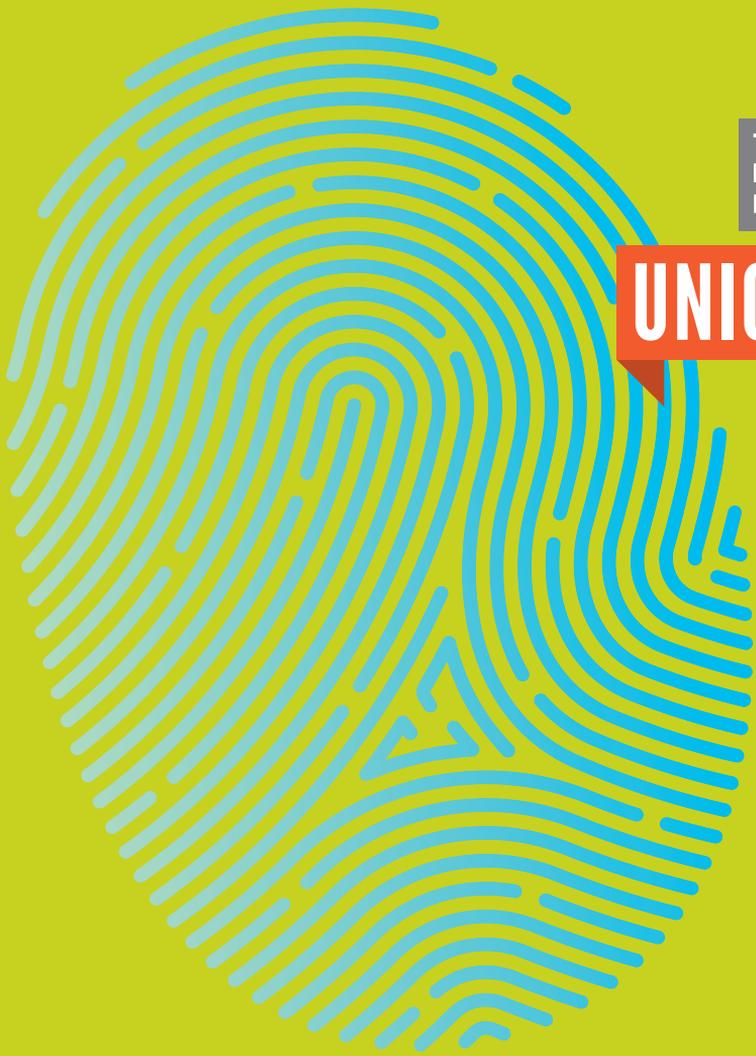


ADVENTIST REVIEW

SEPTEMBER 2020: SINCE WE HAVE HOPE +
OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION + GENESIS: A SCIENTIFIC
ACCOUNT? + FROM CHOICE TO PLAN + NEVER
SETTLE + LIFE, LIBERTY, AND ACCESSIBILITY TO ALL



The Church
I Want to
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UNIQUE

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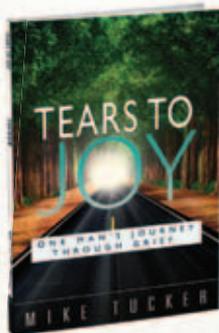


LIVE SEMINAR

Good Grief: From Tears to Joy

A Live Seminar with Mike Tucker.

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INSPIRATION

Tears to Joy

Share Mike Tucker's personal journey through grief in this enlightening, powerful book.



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Belong to Is...

UNIQUE

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Seventh-day Adventists live and work in nearly every country on earth, their presence demonstrated by hospitals, clinics, schools, universities, and other institutions of service. Millions of people benefit from attending Adventist educational facilities, being touched by their healing ministries, and are able to keep secure jobs because of Adventists' efforts to protect everyone's religious freedom.

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TRENDING

THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:

- 1 ADRA Responds to Massive Explosion in Beirut
- 2 Groundbreaking Technology Aids in Heart Transplants
- 3 Confessions of a Science Denier
- 4 Love Is Not Rude
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EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF COVID



The Adventist Church began early to establish schools for the training of its children and youth. In 1874, Adventists founded Battle Creek College, now Andrews University. Within a few decades Adventist colleges could be found in Canada, Illinois, Minnesota, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Tennessee, Texas, California, and Washington. Adventist congregations often organized "church schools" across North America.

In 1909, realizing that not all Adventists had access to Adventist education, the church launched Home Study International as Fireside Correspondence School. Now known as Griggs University/Griggs International Academy, it operates under the umbrella of Andrews University School of Distance Education, and provides elementary, high school, and university classes to students worldwide.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced school districts, both public and private, to reexamine how education is delivered in an age of social distancing. Technology now makes possible what used to be known as "distance learning."

As more students are being forced into nontraditional modes of learning, education may become a hybrid of in-person, on-screen, or homeschool learning. For a treatment of the third mode, read "Can I Do It?" at AdventistReview.org/can-i-do-it.

TURN UP THE LIGHT!

God has a Global Warning System, it's the three angels' messages of Revelation 14

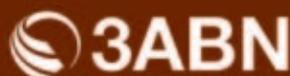
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BILL KNOTT



The Signature of Hope

For more than 40 years, I've used a singular expression to mark the Bible verses, the pointed insights, and the maxims I wished never to forget: "I have written it on the walls of my life."

Little did I know when joining the *Adventist Review* team 23 years ago that the metaphor of writing on the walls would one day cease to be only a metaphor—that I would actually be writing freely, even expansively, on the long east wall of our conference room. An enterprising member of our team some years ago painted the entire surface with "whiteboard paint," immediately turning it into a giant "think-pad" of sorts, where staff members work out article ideas, themes, advertising campaigns, finances, and the occasional "Happy Birthday" message.

Fifteen months ago, as we were planning "The Church I Want to Belong To" series that concludes with this September edition, the wall was covered with dozens of adjectives as team members called out the qualities and commitments that make them passionate about the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Hours of discussion, prayer, and even debate ensued as we honed the challenging *bon mots* from more than 70 to a specific list. Each themed statement—"The Church I Want to Belong to Is . . ."—was explored in sub-themes, curated articles, essays, commentaries, illustrations, and infographics. Perhaps

never before in the 171-year history of this journal has there been such a sustained focus on the essential characteristics of the remnant church of Bible prophecy.

Suffusing all the adjectives written on the wall was a pervasive sense of hope—of aspiration. These 15 adjectives are "both now and not yet"—realities we have tasted just enough

to hunger for their fuller expression in this movement we love.

Thank you for the privilege of stirring your thinking as ours has been stirred—for allowing us to lift up a vision of a faithful, diverse, and united body of believers in the three angels' messages who live with clarity and passion toward the soon coming of Jesus.

Write these words on the walls of your life. ▀

ETHICAL SAFE
LIFE-AFFIRMING
FAITHFUL TO SCRIPTURE
FEARLESS
CHRIST-CENTERED
PROPHETIC
MISSION-MINDED
WELCOMING
READY FOR JESUS
HEALTHY
HUMBLE
COURAGEOUS
COMPASSIONATE
UNIQUE

I hope that during these awkward times [Dixil Rodríguez] is able to continue her work. We would be lost without her.

BRADFORDLY COX

THE FROZEN FOYER

Bill Knott's *The Frozen Foyer* (June 2020) became very personal when I read the sentence "Others come from homes where television and the cat are all the company they have." Until the pandemic, I would drive the 20-plus miles to church almost every Sabbath and sit with an acquaintance or by myself. But with the pandemic I've had to stay at home and still have not started back to church, where I would have to wear a mask and sit alone, or even be sent home because there were already too many members in attendance.

I usually watch the service on Facebook, and since I have a Glorystar satellite dish, I can watch 3ABN, Hope Channel, and LLBN all day on Sabbath, including programs I have recorded during the week. Spotty, my 13-year-old cat, is frequently curled up in my lap or beside me while I watch.

But in three to five years I will quit my part-time job and move to a senior center in Portland, Oregon, where I will be closer to relatives, and will be able to get the care I need as I get older.

I have saved Bill Knott's article on my computer and will reread it many times.

Joan Beth King

Manhattan Beach, California



that as a church we've progressed past articles about the length of skirts on girls and women and the length of hair on men. Now conversations about inclusion have to include race, economics, and sexual orientation. This is when we get to demonstrate just how committed we are to Jesus' model of inclusion.

Thanks for having the courage to publish such a provocative article.

Ruth Ellis

Albuquerque, New Mexico

DEEPLY TOUCHING WORDS

Dixil Rodríguez's recent article, "Forecast: Heavy Rain" (June 2020), touched me and the family. Her insights enlighten and inspire me and my family, as we are regular listeners and readers of *Searching the Obvious*. It is difficult to locate other works she has touched outside of *Searching the Obvious*. We are grateful for her and her commentaries. I hope that during these awkward times she is able to continue her work. We would be lost without her.

Bradfordly Cox

CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM

I appreciate the message decrying racism. The apostle Paul faced

JESUS SAID, "COME"

Stephen Chavez's "Jesus Said, 'Come'" (June 2020) is a welcome reminder that if we want to reflect Christ's character, we have to welcome everyone who shows

up at our churches. It's gratifying to read how some congregations are taking this seriously.

We lose much when we judge people from outward appearances. I, for one, am thankful

Thanks for having the courage to publish such a provocative article.

RUTH ELLIS, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

this perennial issue in his day. The virus I would call Racism-2020 has caused more damage in the world. Paul's message to the Galatians was "You are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). If we don't follow the example of our Savior, we are not Christians.

Anatomically we are equals, but humans look at the appearance instead of the heart. Paul wrote: "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). That transformation has to happen now if we want to be citizens of heaven then.

Leo Ranzolin Sr.
Estero, Florida

Wow! The article "Love Is an Action Word" (July 2020) is just what we needed following the racial unrest we've seen over the last few weeks. Ella Simmons sounded a call that seemed almost prophetic. Nothing less than a radical love can address the problems faced by society.

Thank you for this call to action. I hope that we as a church will remember that we occupy two societies: the kingdom of God and kingdom of this world. God expects us to be good citizens of each.

Kent Stevens
Apopka, Florida

COMMENTS FROM ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

Racism is only one form of discrimination that exists in our society today. It may be the form that has attracted the attention of our denominational leaders today. But it will never go away until the root—discrimination of any kind—is addressed and removed from our denominational life.

It's easy to offer platitudes in response to current events. But we need to listen and understand before we speak. We demonstrate our failure to understand when we respond with such comments as "All lives matter."

We may want to congratulate ourselves on being on the right side in the current issue of racism in our society. Yet if we fail to understand current issues of sexism and gender, we demonstrate that we have traveled a very short distance down the pathway to equality.

This is a time when all of us should listen, think, and understand before we speak.

Gregory Mathews
via web

DON MIGUEL, AND OTHER LESSONS

Thank you for a very thoughtful article: "Don Miguel, and Other Lessons" (AdventistReview.org/don-miguel-and-other-lessons). It had important values, well expressed.

Ruth Hoffer
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.



EVERY CHILD.
EVERYWHERE.
IN SCHOOL.

#EveryChildInSchool

TODAY, 262
MILLION
CHILDREN
DIDN'T GO TO
SCHOOL.

Join the Adventist-led, global movement to ensure education for children everywhere by signing the petition at ADRA.org/InSchool.

The world is facing a growing education gap, especially among vulnerable children.

Page 11

NEWS



Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries' virtual backstage, during the 2020 virtual convention on July 31 PHOTO: ASI

ADVENTIST-LAYMEN'S VIRTUAL CONVENTION OPENS WITH A CALL TO REACH OUT

CHURCH MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO SHARE GOD'S MESSAGE FOR THE TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE.

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

The Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) 2020 convention opened virtually on the evening of July 29, 2020, with an unambiguous call to share Jesus and the three angels' messages recorded in Revelation 14 with a world in search of answers.

"More than any other time, at least in my life, we have seen people have an interest as they are looking for an answer," said North American Division president Alex Bryant, who greeted the thousands who registered for the online-only event. "We can share with them that the

only solution is found in Jesus Christ and His three angels' messages."

Kyle Allen, Adventist World Radio (AWR) vice president, agreed. "God has been using this pandemic time," he said as he detailed some of the evangelistic initiatives AWR is rolling out around the world. "It has given us wonderful opportunities to reach other people."

THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

Under the motto "Three Angels' Messages: Into All the World," the ASI 2020 event zeroed in on one of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's long-standing key messages. "For



When you get a call at 3:00 a.m., you know it's something important.

Seventh-day Adventists, the three angels' messages in Revelation 14 are a rallying point. They define who we are as a people and describe our mission to the world," read the description of the opening message by international evangelist and keynote speaker Mark Finley.

Seventh-day Adventists teach that the purpose of the three angels' messages recorded in Revelation 14:6-12 is to prepare the world for the second coming of Jesus.

Adventist Church cofounder Ellen White wrote: "Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith [in Jesus] is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"¹*

During the ASI convention's opening program, viewers were able to answer an online poll, which

revealed that for many Adventists, the connection between the two is not so clear-cut. Part of the event, leaders said, was to bridge that gap.

By the end of the event, explained Curtis Letniak, ASI vice president for membership, participants should "understand, live, and share Jesus with the three angels' messages." Some presentations also highlighted how to relate business to the three angels' messages.

ACTIVATING LAY MEMBERS

During the two-hour program on opening night, several leaders highlighted the role that lay Adventists—those not employed by the Adventist Church organization—can play in taking God's message to the people who need it.

For Bryant, it is something per-



sonal. “I came to the Seventh-day Adventist Church because a lay member got involved, someone who gave Bible studies to my family,” he shared.

But it’s the partnership between lay church members and the organized church that can synergize the potential of both for mission, leaders said. In a recorded welcome message, Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson called this collaboration “wonderful.”

“What a privilege it is to share the three angels’ messages,” Wilson said. “We are together in this.”

According to Rodney Bowes, ASI vice president for evangelism, the key is first to understand how the three angels’ messages can impact our lives. Bowes reported on a new website—www.the3amcall.org/—that seeks to activate lay members to be trained and willing to share God’s

message with an increasing number of people. The website, which incorporates the three angels’ messages name, includes resources to train and help lay members who are willing to get involved.

“When you get a call at 3:00 a.m., you know it’s something important,” ASI president Steve Dickman said. In a promotional video, Felicia Datus, who collaborates with the Center for Online Evangelism, seconded this thought. “When someone calls you at 3:00 a.m., you know you have to answer,” she emphasized.

Bowes explained that people can sign up on the new site to become online missionaries. In partnership with the Center for Online Evangelism, the site will include courses on health evangelism, a completely redesigned edition of the New Beginnings Bible studies, the Grow Your Church initiative, and others.

Bryant highlighted the importance of an option like this. “Hundreds of thousands of people will be drawn to Jesus thanks to this initiative,” he said.

CRACKING THE CODE

In his keynote speech on July 29, Finley celebrated the chance of holding the convention even in the face of the current situation. “God knew this would happen beforehand, and He has special blessings for us,” Finley said. “God will do more than we can imagine.”

Finley explained that there’s life-changing power in the three

angels’ messages. It’s all about placing that message within the context of the great controversy between God and Satan, and understanding that Satan has already been defeated. “God has broken Satan’s code,” Finley said, using a wartime metaphor. “The book of Revelation cracks the code. God is never caught by surprise. In these last days He has a special message,” he said.

According to Finley, the message of Revelation 14 is the core of the whole book and is “tailor-made for the time we are living in.”

He traced the beginning of the Adventist movement during the 1840s to a time of turmoil and upheaval. “Social and religious revolutions were changing the world as we know it,” Finley said. “At the same time evolution was developing, God had a message that calls everyone to worship the Creator.”

Finley explained that both evolution and Communism, traced back to about that time, put a low value on human life and dismiss the need for a Creator. “But God raised a divine movement of destiny that would get to the end of the world,” he said.

According to event organizers, the 2020 convention included dozens of speakers, nearly 150 exhibitors, the presentation of almost 50 projects, and more than 40 sessions. The event ended on August 1. ▀

*Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 190.



