by name.
- Guiding participants to adhere to a time budget.
- Keeping the interaction warm, supportive, nonjudgmental, spiritual, and aligned with Scripture.
- Restating or clarifying a point within a testimony that keeps to the spirit of the testimony but makes it clearer to the audience.
- Gently correcting, reminding, or placing within context a nonbiblical statement by a participant while restating it biblically.



**When laypeople share
personal experiences,
it . . . encourages listeners
that a life of living faith
is also possible for them.**

- Using gentle humor to diffuse tension or to enhance a sense of community and support.
- Arranging to have two or three volunteer testimony sharers ready to start or prime the sharing in case there is hesitancy on the part of the congregation.
- Making connections among individual testimonies to highlight a theme or principle across testimonies.
- Offering a brief wrap-up summary of key points that were shared in testimonies.
- Providing or facilitating on-the-spot support and/or prayer for a member in emotional need.
- Being ready with a backup sermonette in case congregants are too shy or are unwilling to share.

BE PREPARED

When the program is prepared properly, presented carefully, and managed effectively, participants have the satisfaction of sharing Jesus, listeners reap the benefits of spiritual and scriptural insight, a sense of community and connectedness grows, participants receive emotional support, and the church service has a different and engaging format that brings a change of pace and glorifies God. Malachi 3:16 sanctions this by these words:

“Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name.”

Although requiring some preparation, this testimony-based worship service complements the offering of more conventional sermons in other Sabbath worship services. Social worship, or testimony services, can be as effective in drawing us to Christ in contemporary times as they were in the early Adventist experience.

¹ All Bible texts in this article are taken from the *New King James Version*, Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² For illustrative examples of this, see Ellen G. White's counsel in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), pp. 246, 247; *idem*, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 201; *idem*, in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 22, 1889.

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PETER N. LANDLESS ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

Fasting

Is it healthful?

Q: I've always thought that fasting was a religious thing, but lately I heard that it is now recommended for my health. So is it religious, a health thing, or both? How does fasting help me?

A: Fasting, a religious practice for ages, has also been a health practice for a very long time. To answer your questions with reasonable depth, we will address the physical health aspects now, and the psycho-spiritual aspects in a future column.

Fasting is the voluntary abstaining from all solid and liquid foods—except water (minimum of 2.6 quarts [2.5 liters] per day)—usually for a predetermined period of time. Water-only fasting has been employed by many around the globe for “cleansing” or “detoxifying” the body’s systems and as a metabolic and immunologic “jump starter” before making changes to new, healthier dietary practices.

Fasting may help prevent malignancies and increase the efficacy of cancer therapies. It may even reduce osteoporosis and autoimmune disease activity. Recent studies have shown that medically supervised, controlled water-only fasting for one week had beneficial effects on blood sugar control, blood lipid markers, body weight, and blood pressure.

Diets designed to mimic fasting taken by persons with diabetes and prediabetes for five days per month for three months reduced risk markers associated with aging, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer. People whose lifestyle includes periodic fasting may reverse early type 2 diabetes and hypertension, and may have better heart health than those who don't.

During water-only fasting, stored carbohydrates are used up and fat is used instead (as ketones) for energy; age-damaged cells are recycled in a process called *autophagy*, or “self-eating”; and

growth factors that promote development of healthy lean muscle, new brain cells, and renewed, active cells are released into the immune system. The use of ketones for energy favors the breakdown of fatty deposits in the liver and around internal organs and can produce favorable outcomes in metabolism.

Fasting may be a reasonable physical health-promoting practice in places where food is in abundance and overconsumption is common, but not where people are undernourished or malnourished.

POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS OF FASTING

- Nausea
- Irritability
- Heartburn
- Gallstones
- Bad breath
- Headaches
- Binge eating
- Constipation
- Dehydration
- Sleep disturbance
- Eating disorder trigger
- Temperature dysregulation (cold)
- Interference with established drug treatment
- Hypoglycemia (diabetes: on insulin or medications)
- Dizziness on standing (hypertension: on medications)

Pregnant women and those taking medications or who have an eating disorder, or serious medical conditions are cautioned against “just fasting.” Prudence, good judgment, and medical consultation and supervision are *always* in order. Yet what is eaten between fasts is still the major nutritional issue; a balanced, plant-based, nutritionally sound diet knows no substitute. An overall health-promoting lifestyle is key, and in some cases may be enhanced by careful, judicious, intermittent caloric restriction. 

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department. **Zeno L. Charles-Marcel**, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.