Nearly 300 million children, adolescents, and youth globally—about one in every five—do not have access to school. PHOTO: ADRA INTERNATIONAL

“WE DID IT!” WORLDWIDE CHURCH COLLECTS 1 MILLION SIGNATURES

NEXT STEPS ARE UNDERWAY FOR THE EVERY CHILD. EVERYWHERE. IN SCHOOL. PETITION.

BY ADRA INTERNATIONAL, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

The reality that all children around the world can have access to education is one step closer after the petition for *Every Child. Everywhere. In School.*, spearheaded by the Adventist Church and its global humanitarian arm, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), surpassed 1 million online signatures in July 2020.

“It’s indeed a blessing to see our global church family and ADRA standing up together in support of millions of children who don’t have access to education around the world,” said Seventh-day Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson.

“Our brothers and sisters have shown that we can be a powerful voice for change when we work

together. Thank you to everyone who helped us reach 1 million signatures, and for your strong commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of so many children worldwide.”

“Our work doesn’t end here,” Wilson added. “We must now become agents of change in our communities and use our voices to ensure that every child, everywhere, has access to education and can reach God’s potential for their lives as they prepare themselves and others through the power of the Holy Spirit for Jesus’ soon coming.”

Ella Simmons, ADRA board vice chair and an Adventist Church general vice president, said that Adventists around the world “have

spoken loudly and clearly that we care deeply about assuring access to education to millions of vulnerable children so that they can learn and thrive.” She added, “The commitments of our church family and ADRA united to bring awareness to this global issue and speak volumes. Thank you for standing up for the rights of all children everywhere. Let us continue to increase our efforts and magnify our voices on behalf of the children who have no voice.”

GETTING IT DONE

Grassroots efforts for the education campaign kicked off in October 2019 with the Adventist Church and ADRA urging support for the nearly 300 million children, adolescents, and youth globally—about one in every five—who are not in school, according to a UNESCO report. This is a staggering number of children worldwide who need access to high-quality education and to live free from exploitation and intergenerational poverty. As a result, ADRA and

THE
IMPORTANCE
OF ADVOCATING
FOR OUT-
OF-SCHOOL
CHILDREN HAS
SIGNIFICANTLY
INCREASED.

Adventist Church members in nearly 200 countries pledged their support to this issue, and momentum spread to get online signatures, including in countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the South Pacific.

As the impact of the coronavirus grows, the importance of advocating for out-of-school children has significantly increased. Today, more families have become vulnerable because of joblessness, illness, and other issues that have affected their ability to pay for education, leading to more children being out of school. In fact, 75 million school-age children live in 35 crisis-affected countries and cannot get an education because of increased vulnerability, school closures, and other issues as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to UNESCO.

The world is facing a growing education gap, especially among vulnerable children. Even though 1 million signatures is a phenomenal milestone worth celebrating, we are only at the beginning, explained ADRA president Michael Kruger.

“We are developing new global alliances with key organizations to amplify our voices,” he said. “We need your ongoing support and commitment to ensure that we continue to make progress on this important issue. This is why we will be providing resources so that individuals, groups, and churches can speak up on this issue of access to education. We will also share

essential details to give you a clear road map of what we need to advocate for. Let’s join forces and take this initiative much further.”

WHAT COMES NEXT?

With the achievement of 1 million signatures and widespread support, the next step of the global campaign is for the Adventist Church and ADRA, working together, to localize this effort in individual countries, ADRA leaders explained. Decisions about how education is delivered and funded are not made by global leaders, but by national and state leaders.

To localize this effort, the campaign will proceed as follows:

Define a clear request to your government. Each country will create goals tailored specifically for their country’s education needs and hone in on relevant education issues. Some key priorities will include advocating for increased allocation of education funding in developing countries; increasing foreign aid assistance for education; and improving social inclusion for marginalized children.

Communicate your request to your national leaders. Once the request is identified, each country will strategize how to approach policymakers and legislators to ensure that all children have the opportunity to get an education. Key to this effort will be to communicate the campaign to the most relevant leaders and decisionmakers in each country. These communication pieces will include information about the campaign, the importance of education, what they can do to ensure every child is in school, the success of the global petition, and the tremendous grassroots support that is behind it.

To support the next phase, ADRA is developing a policy report that will analyze the state of out-of-school children around the globe and the policies and actions needed to address it. ADRA is also developing a resource kit for church ministry departments, local churches, youth groups, and schools to continue their involvement beyond the petition. Resources will be available for distribution in October 2020, ADRA leaders said.

ADRA reported that it has started an advocacy master class to build, implement, and evaluate an advocacy strategy tailored to individual countries. The course is designed to help countries understand how to effectively engage their leaders to bring about change. A resource packet that includes draft letter templates, a policy report, meeting guides, and more will be made available. 🍀



The Adventist Mobile Unit, provided by ADRA Colombia, is stationed by one of the main roads connecting Cúcuta and Bucaramanga in north Colombia, as Venezuelans make the journey on foot back to their home country. PHOTO: ADRA COLOMBIA

VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS RETURNING HOME RECEIVE HEALTH ASSISTANCE

ADRA COLOMBIA SUPPORTS HUNDREDS WHO WALK FOR DAYS TO REACH THE BORDER.

BY LAURA ACOSTA, INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Colombia is helping hundreds of Venezuelan migrants who are making their way back to their country on foot after losing their jobs in Colombia because of the pandemic crisis.

According to the Colombia migration report, by April 2020 more than 80,000 Venezuelans, out of the 1,825,000 spread across Colombia, had already returned home. The government reports that many continue to journey back home with their belongings after losing their homes and the means to support their families.

Amid that situation, ADRA Colombia has set up an Adventist mobile unit on highways and at strategic points in such cities as Bogotá, Medellín, Bucaramanga, and Cúcuta, where many travelers stop on the way to the northern border with Venezuela.

“Every week the mobile unit sets up in a predetermined city with a working team that surveys the busiest roads and highways,” said Jaír Flórez, ADRA Colombia director. He said the journey is approximately 125 miles (200 kilometers), and

could take four days or more traveling on foot or through challenging weather conditions.

The Adventist mobile unit, which is a joint project between ADRA International, ADRA Colombia, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has a staff consisting of a nurse, a pre-hospital care professional, a nurse’s assistant, and a social worker. The unit sees an average of 30 persons per day from Monday through Friday on the several designated cities and roads.

Many of the individuals tended to by mobile unit staff are persons with trauma from the long journey on foot. Common medical challenges include blood pressure issues, body aches, asthma, malnourishment, and pregnancy.

The Adventist mobile unit has also provided primary care in cities such as Medellín and Bucaramanga for cases that require an appointment and more intensive medical care, lab work, and prescription medications.

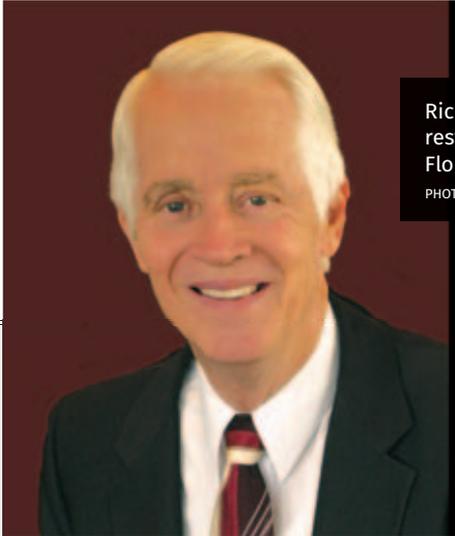
Health professionals report that persons in need are grateful for the service, for meeting their physical

needs but also for listening to them and giving them hope. “We strengthen them to continue on their journey during this complicated time,” said Mauricio Cancelado, a nurse who has been assisting dozens of people every week. “They find in ADRA a friend that supports them and doesn’t abandon them.”

Cancelado shared that many thank God and the agency and the people in Colombia for the support. “They are impacted when they see evidence that someone is listening, will help them, and can provide relief as they continue their journey to Venezuela.”

In addition to the assistance to Venezuelan travelers, local community members are also being helped with medical needs during the time that the mobile unit is stationed by a park or a designated spot to assist those in need, Flórez said. “This has allowed this initiative to be seen and be more accepted among the migrant population,” he said. Government officials in Bucaramanga and throughout the country see ADRA as complementary to other services the government is providing.

Since May 2020 more than 1,500 Venezuelans have been helped free of charge by the Adventist mobile unit as they travel to the border with Venezuela, Flórez said. The emergency medical response project is scheduled to end in mid-November 2020, but ADRA leaders have requested an extension without cost to donors so that more individuals can be helped. ▀



Richard O'Ffill passed to his rest on July 29, 2020, in Orlando, Florida, United States. He was 79.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE O'FFILL FAMILY

ADRA MOURNS THE LOSS OF FORMER LEADER RICHARD W. O'FFILL

HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMANITARIAN AGENCY.

BY ADRA INTERNATIONAL

Richard O'Ffill, who was instrumental in the founding of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), lost his battle with Parkinson's disease on July 29, 2020, in Orlando, Florida, United States. He was 79.

O'Ffill was the first director of the Seventh-day Adventist World Services (SAWS), which was renamed ADRA in 1984. He also spent many years working as a missionary for the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

"Our ADRA family around the world is saddened by the passing of Richard O'Ffill," said ADRA's president Michael Kruger. "He was a remarkable visionary leader and a driving force behind the creation of the Adventist Church's humanitarian institution. His passion for service led him to create many initiatives that helped mold ADRA into the global humanitarian agency it is today. We are grateful for Pastor O'Ffill's many contributions to our church and ADRA, and honor his legacy by inspiring our teams around the world to continue to serve with justice, compassion, and love. We lift in prayer his wife,

children, and family, and express our heartfelt condolences."

LIFE SKETCH

O'Ffill dedicated his life to service. He pastored six churches in Ohio and was called to be a Bible teacher and minister in Pakistan. He returned to the United States in 1970 to be chaplain and Bible teacher of Auburn Adventist Academy and pastor of the Auburn Seventh-day Adventist Church, near Seattle, Washington.

His unrelenting dedication to serving the less fortunate led O'Ffill to Chile in 1972, where he became the first director of SAWS in the region.

After returning to the United States from Chile, O'Ffill took a leading role in the implementation of the first U.S. government grant provided to the Adventist Church for development projects.

"Richard had an amazing intellect for development and relief operations," said Mario Ochoa, who worked with O'Ffill in Chile and the United States. "He had the vision to expand the work of the church into the field of development. He also

understood the need to create a nonprofit organization like ADRA, so our faith could be put into action, for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus around the world."

In 1984, O'Ffill was called to lead lay activities, Adventist Community Services, and prison ministries for the Florida Conference. He created the first men's ministries department and authored 10 books about the power of prayer, the family, and Christian life. O'Ffill's spiritual messages also reached television and radio audiences through the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN) in the mid-2000s. He was a frequent guest on *Crosstalk*, a weekly interview program produced by Layman Ministries.

"My father valued spiritual revival in his church and its members," said Richard O'Ffill, Jr., director for information technology at ADRA. "Even after retirement, he never stopped reaching people and drawing them closer to Jesus."

O'Ffill is survived by his wife, Betty; sons Richard, Jr., and Dan; daughters Cindy and Kathy; and eight grandchildren. 🍀



GROUNDBREAKING TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS “DEAD” HEARTS TO BE TRANSPLANTED

ADVENTHEALTH NOW PERFORMS A PROCEDURE THAT GIVES HOPE.

BY ADVENTHEALTH NEWS

The AdventHealth Transplant Institute cardiothoracic team recently performed the first heart transplant in Florida, United States, through a process known as Donation After Circulatory Death (DCD). The team utilized a donor heart that was no longer beating and was evaluated via a groundbreaking process under a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) clinical trial.

DCD heart transplantation gives hope to patients and physicians faced with a growing organ shortage across the United States. These heart transplants are made possible by a clinical trial using the Transmedics Organ Care System, a machine that takes a heart that has stopped prior to donation and keeps it viable for hours. AdventHealth is one of 12 transplant centers in the country participating in a clinical trial for the process. The transplant was a team effort in partnership with AdventHealth Translational

Research Institute and the organ procurement agency OurLegacy.

“There are far more people in this country who need heart transplants than there are heart donors,” said Donald Botta, surgical director of the heart transplant program at AdventHealth. “We’re excited to have another tool in our arsenal that can help us save lives. These kinds of transplants could expand the donor pool by thousands.”

George Martin, 46, had been waiting for a transplant since 2018, when a severe case of influenza attacked his heart muscle. The Belleview resident had twice before been told a donor’s heart was available, only to learn later that the organ was not viable.

In mid-June, the AdventHealth Transplant Institute team traveled out of state to the donor’s location, procured the heart for Martin after the donor was removed from a ventilator, and connected it to

the machine to support it with blood from the donor. The team returned to Orlando with the heart, where it was transplanted into Martin.

“The next day I was up walking,” said Martin, a Navy veteran and an engineer for an aerospace company. “From an engineering standpoint, the technology was something that appealed to me. It’s just a blessing.”

Nearly 110,000 people are on the national transplant waiting list, and, according to the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, more than 3,000 of those are waiting for a heart. Twenty people die each day waiting for an organ transplant.

“The hearts that will be transplanted as a result of this technology would have been buried before,” said Scott Silvestry, surgical director for thoracic transplant at the AdventHealth Transplant Institute and the principal investigator for the Transmedics clinical trial at AdventHealth. “Instead, they’ll save lives of people like George Martin and hopefully many more central Florida residents.”

“Organ donors, such as Martin’s, are heroes who deserve our gratitude and respect,” said Ginny McBride, executive director of OurLegacy, central Florida’s organ procurement organization. “This new technology will allow donors and their families to touch even more lives through their generosity. We are humbled to be stewards of these lifesaving gifts.”



ADRA AIDS AFTER DEADLY BEIRUT EXPLOSION. Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) response teams in Lebanon are providing emergency supplies to recovery workers and survivors of a massive chemical explosion in Beirut Harbor that caused destruction described as unprecedented. The blast killed at least 163 people, wounded more than 5,000, and left more than 300,000 people homeless. ADRA teams working with church volunteers, local authorities, and partners in Beirut deployed humanitarian support that included water and food.



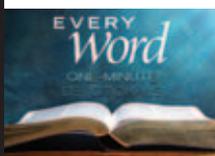
“SABBATH WALK” INSTALLED. Stuarts Point Convention Centre, a Seventh-day Adventist camp in New South Wales, Australia, established a nature walk that commemorates the seventh-day Sabbath. Information plaques attached to multiple pillars along a 1-mile (1.6 kilometer) route at the center tell the story of the Bible Sabbath. Managers hope that visitors will be able to enjoy and learn about the Sabbath because of the new installation.



NEW HIGH-TECH WORLD FOR KIDS IN DOMINICA. Seventh-day Adventist businessman Eric Rajah and his friend Brian Leavitt, cofounders of A Better World Canada, recently worked with Maurice Hollingsworth, president of Information Technology for Dominica Foundation (IT for Dominica), to install Chromebooks in 23 schools in Dominica. The donation will give children in dozens of elementary schools on the island nation their first individual access to information technology.



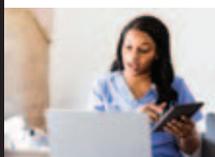
LLUH SCHOLAR APPOINTED TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE RESEARCHING COVID-19 VACCINE. Michael Hogue, dean of Loma Linda University’s School of Pharmacy, has been appointed by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to a 45-member Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Workgroup pursuing development of a COVID-19 vaccine. The group is tasked with evaluating scientific evidence behind COVID-19 vaccines and making recommendations to the ACIP on their use. Hogue also serves as president of the American Pharmacists Association.



IT IS WRITTEN PROGRAMS AVAILABLE AS PODCASTS. From weekly episodes to daily devotionals to shows in Spanish, eight original It Is Written (IIW) programs are now available as podcasts on Apple and Google podcasts as the IIW ministry extends its reach into the popular medium. Six of these programs are heard on a weekly schedule: *In the Word*, *It Is Written*, *Sabbath School*, *Line Upon Line*, *Conversations*, *Escrito está*; and two more—*Every Word* and *Una mejor manera de vivir*—every day.



ADVENTIST PHYSICIAN IN EL SALVADOR DIES FROM COVID-19. Jeremías Ramos, 51, a distinguished anesthesiologist and member of the Scandia Seventh-day Adventist Church, recently passed away in San Salvador from COVID-19. Ramos was a pioneer in modernizing techniques to administer anesthesia. Jesús Arteaga, Ramos’ pastor, said, “We have lost a church member and a great leader and servant of God.” Ramos is especially remembered for his work with Adventist university students, at-risk youth, and his quartet music.



ADVENTHEALTH GLOBAL MISSIONS NURSING CONFERENCE MOVES TO DIGITAL FORMAT. COVID-19 disruptions across the globe may have increased the value of AdventHealth’s annual nursing conference. AdventHealth knew their partners were expected to experience COVID-19 spikes after the U.S., and wanted to help them. They therefore convened an online encounter in July that reached more participants, even locations without digital facilities, such as Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Webinars were recorded and saved on YouTube. AdventHealth found the virtual conference so successful that it may feature both live and digital options in the future.



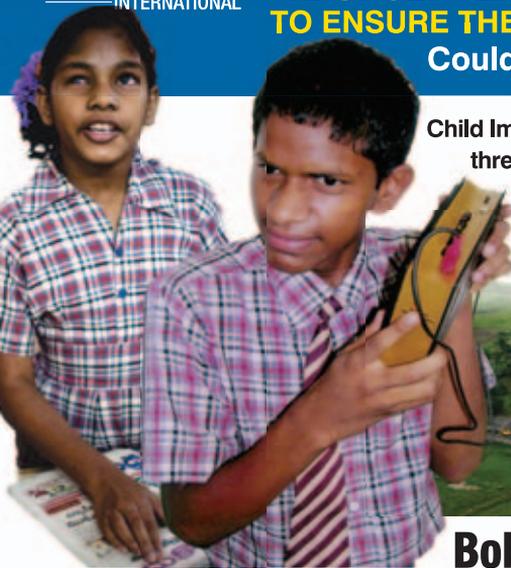
CHILDIMPACT
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WE URGENTLY NEED TO RAISE OVER \$80,000 FOR 2020 TO ENSURE THESE SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN HAVE HOPE.

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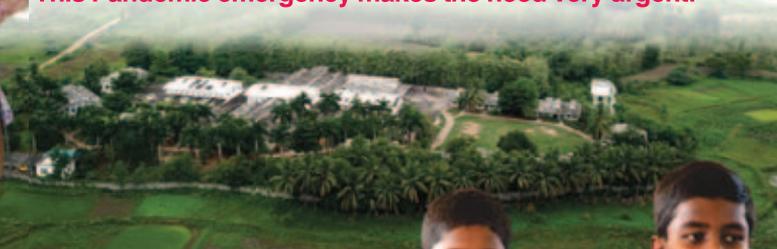


Child Impact International and its supporters fully support financially three Special Needs schools operated by the church in India. They serve the poorer communities where these at risk special needs children are given HOPE!

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Kollegal Speech & Hearing School

Over 100 children gain a special education. Deaf and hearing impaired children are taught to be a part of the community.



Sunrise Home

Many children are abandoned and parentless. They live on the streets or railway stations. Sunrise orphanage is located in a rural setting where they are given a home, education and work experience.



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The Seventh-day Adventist movement was birthed in the nineteenth century by passionate Bible study among Christians who wanted to become just what Jesus wanted them to so that He could recognize them when He came to earth for His people. Their spiritual ancestors in the sixteenth century rediscovered righteousness by faith, a doctrine obscured by centuries of tradition and biblical misinterpretation. Before that, first- and second-century Christians turned the world upside down with their proclamation about a crucified, resurrected, and returning Savior.

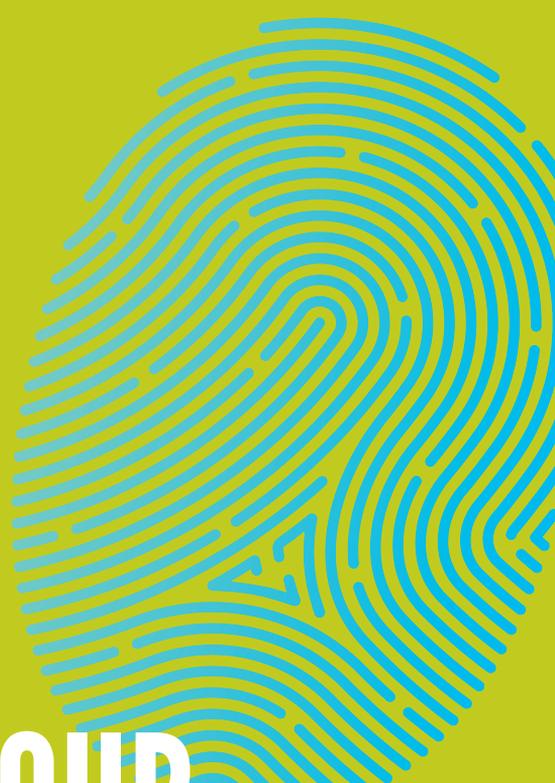
Today, Seventh-day Adventists live and work in nearly every country on earth, their presence demonstrated by hospitals, clinics, schools, universities, and other institutions of service. Millions of people everywhere benefit from attending Adventist educational facilities, being touched by their healing ministries, and being able to keep secure jobs somewhere because of Adventists' efforts to protect everyone's religious freedom.

Though they are known for all these, Adventists' most compelling contribution to Christianity in general is their unique commitment to balanced Bible study undistracted by Platonic philosophy or humanistic, self-centered interpretation.

Because of that commitment, we Adventists often find ourselves marching to the beat of a different drummer. Some of the Bible's most distinctive teachings—the seventh-day Sabbath, Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, our bodies as temples for God, death as a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection—are often ignored or given short shrift by most other Christians.

We embrace these and other Christian doctrines not to be odd or peculiar, but because we've found them to be essential in reflecting God's character. We're committed to living God's truth not because we want to be known, but because we want God to be glorified. We honor Him by understanding that as our Creator, He knows what's best for our spiritual, emotional, physical, and material health.

When so much in our culture is "out of control," we want people to know that only as we are informed by God's truth, and controlled by God's Spirit, do we have something to look forward to in this life and the next. We invite you to consider the next few pages specifically focused on four Bible doctrines and why our understanding of them is as distinct as it is.—Editors.



OUR BOAST IS IN THE LORD

"Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord" (Jer. 9:23, 24).



THE SANCTUARY DOCTRINE

*Adventism's unique
contribution to Christian
theology*

The doctrine of the sanctuary lies at the foundation of Seventh-day Adventist theology and mission and constitutes the most distinctive contribution of Adventism to Christian thought.

THE KEY THAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

While other Adventist “distinctives” (seventh-day Sabbath, state of the dead, tithing, etc.) are taught by various Christian denominations, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the only major faith-group teaching the “good news” of the three angels’ messages—that in these last days of earth’s history, “the hour of His judgment *has* come” (Rev. 14:6, 7). Adventists believe that at the beginning of the antitypical day of atonement, October 22, 1844, Jesus, our High Priest, entered the Most Holy

Place of the heavenly sanctuary to conduct a pre-Advent judgment vindicating His people and bringing justice against all evil (Lev. 16; Dan. 7:9, 10, 21; 8:14).

For Adventist pioneers, “the subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God’s hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people.”¹

The sanctuary message is not just one doctrine among many in Seventh-day Adventist theology. In 1906, Ellen White could write, “The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.”² Adventist scholars, both past and present,



RICHARD DAVIDSON

have shown how the sanctuary is the center of all the major doctrinal truths in the Bible.”

THE SANCTUARY: A BEAUTIFUL MESSAGE

The sanctuary message is a revelation of the beauty, truth, and goodness of God (Ps. 27:4, 13). In contrast to most Christian theological systems, constructed around the Platonic notion of a timeless God who is incompatible with spatio-temporal reality, Seventh-day Adventists offer a corrective to what they consider a distortion of the nature of God.

Scripture reveals a God who enters space and time, who dwells in a real place in the universe—His heavenly temple/palace: Isaiah 6:1-9 is but one of multiple examples. From the time the universe was created, even before the rise of sin and evil, God has invited us to enter into personal and intimate fellowship with Himself. Israel’s earthly sanctuary/temple, a “miniature representation” of the heavenly original, had this same major function (Ex. 25:8, 9). The sanctuary doctrine is thus the embodiment of the Immanuel principle—“God with us” (Isa. 7:14).

The sanctuary doctrine focuses upon Jesus in the sanctuary, including (1) His atoning work on the cross, which functions as the sacrificial altar of the heavenly sanctuary (see Heb. 13:10); (2) His heavenly ministration of intercession for us (Heb. 7:25); and (3) His work of vindicating His people during the pre-Advent judgment (Dan. 7:22). If we *really* want to focus upon Jesus, then we need to concentrate on where Jesus is *now*, applying the benefits of His atoning work on Calvary for us personally in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 7:10). The sanctuary message is a window into the heart of the Triune God, and involves the united work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Most people today are fascinated by the concept of a sanctuary, but paradoxically, little attention is given to the sanctuary message of the Bible. However, the biblical doctrine of the sanctuary embraces all of the main meanings of sanctuary recognized by secular society today—and far exceeds the most lofty conceptions of sanctuary humans can imagine. The biblical sanctuary is a sacred place—both here on earth and in heaven—where beings come to worship God (Ps. 150:1); it is the command center of the universe where angelic hosts come and go in the loving service of their Commander (Isa. 6:6-7). The sanctuary is also a place of refuge, where

God is engaged in saving the endangered species of humankind (Ps. 27:5). The sanctuary is a place of safety and quiet, where God invites His people to come by faith and escape the hectic and threatening pace of today’s living (Heb. 4:16; 10:19-22).

ASSURANCE IN JESUS, NOT FEAR OF HELL

The pre-Advent judgment message of the sanctuary has sometimes been understood in such a way as to bring fear into the hearts of those who do not feel they are good enough to face the Divine Judge. But the biblical message of this judgment is good news about Jesus (Rev. 14:6, 7).

In this message we see that Jesus is (1) our Substitute, who has paid the price for our sins (Isa. 53:6); (2) our Lawyer, who has never lost a case committed to Him (1 John 2:1); (3) our Star Witness, who testifies in our favor against the false charges of Satan (Rev. 3:4); (4) our Judge, who is on our side (John 5:22); (5) our Purifier, taking responsibility for our moral cleansing (Ezek. 36:25-27); (6) our Vindicator, who pronounces judgment “in favor of the saints” and brings retributive justice against those who have maligned and mistreated God’s people (Dan. 7:22, 26); and (7) the Vindicator of God’s character, so that the whole universe will eventually declare, “Just and true are Your ways, O King of saints!” (Rev. 15:3, NKJV).³

For God’s people, the verb “judge” in the Bible has positive implications: “justify” (Rom. 3:22-26; 5:6-11); “save” (Isa. 35:4); “deliver” (Ps. 9:7-10); “vindicate” (Ps. 135:14). In this world of injustice, oppression, abuse, suffering, slander, and evil, the God of justice and mercy is in the heavenly sanctuary, working it all out to bring justice to all wrongs done in the universe, and salvation and vindication to all those who trust in Him. The lyrics of Michael Card’s song “Jubilee” capture the “good news” of the sanctuary judgment message: “To be so completely guilty and given over to despair, to look into your Judge’s face and see a Savior there!”

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911, 1950), p. 423.

² Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 221.

³ 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.

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WHY THE SEVENTH DAY?

*"There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord."—Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath*.*

*Adventism's
Sabbath celebration*



MATHILDE FREY

The Sabbath is a unique day. Its revolutionary ideas were significant in the ancient world, and are still revolutionary in our society. As an integral theme of Scripture, the Sabbath speaks to deeply theological questions about God and about His relationship with humanity as well as all creation.

WHAT'S SABBATH ABOUT?

Swiss Reformed theologian Karl Barth noted Scripture's emphasis on the climactic event of creation Sabbath as God entering the created world: "by resting on the seventh day, He [God] does not separate Himself from the world but binds Himself the more closely to it."¹ In its rhythmic

recurrence, the Sabbath signifies the Creator's constant presence in the world and His care for it.

The sacredness of the Sabbath is then the essence of the divine-human relationship and enables human beings to rest and work in this world in the image and likeness of the Creator God. Since the fall into sin, the Sabbath has liberated people from oppressive regimes of human gods; it places them in proper relationships with each other; it relieves their attitude toward work in a society that is often exhausted and stressed by hard labor; and it testifies to the sacred design in time and space whereby human beings can recognize and emulate the Maker of all.

Thus, the Sabbath is an important part of God's program for restoring *imago Dei* in fallen human beings.

SABBATH: FAIRNESS AND FREEDOM

The commandment to keep the Sabbath holy is at the center of the Decalogue in Exodus 20:8-11 and in Deuteronomy 5:12-15. In both Decalogue versions, Sabbath is the hallmark and guarantee of God's gift of freedom from slavery and oppression.

In turn, people who are freed from slavery are to extend the same gift, as well as their care and compassion, to anyone in their sphere of living, including animals. The meaning of the Sabbath in the law sections of the Bible cannot be overstated, especially with regard to its divine concern for justice and fairness toward those who are disadvantaged by society.

It is in this spirit of justice that the prophets spoke of the Sabbath. Amos condemned its misuse by those who were greedy and oppressed the poor (Amos 8:5). Hosea exhorted those who disregarded the Sabbath's significance as a sign of covenant relationship between God and His people (Hosea 2:11). In Isaiah, the Sabbath is imbued with the divine call for justice and righteousness in this world (Isa. 56:1) as well as a catalyst of hope for an all-inclusive new heaven and new earth when "all flesh" will worship the Lord "from Sabbath to Sabbath" (Isa. 66:23).

According to the Gospels, the Sabbath is made to benefit the human being (Mark 2:27), and the "Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath" (verse 28). If animals need to be assisted and cared for on Sabbath, how much more so do human beings who need healing. Thus, Jesus says, "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (Matt. 12:12).

In the Gospel of John, Jesus' healings on the Sabbath speak to God's life-giving care for people who were neglected by the temple authorities (John 5; 9). While the New Testament attests to Sabbath observance in the early church,² it is in Hebrews where Christians are called to enter God's "rest," which is "a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. 4:9). The language evokes Isaiah's vision where the Sabbath carries eschatological fulfillment of rest and peace. All believers will enter God's Sabbath rest.

The book of Revelation concludes the theological import of the Sabbath in Scripture with letters to seven churches of Asia Minor, followed by seven

cycles of visions that culminate in the vision of the New Jerusalem—a panorama that reflects on the sevenfold structure of the Creation account in Genesis 1:1–2:3. At the heart of the prophetic scenery is a prominent allusion to the Sabbath in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:8-11), "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters" (Rev. 14:7). Earth's moments of crisis seem to center on the rich gospel themes of the Sabbath:

The Creator God is trustworthy. The Sabbath provides a chance for us to reorient our lives toward God as the ultimate provider. It is an invitation to trust Him with all our being and with our sources of security, such as work or money or relationships. As His created and re-created beings, we are His image, dependent on Him and His good gifts.

Sabbath is the mark of free people. To work without stopping is what slaves did. God has redeemed His people from slavery and set the Sabbath as a recurring reminder of liberty. The Sabbath reminded slaves that they had received a new identity as free people.

The Sabbath's greatest concern is for justice and mercy. The Sabbath commandments call on Sabbathkeepers to pay close attention to those who are "the least of these" in society and allow them to rest so they "may be refreshed" (Ex. 23:12). The same concern was at the heart of every Sabbath controversy when Jesus cared for and healed people who were at the margins of society.

The Sabbath is joyous anticipation. The notion of Sabbath as a strictly regulated day of law is not a divine model. The biblical story about the gift of the manna and the Sabbath is explicit with its festive overtones in the celebration of God's gift, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field" (Ex. 16:25). According to Jewish tradition, Sabbath was a time for eating and celebration. It's hopeful outlook into a world made new, signals to us in the here and now the "delight and joy" of God's grace toward His people (Isa. 58:13). ♣

¹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958; repr. 2004), vol. 3, part 1, p. 223.