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MARTIN LUTHER AND ME

Applying Reformation principles

MICHAEL SOKUPA

In looking at the Reformation and the lives of the Reformers, we emphasize the biblical and theological elements, and often fall short of applying the principles of Reformation to our lives. I see in Martin Luther's experience much that is in common with my own spiritual heritage. Like him I have had to fight fear and tradition as God led us, by Scripture, into the meaning of true freedom. Luther's life experience casts light on mine.

LUTHER'S EARLY JOURNEY

In the early 1500s Luther started on his path toward a law career by enrolling at the university in Erfurt.¹ In 1505, while returning to university from home, Luther was caught in a thunderstorm. A bolt of lightning led him to cry out in desperation, "Help me, St. Anne, and I'll become a monk!"² Luther kept his vow and entered a monastery within a month.

At the age of 27 Luther traveled to Rome to represent the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. As he dutifully went through the motions, doubts began to fill his critical mind. He began to question the church's teachings about relics and merits. He returned to the monastery more troubled than before. His supervisor, Johann von Staupitz, both encouraged him and reprimanded him for his attitude.

Staupitz encouraged Luther to focus on the love of God and stop worrying. Luther had built up a negative attitude toward God that drove him to fear and hate God. Luther recalled his true feelings when he received the encouragement from Staupitz: "Love God? I hate Him!"

In 1513, while preparing for a series of lectures, Luther read Psalm 22:1: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" This verse brought Luther to a turning point in his life. Applying it appropriately to Christ, he realized that even Jesus had feelings of separation that Luther sometimes felt. This gave Luther some comfort.

Two years later, as he was preparing for lectures on the book of Romans, Luther read Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith" (KJV).³ This text became pivotal for his spiritual journey. Its discovery gave Luther an assurance that his salvation did not depend on merits, that he did not need to fear God. He embraced the idea that only by faith are we made righteous.

LUTHER BREAKS OUT

On October 31, 1517, Luther wrote 95 statements against the practice of selling indulgences and nailed them to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, a conventional way of inviting an academic debate on a topic. This coincided with the rapid deployment of Gutenberg's movable printing press. Luther's theses were printed, and copies were distributed throughout Saxony. Even the pope got a copy. The pope's reaction to Luther's statements set in motion an inquiry. Luther feared for his life, for many Reformers had lost their lives when they were charged as heretics.⁴

In October 1518 a group of princes and nobles (known as the Imperial Diet) met in Augsburg to discuss several agenda items including the Turks and Luther. Luther attended the meeting. The papal representative, Cardinal Cajetan, was not interested in engaging Luther in debate. His main

aim was to persuade Luther to recant.⁵ A century earlier Jan Hus had been burned at the stake for refusing to recant. He had demanded to be shown from the Scriptures what his errors were. Luther took the same position, knowing the history and the consequences that might follow.

Luther narrowly escaped because of his connection to Frederick the Wise, whom the pope did not want to displease.⁶

Luther continued writing. He produced treatises entitled *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church, and Freedom of a Christian*. This fueled the pope's fury, and in 1520 Luther received an ultimatum (in a document called a papal bull) from the Pope to recant his position within 60 days or be excommunicated from the church. Luther publicly burned the papal bull. He was excommunicated on January 3, 1521.

Luther was summoned to the Imperial Diet of Worms under Emperor Charles V on January 22, 1521. Given an opportunity to renounce or affirm his position, he responded: "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason, I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other. My conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe."⁷

He is said to have spoken the following words that continue to ring in traditional circles: "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen."⁸

MY FATHER BREAKS OUT

My dad grew up an Anglican, in a family where his father was the eldest within the extended family. When his father passed away, my father inherited the leadership role. Whenever there was a family gathering, he was the one who spoke to the ancestors on behalf of the family.

In the mid-1960s, around the time of the Rivonia Trial in South Africa in which Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were sentenced to life imprisonment for treason against the apartheid government, there was turmoil in the country.

At the height of that political turmoil, my dad came to know about the Seventh-day Adventist faith. He embraced this newfound faith and was soon faced with critical decisions. He could no

longer sacrifice to the ancestors and remain true to biblical teachings. He also learned that a number of tribal customs had elements that were contrary to biblical principles.

Dad traveled to the village where most of his family lived, and informed them he would no longer participate in family feasts directed to their ancestors. His brothers warned him that the anger of the ancestors would turn against him and his children. They ostracized him from the family circle, so they would not share in the bad luck brought by the ancestors.

I grew up not knowing my uncles, because when they came together for family feasts we could not take part. Most of the family activities we could attend, such as funerals and weddings, were held on Sabbath. This opened an even wider gap between us and our extended family.

MY OWN JOURNEY

When I became a young man, I was expected to go through the Xhosa rite of passage. Instead of sending me to the traditional circumcision school with the boys of the community, my dad

Martin Luther grew up in a Roman Catholic home, shaped by both Scripture and tradition.

collaborated with five other Adventist families; we were about six boys altogether. *Bhomas* (temporary structures) were set up in the bush near our township home, and we became an Adventist community among the traditional *bhomas*. We had an Adventist *ikhankatha* (a dean of the school), who taught us about manhood in an Adventist context.

Since this ritual was done in the Adventist context, all elements contrary to Scripture, such

as serving of liquor and special meats dedicated to ancestors, were removed. The pastor was given an opportunity during the welcome celebration (*umgidi*) to preach the Word to the community that was there to grace the occasion. This was an opportunity for the community to understand what we believe. There was no way to be accepted as a man in the community without going through this ritual.

This rite of passage gave me status to get to the next level, marriage. When I got married, I again had to avoid any elements contrary to biblical principles during the traditional wedding ceremony. Certain elements, such as the introduction of the bride to the family, include ancestor worship. These elements are deleted, and a focus is placed on living family members. The whole process, from dowry negotiations to the wedding, was filled with elements that Seventh-day Adventists have identified over decades and categorized as acceptable or unacceptable to biblical principles.

My experiences as an Adventist growing up in South Africa within a Xhosa context helped me understand the dynamics of maintaining my identity, and still remaining true to Scripture. Because my father took a firm stand against elements in the Xhosa culture that militated against biblical principles, I was able to grow up accepted by my peers, my community, and our extended family without compromising my Christian principles.

From Luther's generation forward there has sounded a call to *sola scriptura*, a Reformation principle that can be applied to any culture. Many Xhosa South Africans have taken their stand with Luther, conforming cultural practice to biblical principle. But some still defer to a culture in which decision-makers are extended family members.

For single parents who are female and have no Adventist males in the family, these issues can present huge challenges. Many women, in striving to be true to biblical principles, have appointed Adventist men with the same clan name to handle family affairs that relate to rites of passage and dowry negotiations.

CURRENT TRENDS

In some parts of South Africa Seventh-day Adventist men have organized initiation schools over winter and summer holidays. This brings

Seventh-day Adventist young people together to preserve their culture and avoid compromising situations. These initiatives are not part of the official church structure. There is, however, a need to have biblical-theological discussions on these elements of tradition, how they relate to biblical principles, and have these documented so that future generations may have a reference point on decisions taken.

For Seventh-day Adventists the Bible not only addresses culture but also modifies it. Lay members expose an interesting approach as they attempt to win the community's confidence while modifying the traditions.

For example, long before there were any Africans, Abraham was circumcised. This reference usually arrests the attention of African traditionalists, because the earlier the custom, the more respectable it is. But more work needs to be done to make sure that the Bible is handled appropriately when such passages are quoted with reference to current practices.

REFORMERS STILL

Martin Luther and I grew up in contrasting religious conditions, but both he and I, and you my reader, come to observe irreconcilable differences between Scripture and prevailing tradition. It is our privilege to follow Luther's example of being true to principle: "The greatest want of the world is the want of [people] . . . who will not be bought or sold, . . . who in their inmost souls are true and honest, . . . who do not fear to call sin by its right name, . . . whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, [people] who will stand for the right though the heavens fall"⁹

Let's stand with Luther today, for God. 🏹

¹ Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950), pp. 21-34.

² See *ibid.*, p. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴ *Luther's Works*, vol. 31.

⁵ Charlotte Methuen, "Luther's Life," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 12.

⁶ Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 464-470.

⁷ Methuen, p. 15.

⁸ See Bainton, pp. 181-186.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 57.

Michael Sokupa is an associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference.

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Like father, like son. Chip off the old block. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

I never understood how much truth was behind these simple expressions until I became a father. Early on I became quite aware that my son, Lincoln, would mimic my actions. It started small as he learned to wave and blow kisses. But as he grew, I realized that the influence I had on his life was growing.

One morning as we were getting ready for church, I happened to wear a sports coat. I dressed him in his shirt and pants, but that wasn't good enough. He kept saying "jacket," "jacket like Daddy." I put his blue blazer over his brightly colored polo shirt, and he became the proudest little boy in the entire world.