² E.g., Paul routinely goes to synagogues on Sabbath to preach the gospel (Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 17:2; 18:4).

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SOUL SLEEP

*Adventism's
understanding
about the dead*



You will spend eternity in either heaven or hell. This is the view of most Christian faith traditions.

DEAD: BIBLICALLY SPEAKING

The Bible evidence does not support either an eternal human soul or an eternal burning hell. The concept of an eternity of penal torment flies in the face of several of the most basic revelations about God in the Scriptures.

Take, for instance, Abraham's question to God near the Oaks of Mamre regarding the end of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). This story demonstrates that God does judge, He investigates beyond human satisfaction of justice, and He destroys the destroyers (compare with Rev. 11:18).

God is the Judge, a righteous and just judge; a judge who does right. This revelation of God matches well with such overt statements as "God is love" (1 John 4:8) and nothing "will be

able to separate us from the love of God" (Rom. 8:39). Indeed, Paul's confirmation that God is for us (verse 31) goes right along with Peter's promise that God is not willing that any be lost (2 Peter 3:9). As God has revealed Himself, it would be out of character for Him to maintain a place of unending torture.

The brimstone and fire destroying the cities of the plain become a paramount illustration of God's great day of executive judgment. Amos refers to Sodom and Gomorrah in comparison to God's partial judgments on Israel (Amos 4:11). The fire of judgment devours without quenching (Amos 5:6). John the Baptist referred to this judgment fire as burning up the chaff after the grain has been winnowed (Matt. 3:12). Hezekiah refers to the dead as in the pit of destruction, where the destroyed cannot praise or hope (Isa. 38:17-19). Why? Because they are destroyed; because there is nothing, no work, planning, knowledge, or wisdom in

death (Eccl. 9:5, 10). So much for their conscious state.

And as for hell, in the end its fire consumes; “Not a root or a branch will be left” after that judgment fire (Mal. 4:1). This is quite a contrast to early Christian apologist Theophilus of Antioch¹ and his appreciation of the *Sybilline Oracles* in their description of continuous and eternal punishing as the wicked “ever daily burn in flames.”

CHRISTIANITY CONFUSED, GOD MALIGNED

Theophilus’ writing (c. A.D. 180) represents a confusion in the development of Christian thought that not only misrepresents the revealed character of God, but also misrepresents the nature of humans. For Theophilus, though he praised eternal punishing, did not believe in innate human immortality.²

Tatian, another second-century Christian apologist, overtly rejected innate immortality too, saying that the soul is not in itself immortal but mortal.³ These two early Christian writers correctly argue that all life depends on God; there is no natural immortality in humans. Yet, they also both believed in never-ending punishing as what Tatian called a “deathless death” or “immortal death,” depending on how you translate him. This demonstrates the conundrum: How can mortal humans survive eternal torture?

The conundrum was resolved in the next generation of Christian writers in which Tertullian in the Latin church and Origen in the Greek church both argued for the immortality of the human soul, though only Tertullian proposed an eternally burning hell. Origen went in the direction of universal salvation. Those who came after Origen correctly rejected his universalism as unscriptural, but adopted eternal hell nearly the same as Tertullian.

Thus, the conundrum was resolved in their theological system, but to the loss of truth, both about God’s character and about human nature. According to most Christian tradition, God created an eternally burning hell, where He wills that immortal human souls, along with their resurrected bodies, burn forever.

MORE ON THE BIBLICAL VIEW

The biblical view of humanity is built from evidence throughout all of Scripture and is well represented in the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists, which include four beliefs—numbers 7, 26, 27, 28—on the question of human nature.⁴ God reveals such points about human nature as that the

dead know nothing (Isa. 38; Eccl. 9); a soul (Heb. *nephesh*) can die (Num. 6:6); we do not have souls added; rather, we are living beings (Gen. 1; 2); the body and the soul can be destroyed (Matt. 10:28).

The Seventh-day Adventist reading of the Scriptures about humanity contrasts starkly with Jerome’s attempts in the fifth century to prove that the Bible teaches immortality of the human soul through such stories as Saul asking the witch of Endor to bring Samuel up from the dead (1 Sam. 28) and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. The fallacy—indeed, the outrageousness—of such interpretations is clear: using a parable as a description of eternal reality; using a God-proscribed action by a man, himself explicitly rejected by God (1 Sam. 15:23, 26; 16:1; 28:6), as the basis for a positive doctrine.⁵

Seventh-day Adventists historically came to believe in the human as a unitary living being on account of our understanding of God as Creator (all life is dependent on God) and through a rejection of the occult’s use of human souls separated from bodies as communicators beyond the grave (the dead know nothing).

Just as there is no immortal soul (no creature with life independent of God), there is no eternally burning hell (no soul writhing in eternal flames). There is a consuming lake of fire in which rejecters of God’s grace, forgiveness, and salvation will be destroyed as the just executive judgment of God (Rev. 20). The lake of fire is temporary; its results last forever.

Revelation 21 describes the re-creation of the new earth after the millennium and the lake of fire. Those who have accepted God’s forgiveness and salvation will spend eternity on this new earth, renewed as per divine announcement, “I am making everything new!” (Rev. 21:5).

I am a Seventh-day Adventist for many excellent reasons. Our collective biblical appreciation of the loving, just, and merciful character of God and our rejection of the concept of capricious eternal tormenting of humans is a major reason I remain a Seventh-day Adventist. ♣

¹ To Autolytus 2.26.

² *Ibid.*, 2.27.

³ *Oration to the Greeks* 13.

⁴ These statements—on the nature of humanity (belief 7), death and resurrection (26), the millennium and the end of sin (27), and the new earth (28)—along with their supporting scriptures, deserve your review.

⁵ The old favorite Adventist book *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* gives good treatment of these stories.

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GOD'S GREAT GIFT



*Where would we be
without His prophets?*

One of the things we notice when we read the Bible is how God interacted with His people, Israel. We sometimes criticize how God's people behaved and some of the resulting misfortunes they experienced. They often endured trials because they refused to do God's will as it was revealed to them by His servants, the prophets.

God was continually sending prophets to guide His people. They were God's gift to His people, as Israel was God's gift to humanity. The nation had an important mission: to preserve His Word and tell others about Him. The book we call the Bible is a collection of the writings inspired by God. It's a precious gift to humanity.

Often the people of Israel didn't do well; they had their ups and downs. When they did well, it was because God succeeded in guiding them to listen to His prophets. Paul observed that with the help of His people God preserved His Word (see Rom. 3:2, 3).

It's important that God's Word, and all that He revealed to His prophets, continue to do its work of making Him known by revealing His character. But



The Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.

human history has not always been kind to God’s Word. Not only has it been obscured and often misinterpreted, but also, for many centuries, individuals and institutions have tried to destroy its influence.

God, however, has always had people who gave their lives to save God’s revelation. Still, many years of ignoring the Word of God has had its effect. Men and women didn’t study God’s Word, or make the Bible their standard to be transformed into the image of God. So God sent messages to another prophet, another gift to His people.

A GIFT TO GOD’S PEOPLE

God was pleased to give His people another gift, another prophet, Ellen Harmon White.¹ Of course, the counsels and writings He gave her were only to impress the truth in our hearts about what God had already revealed to the prophets of the Bible. Her counsels were not to replace the words God gave, but to confirm and help us to understand them again—and better.²

Like other prophets, Ellen White comforted, guided, instructed, and corrected mistakes with her writings. Above all, she made clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.

God loves humanity, and continues to work with people to spread His Word. As with His people in Bible times, God continues to support people who maintain the “Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms.”³ The Seventh-day Adventist Church is committed to that standard, to the biblical hallmarks that identify God’s true last-day church. Like Israel in the past, we have had ups and downs, but God declares that we, His church, are the “supreme object of His regard in this world.”⁴

Ellen White firmly declared: “Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence multitudes according to his will.”⁵

She highlighted the importance of reading and understanding the Bible and God’s will for ourselves.

Why does God continue to send prophets to guide His people? Will He ever abandon His

efforts? God is committed to saving and restoring humankind to His very presence. To do this, He sent His Spirit: not to supersede the Bible, because it is the standard by which all teaching and experience have to be tested; but to guide men and women to the Word of God,⁶ and prepare them for the final days of earth’s history.

FINAL DAYS

Christ urged His people to be ready for His return (see Matt. 24:36–25:46; Rev. 22:20). Concerning the solemn events preceding that climax, Ellen White has said that “none but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.”⁷

Ellen White’s last public words, as she held the Bible in her uplifted hand, were: “Brethren and sisters, I commend unto you this Book.”⁸

Jesus is coming soon, and He wants everyone to know and be ready to go with Him to heaven. The messages of His prophet help prepare us, and we have access to them, even ready access online. Her books, letters, and articles are searchable by subject at egwwritings.org/. They will guide us to accept and understand the Bible as we read her writings carefully to know God’s will for us.

God’s Word transforms its readers into His image. A great blessing is promised to those who read it (Rev. 1:3). When we accept its truths given through God’s gift of prophecy, we are part of the people He is preparing for the great day when Christ will appear in heaven to rescue His people forever. ✎

¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 2, p. 605.

² *Ibid.*

³ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 595.

⁴ Ellen G. White, in *General Conference Bulletin*, Mar. 30, 1903, Art. A, par. 28.

⁵ E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 593, 594.

⁸ In W. A. Spicer, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1937), p. 30.

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GERALD A. KLINGBEIL

We talk a lot about worldview these days. The world has moved closer together. We live “virtually” in each other’s backyard, clear across the globe. Thinking about worldview helps us look at underlying and foundational ideas. We often recognize competing worldviews as we listen to heated discussions—virtually or in real life—about hot topics.

Most scholars would agree that the concept has become a staple of academic discourse in different fields ranging from philosophy to theology, from sociology to anthropology, following the physical and moral devastation of World War II. Since then, East and West and North and South have moved closer together.

Worldview has often been associated with one of the *isms. Marxism, atheism, postmodernism, existentialism, nihilism feature prominently when we think about worldview—and yet, the influence of worldview is more inconspicuous. Most of us know few real-life Marxists or existentialists or nihilists, but we can notice the often-subtle influence of these *isms on the way we look at the world around us. Theologians Steve Wilkens and Mark Sanford note this in their book *Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives*. They suggest that beyond the big philosophical worldview systems there are belief systems we need to consider. They call them “hidden worldviews,” which, often uncon-

sciously, influence all of our lives.¹ Individualism, consumerism, moral relativism, naturalism, the New Age, postmodern tribalism, and salvation by therapy are included in their list.

FIRST THINGS

It’s always helpful to start discussions about complex topics with definitions. Here are some possible definitions of worldview: Worldview is the grid that orders and aligns all elements of our life and outlook. Without a mental structure, we struggle to comprehend and navigate our world. Those more technology-savvy among us may prefer this one: A worldview is the operating system that allows other programs to run and organizes data in a meaningful way. Imagine your computer or smartphone *without* an operating system. Whether macOS, Microsoft Windows, LINUX, iOS, or Android—our tech tools and toys wouldn’t work without their operating systems.

Here is a more technical definition: “Worldview encompasses the mental functioning that directs human actions. It is the mental basis for human interaction with the social and physical environments. . . . It is a view of the world, a way of looking at reality. . . . A people’s worldview shapes and is shaped by their social and physical environments.”²

Notice the key elements of this definition. World-

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY . . .

*Rediscovering the
biblical worldview*

view affects our cognitive functions, which in turn direct our actions. We act because we think a certain way. Worldview shapes how we engage with people and the physical world around us. Worldview helps us make sense of the reality we face.

We cannot simply change worldviews like we change clothing, cars, or hair colors. We soak up worldview as we grow up in a particular culture, in a particular social context, and in a particular time. Worldview transformation is one of the most challenging things we may ever face. Just speak to any Western missionary working in a non-Western culture and you will sooner or later get to talk about worldview. Transforming a worldview, especially our hidden worldviews, is complex and involves cognitive and emotive elements that go far beyond the mere agreement to a number of questions on a baptismal certificate.³

MAÑANA

In 1995, my wife and I moved to Lima, Peru. I had just finished my doctorate, and we had been called to teach at the Adventist university in Ñaña, outside of Lima. We didn't speak the language yet, and we experienced severe culture shock. Culture shock happens when differing worldviews, emphasizing distinct values, clash. Our home on campus had been recently renovated, and on our arrival our toilet didn't have a seat and cover. We

were missionaries and thought that toilets without seats and covers were the norm in Peru. *Good missionaries don't complain*, we thought.

One of the first Sabbaths we were invited to eat lunch with friends on campus. Imagine my elation when I saw a toilet seat and cover while using their restroom. "Chantal, they have a seat cover!" I shouted excitedly when I rushed to join the family for lunch. Our hosts looked at me curiously. *Why would toilet seats generate such a reaction?*

When they heard our story, they laughed. "Why hadn't you told me earlier?" our host said. "*Mañana* [tomorrow] we will have this fixed," he told us with the authority of a university administrator. *Mañana* became 14 days—and we learned a valuable lesson about the worldview of another culture and some of its underlying values. Time in Peru was distinct from time in our own cultures.

FROM WORLDVIEW TO BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

We all have a worldview—whether we realize it or not. As Christians, however, we realize that we need a more solid worldview foundation that can transcend culture and socialization. We need a worldview that is anchored in Scripture. The question is What is the biblical worldview? How do we recognize and understand this worldview? How can we make it our own? How can we relate



**We had a very basic map,
a compass—and little stone pyramids
that other hikers had positioned on
little knolls in an otherwise flat plain of
permafrost ground.**

to texts written thousands of years ago in a historical reality that is far removed from our own?

We could do what many Christian thinkers and theologians have done before us. We could choose an external philosophical or theological system and use it as a blueprint to understand Scripture's worldview. Theologians such as Augustine or Thomas Aquinas applied the philosophical framework of Greek philosophers such as Plato or Aristotle, seeking to formulate a Christian theology—and worldview.

The problem with this approach is that it superimposes an external system and adapts Scripture to that system. In this approach, philosophy trumps the Bible. Centuries of Christian thinkers have followed this route, often resulting in distorted interpretations of God's Word.

A more logical—and surer—approach would be to start with God's self-revelation in Scripture. Language could be, at least potentially, a problem, since God chose to reveal Himself in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek within the confines of a Mediterranean culture that is light-years away from New York's Fifth Avenue or Berlin's Ku'damm. Fortunately, we have good translations and lots of background information that help us better understand Scripture—even if we don't manage the biblical languages.

Let's focus on seven key elements of a biblical worldview emanating from Scripture itself. Consider them the *sine qua nons*.

GOD'S EXISTENCE

God's existence and engagement with this world is never argued, reasoned, or explained. There is no real ontology of God in Scripture. His existence is presupposed.

I grew up in a culture and worldview that was nearly diametrically opposed to that part of the

biblical worldview. Rationalism and science colluded to elevate reason as the gatekeeper for our values. Cause and effect seem to leave little room for a God who stands outside of this system and yet acts in it.

People living in the biblical world shared this premodern perspective—yet with a twist. They had many gods, and somehow their gods looked like squabbling, irrational, emotional, manipulative human beings. Polytheism was Satan's way of distracting from this fundamental truth that God is the foundational part of every equation.

GOD IS THE CREATOR

God as Creator is another foundational element of a biblical worldview. Nobody attempts to explain Creation in Genesis 1 and 2. Creation is splashed all over the Bible. Any conscientious Bible reader must recognize that God is personally engaged as the Creator of all living beings. Yahweh, the Creator God, is a given in the biblical world.

We can discover a great deal about a group's worldview from their prayers and worship. When we read the psalms, pursue the prophets, or engage Paul, we will know, beyond any doubt, that God is the Creator. From Genesis to Revelation He is portrayed as Creator. This foundational biblical perspective creates serious conflict in a world that has fully embraced the theory of evolution.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

Community is another key element of a biblical worldview. God creates in community. The Spirit and Jesus are associated with God's creative act (see Gen. 1:1, 2, 26; John 1:3; Eph. 3:9). While there is no definite head count of the Deity in Genesis 1 and 2, the overall testimony of Scripture tells us that God created in community. Community is a key value in a biblical worldview.