This copy-cat behavior can also be bad. The other day our little dog, Coco, pooped in the house. I pointed, scolding her firmly: "Bad dog!" Lincoln came right up beside me, pointed at Coco, and said, "Bad dog." Again I was reminded that Lincoln is always watching, ready to imitate. Daily actions and behaviors that seem inconsequential have the power to shape his life, for better or for worse.

The Old Testament is replete with examples that portray the power of generational influence.

Baby Moses was found in the river by Pharaoh's daughter (Ex. 2). The young princess agreed to let the boy's mother raise him until he was old enough to enter the palace as a teenager. These early years became the foundation of Moses' life.

Instead of seeking earthly riches and perhaps a chance to become pharaoh, Moses chose a life of wandering and hardship. He was God's instrument to deliver

his people from the most powerful nation on earth, part the Red Sea, receive the sacred law on Sinai, and lead millions of grumbling Israelites to the border of the Promised Land. It's amazing to stop and think of the millions of people whose lives were changed through the faithfulness of one Hebrew mother, a slave at that.

But the influence exerted by the people Moses led was not so positive.

Even after watching God take down their Egyptian enemies through plagues and the parting of the Red Sea, eating bread that literally fell from heaven, and being led by a cloud pillar by day and fire at night, the Israelites still fixated on the impossibility of human circumstances as they sat on the border of the Promised Land (Num. 13; 14).

The result of their defiance was severe: instead of entering the Promised Land in a few days, the people spent the next 40 years wandering the desert. Every adult—except for Joshua and Caleb—died in the desert. Their children spent years in desert toil, years that could have been spent thriving in the land flowing with milk and honey.

Our choices impact much more than our own salvation. The question every parent, grandparent, teacher, pastor, or youth leader must ask themselves is: Am I leading my kids into the Promised Land, or away from it?

We all leave a legacy. What is yours? 

Jimmy Phillips is executive director of marketing for Adventist Health Bakersfield.

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**OUR CHOICES
IMPACT MUCH MORE
THAN OUR OWN
SALVATION.**



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BEASTS, BLACKLIGHT, AND ETERNAL LOVE

*The Protestant
Reformation and
Adventist Education*

FAITH-ANN MC GARRELL

Curtains drawn, lights dimmed, an anxious hush reverberated through the sixth-grade classroom. The Bible teacher's rich baritone bellowed, "Turn your lives over to Jesus! He is coming soon!"

FEAR AND LOVE

Fear gripped my heart as I watched, spellbound, mesmerized by images of multiheaded,

fork-tongued beasts and creatures swathed in blacklight, seemingly floating on air. This was real! The end of the world was near! I needed to give my heart to Jesus.

Forty minutes later, curtains opened, lights on, our sixth-grade classroom looked familiar once again: a maze of desks and chairs, books and binders, pencil shavings and chalk dust. Bible

class was over, and we were free to run outside and enjoy recess.

Yet the unsettling nature of the images refused to go away. Years later, haunted by those images, I could not remember much of what my well-intentioned Bible teacher said, but I remembered the timbre of his voice. The urgency. He believed with all his heart that the end of the world was near.

This fear began to abate during a pivotal Week of Prayer in the middle of my tenth-grade year. Different speaker. Different tone. “Come to Jesus,” he pleaded. “He loves you just as you are!” That week, after listening to stories of how much Jesus sacrificed for me personally, I saw for the first time a Savior who loved me, called me to serve, and had a plan for my life—not only an earthly plan, but an eternal one, as well.

LEGACY OF THE REFORMATION

When Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli first read the Bible for themselves and realized that God loved humanity not because of their good works, but because God, by His very nature, is love, it transformed their world—and the whole world—forever. They were compelled to share, serve, and love with fidelity.¹ And, the more they studied, the more their devotion to God increased.

Inigorated by newfound truth, these Reformers paved the way for what millions now embrace as *sola scriptura*—truth is established by Scripture alone; *sola fide*—we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone; *sola gratia*—we are saved by grace alone; *solus Christus*—Jesus Christ, alone, is our Savior; and *solus Deo gloria*—we live and exist for the glory of God, alone.² Fear dissipated in the presence and awareness of God’s eternal love. Today, we believers embrace these truths born out of their struggle.

ADVENTIST EDUCATION AND ETERNAL LOVE

What, then, does this have to do with Adventist education? Adventist education rests on the gospel truth that God is love (1 John 4:8), and that the foundation of an Adventist Christian education is love: “Love, the basis of creation and of redemption, is the basis of true education.”³ Understanding that true education and redemption perform the same function,⁴ Adventist edu-

The Reformers paved the way for what millions now embrace.

cation seeks to share with everyone, whether directly (as in the classroom), or incidentally (as in day-to-day existence), the truth of God’s love, faithfulness, and abundant grace, as revealed in His written Word, and exemplified by Jesus Christ, God’s Word incarnate. Adventist education seeks to reciprocate God’s faithfulness to us in salvation, by faithfulness to Him in communicating His love to all.

Fidelity, another word for “faithfulness” (from the Latin *fides* [faith] and *fidelis* [faithful]), denotes loyalty, devotion, and accuracy, the degree to which a copy of something reflects the original.⁵ Charles Hodge notes that *fidelity* requires three obligations: (1) knowledge; (2) grounds (reason/rationale); and (3) an understanding of how obligations supersede everything else.⁶ The word “obligation” brings to mind those things we *have* to do, rather than those we *want* to do. Another definition, however, is a debt of gratitude, a commitment to someone or something to whom or for which a great debt is owed.

Adventist educators know the One to whom we owe a great debt. Our faithfulness to Him is demonstrated in service. A knowledge of who God is and what He would have us do—in our relationship with Him and with those around us—is necessary for each of us as we participate in the partnership of education and redemption. There is comfort and assurance in knowing that God sought to know us long before we knew Him: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart” (Jer. 1:5). We love God because He first loved us, not out of mere obligation, but because we want to! In Him we find purpose and life: He came “that [we] may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

True Christian education answers and echoes Christ's call to partner with Him in the highest noblest work possible: that of building characters for heaven.

And there is more, more than just love and service. George R. Knight reminds us that Adventist Christian education has another role to play: an apocalyptic one. He writes: "The third aspect of Adventist educational identity relates to its grasp of the denomination's apocalyptic understanding and the implications of that understanding for worldwide mission and the Second Advent."⁷

We have a Great Commission—a biblical mandate that is more than humanly determined: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The call extends "to every nation, tribe, language and people" (Rev. 14:6).

Yes, we are called to love as Christ loves; we are compelled to serve out of gratitude for what Christ did for humanity. But true education is called to do more. True Christian education answers and echoes Christ's call to partner with Him in the highest, noblest work possible: that of building characters for heaven⁸—characters trained to seek after God's heart, willing to be transformed by His Spirit; prepared to face the challenges of the times with confidence, assurance, and power rooted in God's Word; unafraid because they know how the story ends, but, by the same token, driven by a sense of urgency to let the whole world know.

During a required Daniel and Revelation course in college, and under the tutelage of a caring, erudite professor, I began to comprehend more clearly the love story between God and humanity. The fear-inducing images of beasts shrouded in ultraviolet light transformed into big-picture symbols: messages of hope, assurance, and God's ultimate plan for every individual, regardless of

birth or status. That descendant of the Reformation, and practitioner of truly Christian Adventist education, urged the entire class to read the apocalyptic passages for ourselves. And with each assignment and careful instruction, understanding bloomed.

500 YEARS AND MORE

For Christians this collective journey toward understanding continues. Five hundred years beyond Martin Luther and the Reformers, Bibles are no longer chained to podiums. We read and listen to them on our own computers and mobile devices, and by faith accept the rule of Scripture in our lives, even while many still struggle to accept God's unconditional love. But Adventist Christian inheritors of Reformation truth rest in the assurance of God's saving, keeping love, and rejoice in Christ's witness to "what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:16).

As an Adventist educator I know, without fear or doubt, that God loves me. My purpose is tied up in His. Where authentic Adventist education is disseminated, teachers and students experience this love for themselves, and grow in appreciation of the true character of God in ways that nurture and cultivate their eternal love for Him (see Deut. 6:4-9). Teachers "see in every pupil the handiwork of God"⁹ that they are preparing for another school—the Eden School—where we all shall delight together in reflecting "throughout endless ages the light of the knowledge of His glory."¹⁰

¹See Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub Assn., 1911), pp. 120-125.

²Justin Holcomb, *The Five Solas: Points From the Past That Should Matter to You*, <http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/the-five-solas-of-the-protestant-reformation.html>.

³Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 16.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁵<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fidelity>

⁶Charles Hodge, D.D., "Fidelity in the Service to God," http://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/hodge/fidelity_in_the_service_of_god.htm.

⁷George R. Knight, "Education for What? Thoughts on the Purpose and Identity of Adventist Education," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 79, no. 1 (October-December 2016): 11.

⁸Ellen G. White, *True Education: An Adaptation of Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2000), p. 13.

⁹Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1913), p. 229.

¹⁰E. G. White, *Education*, p. 22.