While the Bible is very balanced distinguishing between "I" and "we" in terms of salvation, "we" seems to be the prevalent *modus operandi*. Abraham and his family reflect the "we"—consider circumcision as the covenant sign applied collectively to Abraham's entire male household (cf. Gen. 17:10-27). Jesus ministered in community. Paul tells us that the church is a body (1 Cor. 12:12-31)—a community of body parts that need each other. A biblical worldview challenges us to look beyond "I" toward the "we." It's a reflection of the community represented in the Trinity.

GOD AND HISTORY

God is engaged in human history. He is not far removed or distant. He is not forgetful of His creation or distracted. He acts in history and makes history. That's a major challenge to a rationalist worldview in which history is considered a closed system, following the law of cause and effect.

Biblical history is grounded in the reality of Creation; it's theological (i.e., God has a place in it and is acting in it); it's selective, interpretive, biographical, and intentional. A biblical worldview needs to recognize God's involvement in history.

SIN IS REAL

Here is another element of a biblical worldview: the entrance of sin changed everything—except for the love of God. Sin has penetrated every process, every relationship, every thought pattern, and every act. Genesis 3 is not a myth but a reality affecting every moment of our lives. Sin separated us from God and left us hopeless and homeless.

WE NEED A SAVIOUR

"We need a Saviour" is not cliché or rote self-flagellation. Scripture is full of stories that illustrate this foundational fact. We cannot pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps. Most world religions include a way of overcoming sin and finding salvation. We pray, we pay, we do good deeds, we try to overcome—but there is no substitute for a Saviour. We can't work our way to heaven or pull ourselves out of the quicksand of sin by doing. Help needs to come from outside of us.

THE COSMIC CONFLICT LENS

Finally, we look at our own lives and the world around us through the lens of a cosmic conflict. Following the Fall, earth has become a battle zone. Life is not fair. God is not to blame, for there is an antagonist who is constantly seeking to destroy and derail God's purpose for this planet. "It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy," writes Ellen White. "His sophistry gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes false conceptions of God so that they regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love."⁴

WORLDVIEW TRANSFORMATION

Following my high school graduation, three

friends and I decided to travel through Scandinavia. We pooled our money, bought an old diesel Mercedes transporter that had seen five hard years of service as a construction van, fixed it up as a mobile camper, resprayed it, and traveled more than 7,500 miles (12,000 kilometers) through Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Norway.

Beyond the Arctic Circle we didn't experience night for six weeks. We hiked through Lapland, one of the most isolated and lonely places in northern Finland. There were no paths and no roads. In fact, in our four days of hiking through Lapland we never saw another human being. We had a very basic map, a compass—and little stone pyramids that other hikers had positioned on little knolls in an otherwise flat plain of permafrost ground. I have never forgotten the little stone pyramids that helped us find our way.

A biblical worldview that is informed by Scripture points us in the right direction—straight into the arms of Jesus, the everlasting God, whose commanding Word spoke life into existence and whose final words on the cross—"It is finished"—have given us the ultimate clue to how this story will really end.

Worldview transformation is tough. A biblical worldview is countercultural and goes beyond rational acceptance and intellectual agreement. Day by day we are hammered by media that subscribes to distinct worldviews. Ultimately, like the birth of a newborn baby and the Christian who has to be born again (see John 3), we need God's Spirit to effect this transformation daily. It's the work of a lifetime—and it requires our daily surrender.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).⁵

¹ Steve Wilkens and Mark L. Sanford, *Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2009), pp. 12, 13.

² Ronald A. Simkins, *Creator and Creation: Nature in the Worldview of Ancient Israel* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), pp. 23, 24.

³ Compare the helpful dissertation by Kelvin O. Onangha, "Towards a Missiological Model for Worldview Transformation Among Adherents to African Traditional Religions in Yorubaland" (Ph.D. diss., Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, 2014). Based on primary research, Onangha articulates a theory of worldview transformation involving (a) better biblical explanations to counter existing worldview assumptions; (b) the exigency of encountering the power of the gospel in a power-oriented context; and (c) the importance of an experiential relationship with Christ to replace the role of diviner in that context.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *From Here to Forever* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1982), p. 348.

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FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE. MATTHEW 10:8

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FROM CHOICE TO PLAN

Choice. One of the most emotionally and philosophically charged words in our vernacular. When we engage in it, we are deciding between two or more possibilities and/or options. As complex as “choice” may be, we engage in it every day. Why? Because we all have plans, and plans require choices.

We choose our friends by mutual interests, character types. We choose our homes by location, weather, job availabilities. What choices weigh more heavily in our lives? Do we create a plan and deal with choices as they come? Do we spend time outlining the choices necessary, *then* watch the plan unfold?

For us as Christians, “choice and plan” have a specific gravitas. While choice may engage many facets of exploratory excursion into free will, there is value in simply exploring choice as an overall approach in our daily interactions. In moments of uncertainty, when we cannot fully see a plan developing, how do we engage wisdom to move from choice to plan?

Of all the things Solomon could have had, wisdom was his choice. Wisdom can engage other qualities, such as compassion, humility, empathy, love, a heart willing to serve, leadership, purpose. Our choices are ongoing.

I think on this as I observe students going through academic advising during early registration at the university. They visit with professors and collect information to make informed decisions about how to continue (or begin) their academic pursuits. I sit next to my colleague, Professor Sanders, who will retire at the end of this term. We often discuss ethics, language, religion, and somehow always

manage to appreciate each other’s opinions. Today he speaks of retirement and lessons learned after 48 years of teaching. His reflections are interrupted by a student standing in front of our table.

“I have no clue,” she says. “I chose philosophy because I need to find myself, find some purpose. What do you recommend?”

The question is familiar. Before I can hand her a course listing, Professor Sanders reaches into his briefcase and pulls out a Bible.

“Here you go,” he says, opening the Bible at the New Testament and placing it in front of the student. “Begin here. Read every day. The ‘self’ is unable to engage in purpose without the sacred. Understand that, and other choices become easier.”

The student glances at me, carefully picks up the Bible, mumbles a “Thank you,” and exits the building. Professor Sanders casually adjusts his tie, aware that he has chosen to consciously break all university standards regarding potential proselytizing.

“I wish someone would’ve done that for me when I began,” he says. “I hope my legacy includes a way to encourage students to search for answers in the *right* places and choose well.” His voice shakes. My friend, a professor, realizes that *this act* was the best lecture given in 48 years.

The sacrifice made for our choices to exist outside of the daily mundane into the sacred and holy is a gift from God through Christ. “For I know the plans I have for you, . . . ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jer. 29:11). To embrace that promise is the way to surrender all and choose wisely God’s plan for us. ▀

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SEARCHING
THE OBVIOUS
DIXIL
RODRIGUEZ



DO WE CREATE A
PLAN AND DEAL
WITH CHOICES AS
THEY COME?

Do you want a boy or a girl?" expectant parents often get asked. Most parents respond, "I just hope he or she is healthy." But parents also want their baby to thrive in all aspects of life: physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

Babies cry in the middle of the night. They slobber on their parents' clothes. Our sin-drenched world can warp their development. They can cause their parents heartaches. Yet children can do nothing that makes parents love them less. Babies eventually achieve amazing feats of scholastic achievement and physical prowess. They serve God and humanity. They are good parents for their own children. But nothing they achieve makes their parents love them more.¹

Boundless aspirations and unconditional love help children grow. All parents provide these the best they can. Adventists picture God as having similar boundless dreams for each of His children. This has its basis in Adventists' unique understanding of the nature of humanity.

CREATED WHOLE

God laid the philosophical foundation for the Adventist health message by drawing attention to the biblical understanding of humans as whole and complete beings: "Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (Gen. 2:7).

Most Christian and non-Christian religions see humans as consisting of both a soul and a body. They tend to place a premium on spiritual salvation, represented by the soul, but they often view the body, mind, and human relationships as being of lesser importance. Some even consider them evil, to be denied and repressed. In contrast, Adventists affirm that God created all aspects of humanity a complete whole, and considered that whole to be "good."

A quarter century after God inspired our church founders to see humans as a whole entity, He led them to specific counsels regarding how to improve the chances of living healthfully. He commended to them such things as pure air and water, a healthy diet, exercise, and sleep. He revealed to them the dangers of addictions. He fostered trust and hope. God also demonstrated His concern for

our social relationships with advice on marriage, family life, and leadership.

Many religious organizations operate hospitals to care for those who are sick or injured. They rightly see this as following Jesus' example of healing. Adventists uniquely add to this a picture of God as a gracious parent, working to prevent disease and degradation and empower all aspects of His children's lives—insofar as it is possible—on earth.

A POTENTIALLY TOXIC MESSAGE

Unfortunately, we distort our unique understanding of God's boundless aspirations when we forget His unconditional love. As a first-year medical student at Loma Linda University, I was paired with another student to take a food inventory. As my partner and I struggled to recall what we had eaten during the past 24 hours, we were distracted by a heated discussion from two of our classmates.

"You use *dairy products*?" accused one classmate.

"Well, only a little milk for my cereal," the other classmate replied.

"We use soy milk," declared the first.

We humans often become so enthusiastic about an insight we have discovered that we are willing to browbeat others into accepting it. It's for their own good, we rationalize. When we do this, we can perpetuate a picture of God who bullies us into following good health habits so that He will love us as a result.

We need to remember that God loves us even more than our earthly parents do. There's nothing we can eat that will make God love us more; and nothing we can eat that will make God love us less.

A MESSAGE FOR 2020

Through the events of the worldwide pandemic and the horrors of racial injustice we experienced in 2020, we have become familiar with the term *health disparities*.² Health disparities cause differences in the health and life expectancy between Brazilians who live in São Paulo and those who live along the Amazon; between entrepreneurs living in Shanghai and farmers in western China; and between residents of Loma Linda, California, and their neighbors living just to the north in San Bernardino.





NEVER SETTLE

*God always has our
best interests at heart.*

God created all aspects of humanity a complete whole, and considered that whole to be “good.”

Researchers who study health disparities point to such factors as avoiding addiction, exercise, clean air and water, healthful diets, and stable families as promoting good health outcomes. Do those sound familiar?

Economic inequity creates health disparities. Many people are trapped in “food deserts,” where the stores do not carry fresh produce; where violence from criminals and police make it unsafe to exercise; where missing a single paycheck may mean eviction. All these factors erode physical, mental, and social health. Does God provide an antidote to economic inequity?

Adventists are often described as operating the largest Protestant educational system in the world. That emphasis—God wanting each of His children to take advantage of educational opportunities to bless others—is not found in many religions. But in Adventist Christianity it has resulted in lifting many out of extreme poverty and into positions to help others.

Our unique understanding of God’s interest in His children’s whole health is particularly relevant as societies struggle with health disparities. The health message addresses many preventable causes of impairment. We promote a healthy spirituality. Perhaps no other church emphasizes more the need for each of us to train and learn to benefit others in practical ways. At our best, Adventists offer a community development plan that addresses health disparities. One life—of many—exemplifies this process.

BOUNDLESS ASPIRATIONS

Growing up in the aftermath of the U.S. Civil War in Mississippi, Anna faced a bleak future.³ Her mother was descended from slaves. Their neighbors particularly despised her father, Nate. They described him as an illiterate, murdering, traitorous, incestuous, impious scoundrel. The family’s reputation forced Anna to carry a gun to defend herself.

Anna arranged for playmates to teach her to read. With no Adventists nearby, she read herself into the church and traveled 400 miles to get baptized. At this point most of us would say “Praise the

Lord” and end the story. God saved Anna spiritually.

But God wanted Anna to live an even more fulfilling life. He led her to Battle Creek, Michigan, where she graduated from nursing school. She returned to Mississippi to start a school and address public health concerns. While a delegate to the 1901 General Conference Session, Anna felt called to become a missionary to India.

On returning to the United States after six years of mission service, Anna promoted Christian education throughout the southern United States as a teacher and administrator until her death at the age of 98. Anna Knight exemplified the Adventist understanding of God’s aspirations, not only for spiritual salvation but also for physical, intellectual, and social fulfillment on earth.

GOD ADDRESSES HEALTH DISPARITIES

Anna Knight would recognize the mission of Loma Linda University’s San Bernardino campus. There, in partnership with citizens and leaders of San Bernardino, health profession students and their professors work with colleagues from the community to address physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs. Helping these students learn are recent high school graduates of the San Bernardino City School District, who are earning their initial degrees in medical assisting or community health work from Gateway College. Together they demonstrate God’s love and aspirations for His children.

This same combination of spiritual, physical, psychological, and social empowerment occurs everywhere Adventists are found. Nuzvid, India, has an Adventist church, hospital, and school. The chapel in the dormitory for student nurses is dedicated to Anna Knight.

God created humans as whole people. He demonstrates boundless aspirations and unconditional love for each of us. Through health and educational ministry, we extend this to individuals and entire communities. When we do, we represent a loving Parent who says to each of His children, “There is nothing you can do to make Me love you more; nothing you can do to make Me love you less.”¹

¹ Philip Yancey, *What’s So Amazing About Grace?* (Nashville: Zondervan, 1997).

² David R. Williams, Pamela B. Jackson, “Social Sources of Racial Disparities in Health,” *Health Affairs*, 2005.

³ Anna Knight, *Mississippi Girl* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952).

Daniel Giang is vice president for graduate education at Loma Linda University Health.

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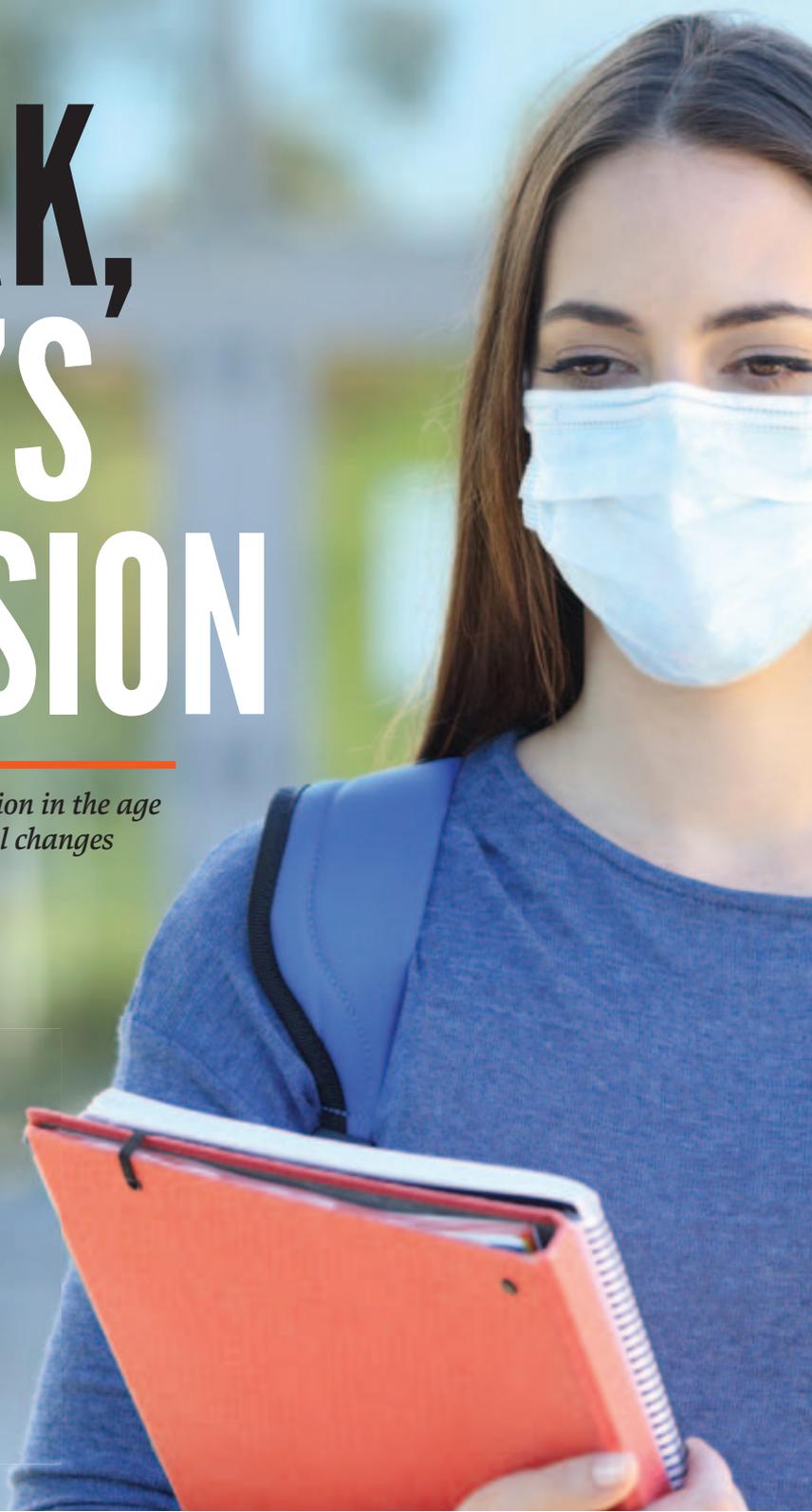
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OUR WORK, GOD'S MISSION

*Adventist higher education in the age
of unprecedented societal changes*

Associate editor Lael Caesar recently interviewed Andrea Luxton, president, and Christon Arthur, provost, of Andrews University. They spoke about the challenges of leading a university at this stage of the twenty-first century.