Faith-Ann McGarrell is editor of *The Journal of Adventist Education*.

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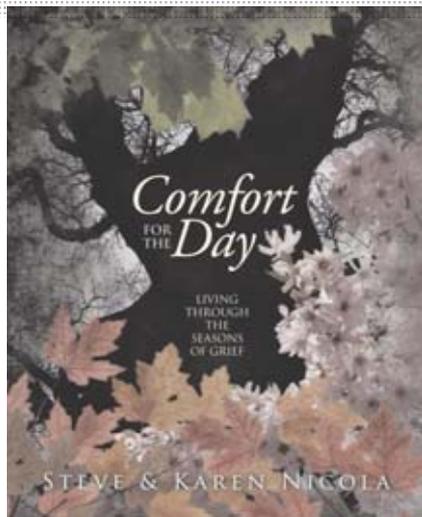


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Comfort for the Day

Living Through the Seasons of Grief

Steve and Karen Nicola, *Comfort for the Day: Living Through the Seasons of Grief*, 3rd edition (Bloomington, Ind.: Westbow Press, 2016), \$16.95 at www.comfortfortheday.com. Reviewed by Gerald A. Klingbeil, *Adventist Review*.

In *Comfort for the Day* author, presenter, and grief coach Karen Nicola and her husband, Steve, share their own grief journey following the death of their 3-year-old son from leukemia. The updated third edition, published more than 30 years after that experience, includes more insights, offered from the distance of the experience of past loss.

Comfort for the Day does not only contain helpful insights and good counsel. It represents, in itself, a journey toward healing, as it is designed as a personal journal with ample space to jot down impressions, emotions, questions, and personal insights. Following a brief introduction (pp. 1-4), highlighting the key elements of the volume, the authors include two short chapters focusing on the nature of grief and elements of the healing process (pp. 5-13), as well as the physical impact of grief (pp. 14-20). Each chapter con-

500 Years of Protest and Liberty

From Martin Luther to Modern Civil Rights

500 Years of Protest and Liberty: From Martin Luther to Modern Civil Rights, by Nicholas P. Miller (Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2017), 192 pages, paperback; \$24.99. Reviewed by Lael Caesar, *Adventist Review*.

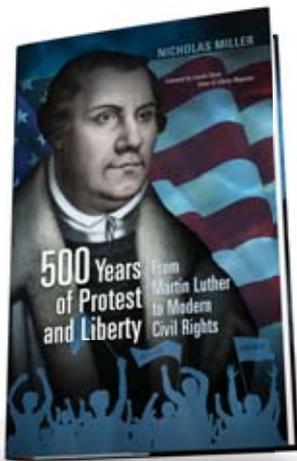
In *500 Years of Protest and Liberty* Nicholas Miller has given us a book on the intersection of Christian religious history and American political and civic success. Four sections of varying length concern themselves, successively, with (1) European backgrounds of Protestant liberty, (2) early-American experience of such liberty, (3) a Protestantism consistent with its name, and finally, (4) a look at other church and state legal issues in current American conversation such as homeschooling, tuition vouchers, tax-tutored theologians, new variations on marriage, and the contrasting consciences of legislators, employers and employees in relation to affordable health care. The sections are embraced by 11 pages of important preliminary material and a nine-page conclusion.

The introductory and concluding pages, along

tains very practical suggestions for overcoming grief.

The authors make a strong case for journaling. “Having an outlet to express your thoughts and emotions is part of the therapy for heart healing. It can be painful, but it will lead you towards healthy grieving” (p. 14), they suggest, even though they acknowledge that this exercise is often difficult and heart-wrenching. Writing a goodbye letter to their son was one of their most painful writing tasks.

Understanding the physical dimensions of grief was helpful to me. Our immune



with Miller’s introduction to each of the four sections, together constitute most of the book’s new material. Seventeen of the book’s 26 chapters are reprints of articles first encountered in the pages of *Liberty* magazine between the years 1995 and 2016. Two more are due to appear there soon. Longtime *Liberty* editor Lincoln Steed makes explicit his approval of Miller’s reuse of material by writing the book’s foreword, in which he warns of the forces of revisionist Reformation history that are actively looking for “the next steps toward Christian unity” between inheritors of the Reformation and the very institution they separated from half a millennium ago (p. 12).

The seven chapters that are not *Liberty* reprints are from blogs (two), online *Compass Magazine* [two from 2015], an adaptation from the *Journal of Church and State* (Spring 2000), a reproduction of a National Press Club discussion from the year 2002, and an *Adventist Review* article, “Religious Freedom in America” (Jan. 18, 2013), reprinted

under the title “Religious Freedom and Modern American Politics.” Variations in title between the *Adventist Review* article and the book are small pointers to a larger truth: that Miller’s chapters are not verbatim transfers from earlier articles to the new book. He has tweaked his previously published material where appropriate, to augment its relevance to North America and the world of 2017.

Miller argues that making America great again—an aptly borrowed phrase from current political rhetoric—requires clear explanation of how the nation first became great. For him, America’s Protestant backgrounds and its commitment to representative government and respect for individual freedom of conscience are the *sine qua non* of the nation’s political success. However bitterly opposed, however tragically long delayed, slave liberation, Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights victories, and continuing respect for individual human rights are natural consequences of America’s founding principles.

But to the extent that the courts’ interpretations of constitutional freedoms favor groups—churches, businesses, etc.—above individuals and minorities, America faces the very threat to religious freedom from which its founders fled 400 years ago. And Miller urges the broadest promotion possible of “the dissenting Protestant view of the importance of the individual conscience” (p. 124).

I voice one regret: the title of Miller’s conclusion should have been the title of his book: “From Martin Luther to Donald Trump?” Isn’t that a definite best seller formula? Whether or not, every American should get a copy. Quickly. 📖

system is weakened when we grieve, and we often sense a mental cloud. We feel physically worn and uncreative. The authors adapt the eight health remedies found in the writings of Ellen White as suggestions for regaining physical health (p. 18), and also include a list of questions (pp. 21, 22) a grieving person often asks, together with references to answers contained in the journal, the main section of the volume. Finally, the book includes a section highlighting pertinent texts from Scripture (pp. 148, 149), involving God’s constant presence, His forgiveness, hope, healing, rest and peace, and victory over death, to mention a few.

Each of the 43 journaling sections begins with

a pertinent Scripture, followed by a paragraph that develops the main concept and a section, titled “From Heart to Hand,” containing a number of questions meant to guide the journaling process. Most parts of the journaling section are one-pagers, even though there are some longer sections (e.g., the section “Forgiveness Begins the Healing,” on pp. 36-42).

Comfort for the Day is a helpful resource for those who mourn and find themselves grieving. Since we all face the reality of death at one point or another, it’s a good volume to give away and keep a copy handy on the shelf. 📖

WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THE REFORMATION*

"[Christ] is everywhere, but He does not wish that you grope for Him everywhere. Grope rather where the Word is, and there you will lay hold of Him in the right way."

MARTIN LUTHER

"The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God."

MARTIN LUTHER, THESIS 62

"It is impossible to understand modern history apart from the Reformation. We cannot understand the history of Europe, England, or America without studying the Reformation. For example, in America there would never have been Pilgrim Fathers if there had not first been a Protestant Reformation."

JACK ARNOLD, CHURCH HISTORY PROFESSOR

**"Reformation
ends not in
contemplation,
but in action."**

GEORGE GILLESPIE, THEOLOGIAN (1613-1648)

"Luther knew what it felt like for the law to convict him, accuse him, leave him with nowhere to rest. And if you want to know what really sparked the Protestant Reformation, it is the fact that feeling

this way, Luther . . . believed that God's grace is a gift, [and] no longer accepted what the church had for so long taught: that we are really saved by the works of the law. The medieval church had pawned off law as gospel, and Luther dared to know the difference. Then he became a preacher of grace, and that changed everything."

NADIA BOLZ-WEBER, PASTOR

"The Reformation as such, liberated from its early modern political constraints, remains alive and well in the United States. Anyone who doubts this need only open the yellow pages of a local phone book from anywhere in the United States and look under 'Churches.'"

BRAD S. GREGORY, PROFESSOR

"The mainstream Reformation was not concerned with establishing a new Christian tradition, but with the renewal and correction of an existing tradition. On the basis of their assertion that Christian theology was ultimately grounded in Scripture, Reformers such as Luther and Calvin argued for the need to return to Scripture as the primary and critical source of Christian theology."

ROBERT KENNERSON, AUTHOR

"The recently published *Atlas of World Christianity* enumerates about 500 million adherents to churches and denominations that trace their descent directly or indirectly from sixteenth-century Protestant beginnings, and several hundred millions more in 'independent' churches with Protestant origins or strongly Protestant characteristics."

MARK NOLL, PROFESSOR



“The Reformation is a much broader event than that singular day. To be sure, the Reformation began on that day. The Reformation, however, spanned two centuries and encompassed a cast of characters from a variety of nations. Luther may very well be at the center of the Reformation, but he does not stand alone.”