What are some ways the pandemic has affected the mission of the university? In areas of student learning, how has it impacted the on-campus/remote learning reality?

AL: We had a traditional Adventist university setting in which it's residential, in which you have wonderful spiritual experiences and these meaningful, engaging conversations in the classroom. Then all of a sudden, no more.

Our faculty reached out to change the way they did things, to still have that spiritual and personal connection with their students while delivering a great education.

Are you expecting all who were there before to come back, or have you made some other arrangements?

CA: We've said to our students, "Don't forget that Andrews University is your home. Our arms are open wide to welcome you home." Some of our students are saying, "We can't quite come back." But we insist that we still want them to be part of this community. Those who are able to come back for face-to-face interaction and learning, you are home physically. Those who can't, you might be home remotely, but you're still home. Our table is wide enough to say, "You're still at home."

What is it like working with an international team, working with one of North America's most consistently international student bodies?

AL: One of the reasons I came to Andrews was because I knew how international it was. That's what I love about the church. Because we are so international, we have multiple richness and diversities that we bring together.

We have a team that comes to the table with different perspectives, ideas, and understandings, and helps us respond in an environment in which we are in Berrien Springs and all over the world. It has been hugely beneficial for us to have that community and culture.

What's your plan A for school on campus at a time of coronavirus? What's your plan B?

AL: Our playbook for the semester is about 60 pages long. It's available in a way that people can actually click and get the answers they want.

All summer we've been putting out lots of messages and information. It's not just plan A and

plan B. It's plan A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Our plan A is to open as usual on campus. Well, "as usual" is probably the wrong word. We will open the campus with a lot of mitigation, recognizing that some people will still both work and study remotely. That's our plan A.

CA: It's hard to describe a plan in one word, but if we could use one word, it would be "flexible." A synonym might be "adaptable," because the environment will change. Our strategies are not going to change the core beliefs about spirituality, the reason for our existence, or mission. But it will change and adapt the strategies to fit the changing environment. Our core mission will remain strong, fixed.

What about demanding administrative issues?

AL: Finances has to be one of them. When the pandemic hit higher education, it just gutted everyone's budgets. It's going to mean losses, losses for people. That's always very difficult. When you have people who have done a brilliant job of working for you, you have to furlough them. Or say there's no longer a job; that has been the hardest administrative issue that we've had to deal with.

Anything else?

AL: The students: we're seeing a good level of retention and commitment to Andrews. But it comes down to asking, Do people feel safe to be away from their homes? Will it ever be back to where it was? Maybe not. What about the fact that we have so many international students? What is the confidence of international students coming to Andrews, or to the United States in general?

How about opportunities?

AL: We have some great people leading out in distance education. Their capacity to be creative and help our faculty find new means of reaching out has been great.

CA: Andrews is well known for its strong, liberal arts education. How can we take that legacy to where it needs to go next? We have to keep asking, What's next? To stand still is to move backward.

AL: We're talking about Andrews University as being a place for world changers in a changing world. We have a great seminary; we have the widest range of graduate programs in North America for Adventist schools. That means we are preparing people who are going to be professionals

in our church and in society, to prepare them to work in an environment that has changed and is changing. That's a huge opportunity.

Let's talk about George Floyd. What can you tell us about your personal and institutional responses to the Black Lives Matter movement?

CA: One of the profound questions that liberal arts cause us to grapple with is What does it mean to be human? What's the value of human life? What are things we do culturally, individually, collectively that value the humanity of all people?

Christ and the gospel call us to be more human. God made this human person and breathed into that human person. That person became a living soul. That's core Adventist theology. That's core to the humanities and liberal arts. What makes a person human? It is the presence and the spirit of God in that person. When we devalue that human being, what are we doing to God's creation? The spirit of God makes that person human.

One of the things we've done is to say, "Let's find students who want an Andrews education, but have difficulty accessing it for whatever reason."

We have created a scholarship in George Floyd's name, not to celebrate him, but to honor the human spirit. Starting this fall, a student can come to Andrews on a full-ride scholarship named after George Floyd. We celebrate the human spirit.

AL: Some of the most profound questions that came out of the George Floyd situation are How did we get to a situation in which things like this happen? What happens in the way we run our society? You have to ask, "What about us? Are we at risk of having structures, or having an environment in which we are not fully living out the expectations of the gospel in the way we relate to individuals, in the way that we teach individuals to make a difference in society?"

Over the past few years we have consciously tried to look at ourselves, ask that question, and be honest about it. We have to take an honest look at ourselves as a group; we have to say, "What can we do differently?"

CA: An Ubuntu saying has stuck with me. "I am because you are. Because you are, I am." It gives this sense of community. When you are diminished, I am diminished. When you are at your highest pinnacle, so am I. I cannot diminish you and think for a moment that I am not diminishing myself.

AL: Early in my presidency, we had one of those moments. We tried to do a lot of listening. We tried to be honest about what we were hearing. What we heard was, "We are not innocent."

That set us on a path to say, "How can we do things differently in the way we educate, in the way we hire people, in the way we value people?" It's a difficult conversation because of systemic racism. Some people hate the term systemic racism. I like it, because it's not a personal accusation. I don't have to be defensive about it; I can be part of a solution.

What is the one thing that determines either that Andrews succeeds, or if you miss it, you're destined for oblivion?

AL: Losing sight of the mission.

What message do you have for parents and students?

AL: I know times are hard. I know that everything has been changing around you and your families. But beyond that is a God who doesn't change. God gives us all hope. If we rely on God's faithfulness, then the future is good.

CA: We had a student toward the end of the Andrews experience. [Their] reflection note said, "I came to Andrews; I really didn't want to. I was at a point in which my family's God was not mine; my family's religion was not mine. I wasn't sure if I wanted to be a Seventh-day Adventist. I thought, *Why am I going there? I'm not even sure what I believe.* But my years at Andrews have caused me to discover who God is. I am leaving today with my faith restored, my love of God renewed, my beliefs enhanced. Had I not come to Andrews, I couldn't say those things."

Even when it is indiscernible, change is happening. Students are being transformed even when we can't see it. It's indiscernible, but it's happening.

AL: I've had the opportunity to travel, and I keep meeting people I've known when I taught secondary school or college. They say, "Do you remember when you said this?" I can't remember. Then they'll say, "That changed my life," or "That led me to this." God works in the lives of students, and we are simply a means of opening up that conversation between God and our students. We educators have been given a wonderful gift. 🍀

REFLECTIONS FROM FRONTLINE SERVICE

My intent was to serve. The outcome is, “I was blessed.” So is the summary of my service at the Adventist University of Africa (AUA) in Nairobi, Kenya. AUA is a General Conference institution that specializes in providing theological and graduate programs for the three divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (East-Central Africa, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean, West-Central Africa) in sub-Saharan Africa.

Carlos Wallace, author of *Life Is Not Complicated—You Are* (2013), noted: “Your intent will always be second to what you complete.” My wife, Susan, and I recently applied for permanent return to the United States, which officially ends our overseas service. It has been an honor to serve.

The high point is not the progress achieved at AUA, but working with the people: talented students, gifted faculty and staff, committed members, workers, and leaders of the three divisions. Foundational to everything was the providence of God and the generous support of donors, supporters, friends, and entities from around the world.

FIVE REFLECTIONS

Adventism and Africa: Africa is the second-largest continent in terms of land mass and population. Approximately 1.25 billion people live on the African continent, with 19 being the average age. Adventism offers answers that Africa needs, and the church is thriving on the continent. African Adventists represent more than 40 percent of the world church (2019).

Communication Connections: A constant source of connection and community was communication via social media. Family, friends, and colleagues were only a click away. The global community was ever-pres-

ent with its joys and sorrows. In the past few months and years, the Internet has seen a resurgence for positive, spiritual, domestic, and humanitarian ends.

Leadership Logic: We live in a constantly changing world that is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). Successful Adventist leadership requires a VUCA response: vision, understanding, clarity, and agility, based on Bible and Spirit of Prophecy principles. The Joseph Principle has been a successful stratagem, in which we operate in God’s providence, while remembering lessons of the past, maximizing opportunities in the present, and proactively preparing for the future.

Mission Mindedness: Believers committed to the gospel will go from strength to strength. Regardless of the conditions and crises, in Christ believers can go on being resilient, robust, and unbreakable. The effectiveness of the gospel is powerfully evident in Africa.

Ubuntu, Race, and -isms: Though separated by thousands of miles and multiple cultures, the George Floyd incident struck a chord in Africa. Unfortunately, racism in its various forms finds resonance with tribalism, nationalism, classism, and other -isms. The Bantu term *ubuntu*, popularized by Nelson Mandela—“I am because we are”—is an alternative to -isms. It emphasizes that humanity finds purpose and personhood in each other and God. It speaks to the principles of justice, mercy, and humility (Micah 6:8).

The world needs people to serve in common and creative ways, at home or abroad. The message of the gospel and serving humanity is relevant and urgent. Consistent with the strategic theme of the church, the current appeal is for those who say: “I will go!”

Delbert W. Baker served as vice chancellor of the Adventist University of Africa from 2015 to 2020.

TRANSFORMATION TIPS
DELBERT W. BAKER



IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR TO SERVE.

We often use the word “apology” to refer to a request for forgiveness when we do or say something wrong. Christian apologetics makes use of the original meaning of the word to indicate a defense for doing or saying what is right.¹ The apostle Peter assumed the role of an apologist in his first-century letters. These insights continue to be relevant for what we do and say in the twenty-first century.

PETER’S FIVEFOLD APOLOGETICS

When we follow Peter’s advice, our apology is, first, hopeful, and we are always “ready to give a defense [apologia]² to everyone who asks . . . a reason for [our] hope” (1 Peter 3:15).³ Second, our apology is Christ-centered, since God “has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). Third, our apology is Bible-based because we are “born again . . . through the word of God” in the gospel (verses 23-25). In fact, gospel hope is the most important teaching in the Bible. Paul writes, “Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:16).

Fourth, our Bible-based apology indicates hope for a rebirth of the universe. Scoffers ask, “Where is the promise of [Christ’s] coming? For . . . all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation” (2 Peter 3:3, 4). Peter answers, “By the word of God the heavens were [created]; . . . by [the word] the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved [by the word] for fire. . . . Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (verses 5-13).

Fifth, our apology has a present, practical, moral impact motivated by our hope for the future of the universe. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice” here and now.⁴ Peter asks, since we have hope for a new world of righteousness (1 Peter 3:11-13), “what manner of persons ought [we] to be in holy conduct and godliness?” (2 Peter 3:11). Similarly, Edgar Guest wrote, “I’d rather see a sermon preached than hear one any

day; I’d rather one should walk
with me than merely
tell the way.”⁵

BIBLE LANDMARK APOLOGETICS

Our contemporary defense of what is right should copy the four characteristics of Peter’s fivefold apology: (1) hopeful, (2) Christ-centered, (3) universal, and (4) practical. All these elements are present in Adventism’s biblical teaching on God’s law, the seventh-day Sabbath, the heavenly sanctuary, and the state of the dead. Each of these, and others, can be shown to be a Bible landmark that fits under “the everlasting gospel” (Rev. 14:6-12).⁶

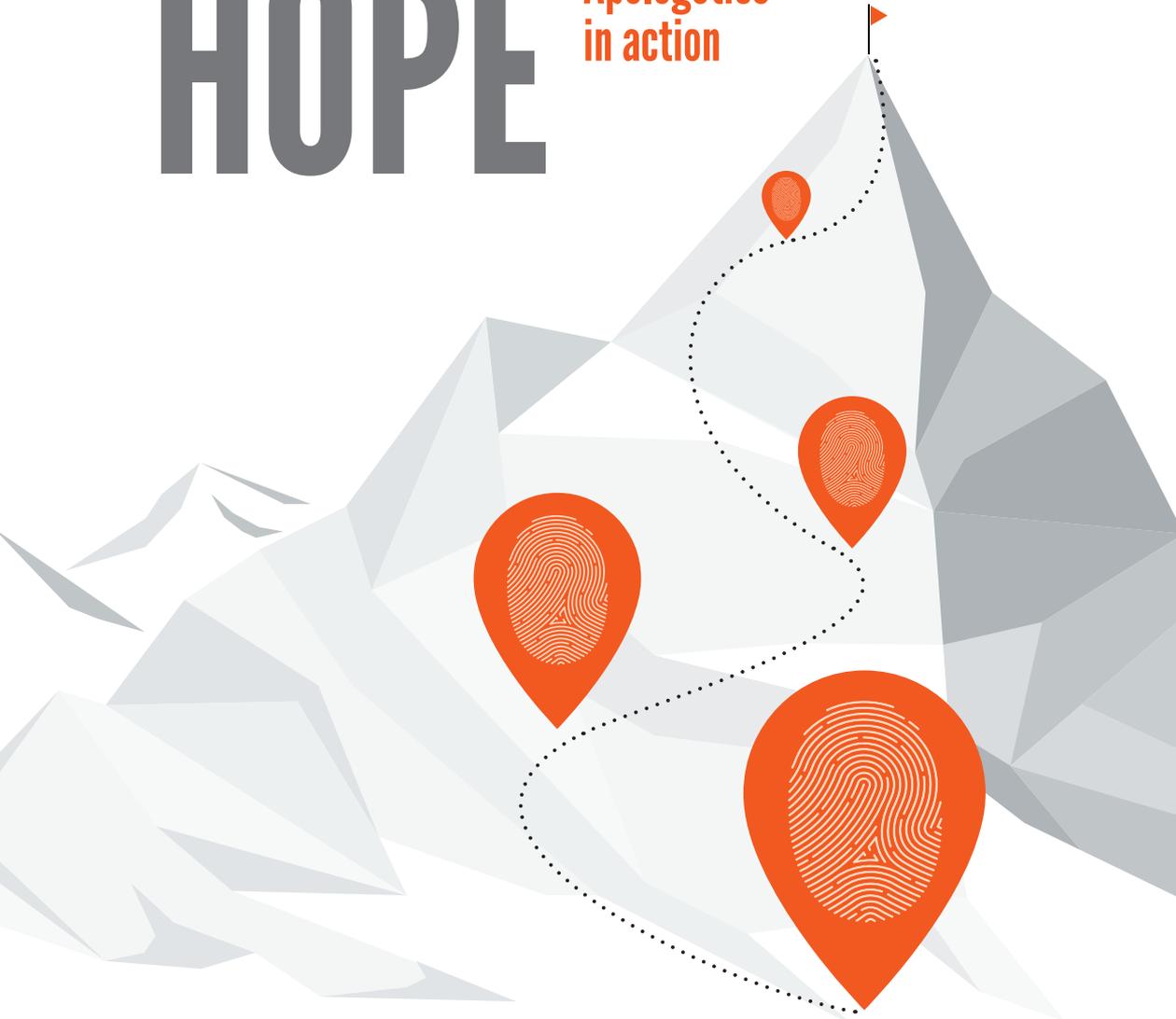
The biblical doctrine on the law is (1) hopeful and (2) Christ-centered. “The law is not of faith” (Gal. 3:12), but “the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (verse 24), so that we “eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (Gal. 5:5). Again, the law is (3) universal: “By the word of the Lord [which is His law—Isa. 1:10; 2:3; 5:24; 8:20] the heavens were made” (Ps. 33:6). Finally, the law is (4) practical, for “hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5); and “love is the fulfillment of the law” (Rom. 13:10).