STEPHEN J. NICHOLS, AUTHOR

**“In essentials, unity;
in differences,
liberty;
in all things,
charity.”**

ATTRIBUTED TO PHILIP MELANCHTHON,
REFORMER AND THEOLOGIAN (1497-1560)

“The now almost universally acknowledged principles of religious freedom, liberty of conscience, the rule of law, separation of powers and constitutionally limited republics were unthinkable before the Reformation.”

THE REFORMATION SOCIETY, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

“The Bible ceased to be a foreign book in a foreign tongue, and became naturalized, and hence far more clear and dear to the common people. Here-

after the Reformation depended no longer on the works of the Reformers, but on the book of God, which everybody could read for himself as his daily guide in spiritual life. This inestimable blessing of an open Bible for all . . . marks an immense advance in church history, and can never be lost.”

PHILIP SCHAFF, THEOLOGIAN AND CHURCH HISTORIAN (1819-1893)

“The Protestant Reformation had a lot to do with the printing press, where Martin Luther’s theses were reproduced about 250,000 times. So you had widespread dissemination of ideas that hadn’t circulated in the mainstream before.”

NATE SILVER, AUTHOR AND STATISTICIAN

“The Waldenses witnessed for God centuries before the birth of Luther. Scattered over many lands, they planted the seeds of the Reformation that began in the time of Wycliffe, grew broad and deep in the days of Luther, and is to be carried forward to the close of time.”

ELLEN G. WHITE, AUTHOR (1827-1915)

“The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world’s history. Luther . . . did not receive all the light which was to be given to the world. From that time to this, new light has been continually shining upon the Scriptures, and new truths have been constantly unfolding.”

ELLEN G. WHITE

*Except for the quotations by Ellen G. White, these were taken from The-LivingLutheran.org/2017/01reformation-500/.

Multiple PERSPECTIVES

For more than you thought

The kingdom of heaven involves multiple perspectives. A bird's-eye perspective may take you above the treetops. The astronaut's-eye view may take you to the international space station, from which, looking down on Planet Earth, says Tim Peake, any astronaut knows "that's one of the greatest things they're going to see."

However great, it's pretty inconsequential when compared to the God's-eye view of reality.

Jesus' varied narratives of the kingdom are an excellent way to sense the breadth of the God's-eye view. There's the explorer's treasure finder perspective; the experimental farmer's multiterrain perspective; varied renderings of the party perspective (the royal wedding, the girls' sleepover); and of course, the "animal farm," sheep and goats perspective, very popular with socially minded leftists and service-oriented millennials. The kingdom of God involves multiple perspectives, including multiple ways of conceiving it; and multiple ways of participation: from sterner ways, such as commandment obedience or martyrdom, to impossibly gracious ways, such as forgiving multimillion-dollar debts.

Through the years Bible students have tried to divide and choose among these metaphors. We pick faith—and mindlessness—because works and conscientious effort are proof of someone else's pathetic failure of insight into "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" (see Rom. 7:13). We insist on obedience—and tithing our herb gardens—because too many have insulted God by their cheapening of grace. Either

we get the fruit of the Spirit part or we latch on to the Ten Commandments parts, when hard-work parts and soft-heart parts are equally divine: exhaustion in sacrifice for God and the delight of service for Him are not mutually exclusive. Meticulous attention to detail and peace that passes understanding are not opposing possibilities of Christian reality; hard work and partying go together in Jesus the joy of living, at whose right hand there is eternal pleasure, regardless of how much imprisonment, beating, stoning, shipwreck, peril from nature or treacherous humans, hardship, hunger, thirst, and pastoral ministry we ever experience (see 2 Cor. 11:23-28).

What do you know that could never be part of the kingdom? Why? You may be right. But you may be wrong. God's one kingdom of glorious grace is so inexhaustibly varied, diverse, and wonderful: a kingdom for virgins and a kingdom for slaves. A kingdom of administrators and academics for God, researchers and retirees, mechanics and maintenance people for Jesus: of office and wayside witnesses; all aspects and elements of the same kingdom.

The contrast is not between wayside and ivory tower, or between fête and slavery: it's between God's kingdom, and all the other kingdoms! The God's-eye view of Jesus' multiple stories teaches that we shall never exhaust the dimensions of His truth.

Instead, we may all be constantly conscious, and uniquely satisfied, that the kingdom of heaven involves multiple perspectives. 🍌

Lael Caesar is an associate editor of *Adventist Review*.

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