The Sabbath doctrine similarly possesses Peter’s necessary characteristics. It is (1) hopeful: “God rested on the seventh day from all His works” during the six-day creation (Heb. 4:4), anticipating our hope of “entering His rest” (Heb. 3:6; 4:1). It is thoroughly (2) Christ-centered—Christ is its Lord (Mark 2:28). It is certainly (3) universal, contemplating the entire creation in its embrace, “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” (Ex. 20:11). And it is unquestionably (4) practical, a rest, and a sign that the Lord sanctifies us (Eze. 20:12).

The biblical doctrine on the sanctuary is (1) hopeful, we hope for the time when “the tabernacle [sanctuary] of God” will be part of the human experience (Rev. 21:3); (2) Christ-centered: we have a High Priest “in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:1, 2); (3) universal: “Heaven is My throne, and earth is my footstool. Where is the house [sanctuary] that you will build me? . . . For all these things My hand has made” (Isa. 66:1, 2); (4) practical: we “are the temple [or sanctuary] of God” (1 Cor. 3:16).

SINCE WE HAVE HOPE

Apologetics
in action



Landmark Bible teachings are hopeful, Christ-centered, universal, and practical.

The biblical doctrine on death is (1) hopeful and (2) Christ-centered: Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25). It is (3) universal: “The whole creation groans” (Rom. 8:22) and “will be delivered from the bondage of corruption” (verse 21). And it is (4) practical: In Christ we are “a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

APOLOGETICS IN ACTION

Authentic apologetics involves biblical information and spiritual transformation. Since we have hope in Christ, we should show the relevance of biblical landmark doctrines in the way we live. Peter illustrates how to do this through three brief case studies (1 Peter 2:13–3:7) in which, as he says elsewhere, “we ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Government. Since we have hope in Christ, we submit to every good ordinance of the king and his governors, “for this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice” (1 Peter 2:15, 16). While “we are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment. . . . God’s Word must be recognized as above all human legislation.”⁷

Slavery. Since we have hope, servants are to be “submissive to . . . masters” in what is good (1 Peter 2:18). At the same time, we are to resist evil, even risking persecution, “for this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully” (verse 19). God punishes the sin and “high crime of slavery,” which is “in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ.”⁸ While the apostles did not overturn slavery arbitrarily or suddenly, since this would prevent the success of the gospel, they “taught principles which struck at the very foundation of slavery,” and “undermine the whole system.”⁹

Marriage. Since we have hope, wives are to be

submissive to their husbands in what is good, so that they “may be won by the conduct of their wives” (1 Peter 3:1). “Husbands” should also “honor” their wives (verse 7). While sin led to the rule of men (Gen. 3:16), God created male and female in His image and gave them dominion over His creation (Gen. 1:27, 28). He also said, “I will make him a helper comparable to him” (Gen. 2:18). Therefore, wrote Ellen White to husbands: “Remember that your wife accepted you as her husband, not that you might rule over her, but that you might be her helper.”¹⁰

IN CONCLUSION

An effective apology or defense of what is right shows that landmark Bible teachings are hopeful, Christ-centered, universal, and practical. With Peter we submit to what is good and resist what is evil, even if we are persecuted. We resist the devil, “knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by [our] brotherhood” (1 Peter 5:9), and by Christ, the Master Apologist. He “suffered for us, leaving us an example, that [we] should follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21).

In the words of Ellen White: “We cannot equal the pattern; but we shall not be approved of God if we do not copy it and, according to the ability which God has given, resemble it.”¹¹ ♣

¹ www.britannica.com/topic/apologetics.

² The Greek word *apologia* is also used in Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 2 Corinthians 7:11; Philippians 1:7, 17; and 2 Timothy 4:16.

³ All biblical quotes are from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

⁴ “Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution.” Speech given at the National Cathedral, March 31, 1968. www.si.edu/spotlight/mlk?page=4&iframe=true.

⁵ www.appleseeds.org/Guest_Sermons.htm.

⁶ When the gospel was reemphasized among Adventists in 1888, “God gave precious gems of truth” “in new settings.” Some “rejected” the truth with “talk about standing by the old landmarks,” though “they knew not what the old landmarks were.” “They had perverted ideas” of “the old landmarks.” For Ellen White, those landmarks of the three angels’ messages included such items as “the commandments of God,” “the faith of Jesus,” “the temple of God,” “the Sabbath,” and the “nonimmortality of the wicked” (*Counsels to Writers and Editors* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946], p. 30). All Ellen White quotations used in this article may be found at m.egwwritings.org/.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 69.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, p. 264.

⁹ E. G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 459, 460.

¹⁰ E. G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 48.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 549.

Martin Hanna, systematic theologian, teaches at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan.



HIS Students, Laqueta & Isis dressed in their regalia for the annual HIS Heritage Fest.

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When you make a gift to operations, you keep the school going. Operational funding allows the students to be here, which makes a major impact in their lives.



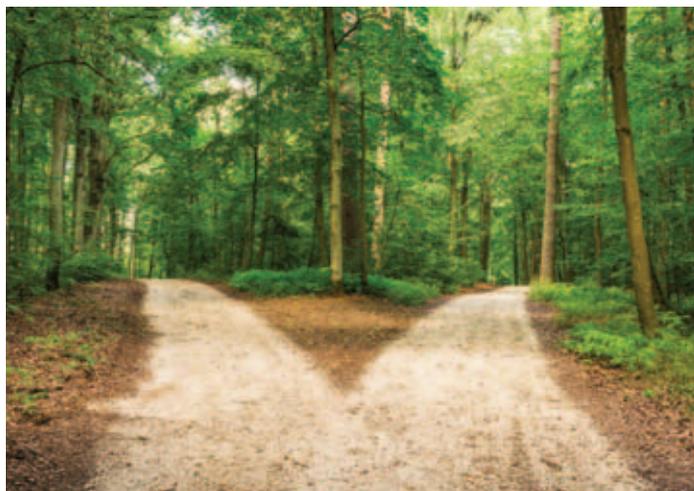
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A UNIQUE PEOPLE

*Highlighting the things
that set us apart*

Now and ever we are to stand as a distinct and peculiar people, free from all worldly policy, unembarrassed by confederating with those who have not wisdom to discern God's claims so plainly set forth in His law. . . .

We are to show that we are seeking to work in harmony with heaven. We are to bear witness to all nations, kindreds, and tongues that we are a people who love and fear God, a people who keep holy His memorial of creation, the sign between Him and His obedient children that He sanctifies them. And we are plainly to show our faith in the soon coming of our Lord in the clouds of heaven.

FREE FROM WORLDLY ENTANGLEMENTS

As a people we have been greatly humiliated by the course that some of our brethren in responsible positions have taken in departing from the old landmarks. There are those who, in

order to carry out their plans, have by their words denied their faith. This shows how little dependence can be placed on human wisdom and human judgment.

Now, as never before, we need to see the danger of being led unguardedly away from loyalty to God's commandments. We need to realize that God has given us a decided message of warning for the world, even as He gave Noah a message of warning for the antediluvians.

Let our people beware of belittling the importance of the Sabbath, in order to link up with unbelievers. Let them beware of departing from the principles of our faith, making it appear that it is not wrong to conform to the world. Let them be afraid of heeding the counsel of any man, whatever his position may be, who works counter to that which God has wrought in order to keep His people separate from the world.

The Lord is testing His people to see who will be loyal to the principles of His truth. Our work is to proclaim to the world the first, second, and third angels' messages. In the discharge of our duties we are neither to despise nor to fear our enemies.

To bind ourselves up by contracts with those not of our faith is not in the order of God. We are to treat with kindness and courtesy those who refuse to be loyal to God, but we are never, never to unite with them in counsel regarding the vital interests of His work. Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, committing to His providence ourselves and all that concerns our present and future,

holding the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end, remembering that we receive the blessings of heaven, not because of our worthiness, but because of Christ's worthiness and our acceptance, through faith in Him, of God's abounding grace.

CALLED TO BE A HOLY PEOPLE

I pray that my brethren may realize that the third angel's message means much to us, and that the observance of the true Sabbath is to be the sign that distinguishes those who serve God from those who serve Him not. Let those who have become sleepy and indifferent awake.

We are called to be holy, and we should carefully avoid giving the impression that it is of little consequence whether or not we retain the peculiar features of our faith. Upon us rests the solemn obligation of taking a more decided stand for truth and righteousness than we have taken in the past.

The line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who do not is to be revealed with unmistakable clearness. We are conscientiously to honor God, diligently using every means of keeping in covenant relation with Him, that we may receive His blessings—the blessings so essential for the people who are to be so severely tried. To give the impression that our faith, our religion, is not a dominating power in our lives is greatly to dishonor God. . . .

SPEAK WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Let us not discourage one another. Let us take hold unitedly to make every line of the Lord's work a success. If someone comes to you and talks discouragingly about the work in one or another of our institutions, telling you that they are extravagant beyond measure, say to them, "I am sorry if that is so, but let us help them out if they are in difficulty."

If you will speak thus you may avoid much of the evil that might result were you to withdraw your sympathy, and should you refuse to help those who, possibly, may have been misrepresented.

Let us never discourage even those who have done wrong, by treating them as if they had committed against us an unpardonable sin. Let us rather encourage them in every way possible, and if we see that they are lifting hard in a worthy enterprise, let us lift with them. . . .

We need to be instant in prayer. It is our great privilege to hang our helpless souls upon Jesus

It is our great privilege to hang our helpless souls upon Jesus Christ, and to rest for our salvation upon His merits.

Christ, and to rest for our salvation upon His merits. Let us speak words that will elevate and ennoble, and that will make pleasant impressions on the minds of those with whom we converse. The Lord wants us to be sanctified and to walk in humility of mind before Him.

If we are obedient to His commandments, not a reproach can fall on us justly. Others may talk about us, they may spread evil reports concerning us, but these reports need not be true.

CHRISTLIKE DEPORTMENT

In our institutions, where many persons of varied temperaments are brought together, it is necessary that each should cultivate a spirit of unselfishness. Let no one feel that it is his place to mold others to his individual mind or opinions. While each will manifest an individuality, yet it should be an individuality that is under the control of the Holy Spirit. If we are kind and Christlike, there will be a blending of hearts and of interests that will be beneficial to all alike. . . .

Everyone is responsible to God for the use he makes of his abilities. He is responsible for making a daily growth in grace. Let no one feel, even though he may theoretically be established in the present truth, that he makes no mistakes.

But if mistakes are made, let there be a readiness to correct them. And let us avoid everything that is likely to create dissension and strife, for there is a heaven before us, and among its inhabitants there will be no strife.

We are to live, not to elevate ourselves, but that we may, as God's little children, do to the very best of our ability the work that He has committed to us. It is our business to give a right impression to others. ▀

Seventh day Adventist believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry. This excerpt was taken from *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1923), pp. 237-244.



OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION

Tragedy should never be taken lightly.

October 10, 2010 (10/10/10) was a good day for me. The day my first daughter was born was not the happiest, because afterward my life kept getting better and better. Leia brought me more joy than I had believed possible. I had always dreamed of having my own family, and at the age of 48 I was older than most to experience this wonderful event.

Melonie's labor had been long and tiring, but that night we basked in the warm glow of being parents. It had been a wonderful day indeed!

WHEN GOOD THINGS GO BAD

Leia and I bonded quickly. During the ensuing weeks and months, Leia fell asleep on me, went on hikes with me in her baby carrier, and even came to my physical therapy office with Melonie.

Leia was a happy baby; I could

always make her laugh. The most wonderful sound I had ever heard was when she learned to say "Dada." We asked ourselves every day how we could be so blessed.

One Sunday Leia, a little more than 15 months old, woke up and started throwing up. As the vomiting continued throughout the day, we became concerned. After consulting with a physician, we decided to watch her through the night. Melonie woke me at midnight to tell me that Leia had spiked a fever and that we should take her to the hospital.

When we arrived at the emergency room, Leia was taken to a treatment room and hooked up to a heart monitor. As the nursing staff attempted to get an IV into Leia, we watched in horror as her heart rate rapidly dropped, then completely stopped. As the ER team began CPR, I slumped into a chair, held my wife in my arms, and cried out, "This can't be happening!"

I prayed aloud, "Please, Jesus, bring her back." CPR continued for 20 minutes before her heart started beating again. Once she was stabilized, Leia and Melonie were flown to Children's Hospital in Seattle.

Leia spent a week on life support in the pediatric intensive-care unit. Three days of tests, imaging, and exploratory surgery revealed Leia's illness: Meckel's diverticulum, characterized by a nodule on the small intestine present in approximately 2 percent of the population. Only 2 percent of those have any complications. In Leia's case the Meckel's had caused the blood supply to her intestine to be cut off. Surgeons successfully corrected the prob-

lem, but Leia's condition remained critical.

An MRI revealed that she had sustained extensive brain damage from the cardiac arrest. Doctors told us that with this severe of an injury there was no possibility for full recovery, and that if she were to survive, her life would be one of a mere vegetative state. On Friday afternoon our pastor anointed Leia, and with an elder of the church prayed for a miracle. We decided to let Leia rest on Sabbath and wait for the miracle that we desperately yearned for.

But no miracle came. Leia was pronounced dead on Sunday, February 5, 2012. Melonie and I left the hospital, leaving behind our source of so much happiness. Our family, the family I had prayed for since childhood, was gone.

As much as it seemed that the world should stop and mourn the loss of my daughter with me, it did not. Life went on as normal for everyone except those of us who were close to Leia. Life would never be the same again.

TWELVE MONTHS OF PAIN

The year following Leia's death was one of the most difficult years of my life. It was weeks before I could go a day without breaking down in sobs of grief. All I wanted was for Jesus to come and reunite me with my daughter.

I delved into the Bible to find answers. One Bible text brought a lot of comfort to Melonie and me: "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Cor. 4:17).

Despite this assurance, I continued to struggle. Holidays were especially difficult. Mother's Day and Father's Day seemed to mock our loss. Leia's birthday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, and New Year's Day all rekindled our grief.

Shortly before the first anniversary of Leia's death, a friend, a Messianic Jew named Randy, took me aside. He reminded me that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son. Randy said that although my situation was different in that Leia was already gone, he thought that it would be helpful if I could do what Abraham was willing to do—give Leia to God.

I went back to the Bible. "Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you'" (Gen. 22:2, 3).

When Randy reminded me of Abraham's will-

ingness to surrender all to God, it was as if a light came on and my perspective changed. I had grieved for nearly a year, sometimes in healthy and beneficial ways, at other times in ways filled with self-pity and anger. I always felt like a victim.

Suddenly I was no longer a passive victim; I had a choice. I could surrender my little life and my little plans to God's plans for a glorious day of resurrection. In that conversation with Randy, I realized that I had a choice. I chose surrender, to give my daughter and my life as a sacrifice to God.

THE PATH TO RECOVERY

Melonie and I experienced healing. We still suffer; but we are not alone in our suffering. Everyone experiences sorrow. But the greatest comfort is knowing that God suffered and suffers too. God knows what it's like to lose an only child: "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16).

Jesus knew suffering. "He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain" (Isa. 53:3).

I believe that God's capacity to suffer is as great as His capacity to love. In my suffering I am consoled with the thought that God relates to me. He doesn't pity me; He doesn't see me as a victim; He has made ample provision for my grief. God is big enough to carry all my sorrows and burdens.

When tragedy strikes, we either draw closer to God to gain strength from Him, or we allow bitterness to take hold of our hearts. It is understandable to succumb to the latter.

But fellowship with us is what God desires. In fact, God desires fellowship with us so much that He sometimes allows seemingly unbearable events to come to us. "But we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:3-5).

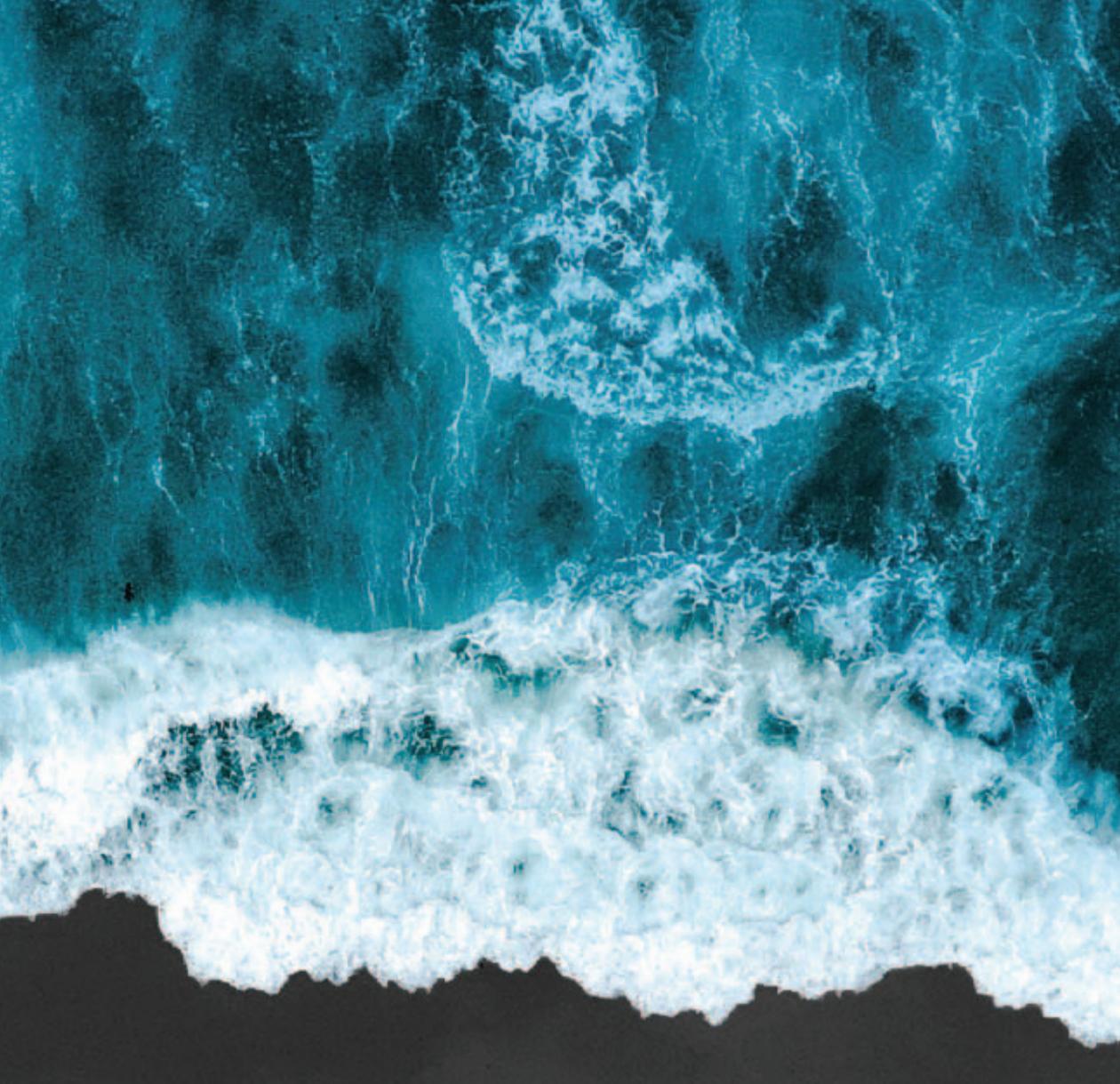
We have been blessed with a wonderful daughter named Lydia, who is as amazing as Leia was. When grief, disappointment, or tragedy comes, I hope we can see through the miasma of our pain and recognize how the Father longs to connect with us. A close and meaningful relationship with God can see us through any and all calamities. ♣

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GENESIS: **A SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNT?**

SVEN ÖSTRING



What makes a book scientific?

Every so often we hear people make the comment that Genesis 1 and 2 is not a scientific account of Creation. What these people want to highlight is that Moses wrote these opening chapters in the Bible to teach us primarily about God and His relationship with us as our Creator. He was not trying to provide us with a comprehensive and detailed scientific description of how God created. It is also often pointed out that Moses was writing Genesis to a bunch of Hebrew former slaves, not to university-trained and scientifically-aware twenty-first century professionals.

ITS BASIC MESSAGE

It is very true that the focus of Genesis is deeply theological. God towers as the mastermind within the entire Creation account. God is introduced right from the start—“In the beginning God”—and is the subject of almost every sentence in the first chapter. Genesis 1 and 2 also tell us how God brought all things created onto the stage—heavens, earth, and all their host. Genesis is clearly describing, at some level, what God did at Creation and how He did it.

One reason that some people conclude that Genesis 1 and 2 is not a scientific account is that

It is not the level of detail that makes a science book scientific, but simply whether or not the level of detail given in the book is scientifically correct.

it does not provide a detailed description of how things came into being. Scientific textbooks that focus on embryology or protein synthesis, for example, go into a lot of detail about how these things came about and how they work.

We don't find this level of detail in the Creation account. Genesis simply says that God spoke and things came to be. Or, that the Lord formed the first human from the dust and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and the man became a living creature. That's really the limit of the detail that Genesis shares with us about how God did it.

This leads to an interesting puzzle, though. The kids' section of your public library contains a host of science books about such things as baby animals, dinosaurs, and volcanoes. These books are simple enough for elementary school children to understand, but lack the level of detail you would find in textbooks that Ph.D. students would hunt for in their university library. Does this lack mean that children's science books are not scientific accounts? This seems like a logical contradiction—a children's science book that is not scientific? How odd!

What this shows is that books can provide different levels of scientific detail. Even though a children's science book does not include a huge amount of scientific detail, it can still be scientifically correct.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The problem does not stop with children's science books—picture one of those bridge pathways in an adventure movie that towers dizzyingly high above a ravenous chasm, but is rapidly collapsing behind the hero as he tries to escape the evil powers chasing him.

That's what it's like when we try to specify the amount of scientific detail that needs to be in a book for it to be scientific. It would mean that a high school science textbook would rule out a primary school science book from being scientific, a university science textbook would fail as a high school textbook, a graduate scientific monograph

would disqualify an undergraduate science textbook, and on and on. No standard of scientific detail can be set up that will not be ruled out by another book of greater and finer scientific detail. It is not the level of detail that makes a science book scientific, but simply whether or not the level of detail given in the book is genuinely aiming to describe the world in which we live.

It's the same for the Bible. While it is true that the Bible does not provide a detailed particle-by-particle, gamma-ray-by-gamma-ray account of how God ignited the sun (for example), these opening chapters in the Bible do actually provide answers to a number of fascinating and important scientific questions:

How long did it take for Planet Earth to be transformed from a lifeless environment to a planet teeming with living organisms?

Biblical answer: Less than four days, because God created plant life during the third day of Creation week and finished creating all of the original life on our beautiful planet home by the end of the sixth day. Think about that for a moment—that's going from empty to teeming in less than 96 hours!

Which appeared first on the earth—birds or land animals?

Biblical answer: Birds, because birds were created on the fifth day, while land animals were created on the sixth. This means that birds did not evolve from dinosaurs.

Do human beings and chimpanzees have a common biological ancestor?

Biblical answer: No, because Genesis 2 tells us that the Lord formed Adam and Eve through direct acts of special creation. Rather, human beings and chimpanzees have a common designer instead.

How long was the time between when monkeys appeared on earth and when human beings appeared?

Biblical answer: Less than one day (24 hours, just as we experience today).

The answers that the Bible offers to us for these scientific questions are, no doubt, different from the answers that we would find in standard scientific textbooks. But the question we need to ask ourselves is this: Do we really want to find the truth? Deep down, scientifically-minded people want to discover what's true too! And if we are seeking the truth, could Genesis 1 and 2 be giving us the true answers to these questions?

THE ANSWER IS YES

There are a number of reasons we can say “yes” to this question. First, the Bible is a divinely inspired revelation from God. We can trust that what God reveals to us is true as a whole, and not just selected passages.

Second, key indicators in Genesis show that God gave this revelation to us as a historical account. It uses the Hebrew word translated “generations” or “account” in English in Genesis 2:4, which is consistently used throughout Genesis to indicate a historical account. Also, the types of verbs that are used in Genesis are those used in Hebrew narratives. Furthermore, Genesis 1 and 2 does not have the usual features of Hebrew poetry. That's why many well-respected Hebrew scholars classify Genesis 1 and 2 as historical prose, not poetry.

Finally, the context in which the word “day” is used in Genesis 1 gives us significant reasons to legitimately conclude that the Creation days are literal, consecutive 24-hour days.¹

But how could it be that the standard answers that science gives us for these questions are not historically true? The critical issue is that science is unable to incorporate or pinpoint specific supernatural miracles within its explanations. It cannot show Jesus restoring Bartimaeus' sight because of his persistent cries for healing, or demonstrate God creating the original dolphins less than two days before He created the first human couple.

Saying that Genesis 1 and 2 is not a scientific account may actually lead people to negative and unhelpful perspectives. For example, it would be correct to say that a person is not a computer. You can't connect a mouse to the person using Bluetooth, then download and install an app on their hard-drive. You may stick a cheeky Post-It note on their face, but doing that won't get it posted on

their Facebook timeline. You can do a quick search of the person, but you will never get as much information displayed by them as would a quick search of Dr. Google.

Saying that persons are not computers may lead you to conclude that since they are not computers they cannot do mathematical computations or word processing or store images. You would be wrong. The fact is that a person can do some things just as well as a computer, and others decidedly better than a computer.

A computer cannot love or forgive or choose to accept Jesus' gift of salvation and eternal life. A person knows that they are not a computer, but a computer does not even know that it is a computer. Thus, in many ways, it would be more helpful and insightful to identify what persons are, not just what they are not.

Similarly, saying that Genesis 1 and 2 is not a detailed and comprehensive scientific account does not mean that it lacks any answers to scientific questions—even better and true answers—compared with the standard answers that science currently gives us.² The best description of these two chapters is that they are a divinely inspired, historical account by God, the eye-witness, who created this world and everything in it, being the only one with the omnipotent capacity to bring it all into reality.

Yes, God is Creator of everything, and made us in His image. And yes, we can trust all of the answers that Genesis 1 and 2 gives us to scientific questions as well, even if it does not answer all our interesting questions. Trade in your high school science textbooks for university books, but keep your Bible—it has the essential knowledge that God wants us to know about our salvation, our origins, and our future. Treasure His Word. 📖

¹ For a more comprehensive discussion about why we can legitimately conclude that the Creation days are literal and consecutive 24-hour days, refer to the section “Evidence for a Literal Interpretation” in Richard Davidson, “The Genesis Account of Origins,” in *The Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in the Old Testament*, ed. Gerald A. Klingbeil (Berrien Springs Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2015), pp. 73-87.

² This is a good example of the insightful observation that people generally are correct in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny. Often people who maintain that Genesis 1 and 2 is not a scientific account are correct in affirming that these chapters teach towering theological truths and do not provide a detailed scientific account, and wrong in denying that a literal interpretation of the biblical account of Creation gives correct answers to key scientific questions.

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LIFE, LIBERTY, AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

Followers of Christ, and their role in breaking down barriers

STEPHEN CHAVEZ

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary since U.S. President George H. W. Bush signed into law the Americans With Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990. Thirty years later, it's hard to imagine a time before wheelchair-accessible parking places, ramps along with stairs, closed captioning, and interpreters for those who are deaf. Today, not a store, school, church, theater, museum, airport, train station, athletic field, or arena is inaccessible to those who are physically disabled.

I remember as a pastor 30

years ago being told how our churches and schools would have to be retrofitted to accommodate those with disabilities. One of the churches I pastored at the time was totally inaccessible to those who couldn't navigate stairs. To get to the sanctuary, you had to climb stairs, either outside or indoors. The restrooms were located in the basement, effectively telling anyone who worshipped with us, "If you can't climb stairs, if you can't hold it, you can't worship with us."

To be fair, this church building was constructed long before anyone understood accessibility as a right. People with disabilities just had to understand that they would never be able to experience what most of us considered "normal" do.

Thankfully, as a society we've learned to be more sensitive to those who might be marginalized by their inability to climb stairs, use unmodified bathrooms, or access public transportation. The Americans With Disabilities Act opened up a whole new world of accessibility. So much so that news reports often feature people who participate in sports, perform artistically, and live fully functional lives in spite of their disabilities.

WHITES ONLY

The recent death of congressman John Lewis reminded us that not that long before the Americans With Disabilities Act was signed into law, some businesses were able to refuse service to patrons who were Black. Segregated water fountains, restrooms, and public transportation prevented accessibility

to a large percentage of the population.

Nothing less than an act of Congress—The Civil Rights Act of 1964—gave Black people in the United States access to integrated schools, businesses, and communities. Despite that landmark legislation, de facto segregation still exists, demonstrated in vivid detail by the recent murder of George Floyd and the racial protests that roiled cities in the United States as well as around the world.

The blindness that kept people from recognizing the discrimination experienced by people with disabilities and prevents people still from identifying and dealing with systemic racism is something we Christians have to admit and rectify.

THE GOSPEL IN PRACTICE

A popular meme has sprung up recently from Christians who maintain that because Jesus was a spiritual leader, we should concern ourselves with spiritual matters and not get bogged down with social concerns.

That would be fine if Jesus hadn't often in His ministry broken down social barriers as He preached the gospel. He engaged a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4); He made the hero of one of His most famous parables a Samaritan (Luke 10); He healed the daughter of a Canaanite woman over the protests of His disciples (Matt. 15); He healed the servant of a Roman centurion (Matt. 8); He healed a man whose only access to Him was through a hole in the roof (Luke 5). These and other acts demonstrate that Jesus' ministry was about inclusion and accessibility as much as it was about the gospel.

Then there's the example of the apostle Peter (Acts 10). While waiting for a meal, he had a vision about food. Except it wasn't about food; it was about people. "God has shown me," he said afterward, "that I should not call anyone impure or unclean" (verse 28).

This was the point at which Christ's disciples realized that the gospel belonged to the entire world, not just to the Jews. Suddenly they realized that the kingdom of God is designed to be accessible to everyone. In the centuries since, we've understood (in theory) that we all come from one Creator, and that we are valuable in His sight no matter our skin color, ethnicity, education, or financial standing.

A MINISTRY OF HEALING

The age of COVID has exposed some interesting challenges to society in general and to Christianity in particular.

These include the matter of access to medical services for millions of people, often enough because of the cost of insurance, in the country that spends more on health care per capita than any other country in the world.² Having access to health care in the United States is for some individuals and populations a continuing challenge, something the COVID-19 pandemic has made rather more sharply clear. This contrasts with a number of other services that are much more readily available to all and sundry—public education; town and country roads, state and interstate highways; mail service; security.

Admittedly, life, liberty and happiness aren't usually delivered whole cloth, with little effort of their own, into everybody's lap. Those who sought total accessibility in public places for those with disabilities were described as impractical dreamers. But all these decades later we understand that the time, effort, and money expended to achieve these goals were well worth it. Our society is better now than it was.

We can hope that years into the future we'll be able to look back at the efforts to supply other areas of current lack with the same appreciation we now offer to those behind the Americans With Disabilities Act (1990) and the Civil Rights Act (1964).

The United States is forever in pursuit of liberty and justice for all. The mandate of Christ's kingdom is "the eternal gospel . . . to every nation, tribe, language and people" (Rev. 14:6). Sometimes Christians' commitment to the principles of the kingdom of their Lord produce an improved quality of life right in the here and now. We should not fear or apologize for efforts for eternity that bring material blessings to our neighbors and our nation. 📌

¹ www.pbs.org/healthcarecrisis/uninsured.html#:~:text=44%20million%20Americans%20are%20uninsured,million%20have%20inadequate%20health%20insurance.

² www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2020/jan/us-health-care-global-perspective-2019#:~:text=The%20U.S.%20Spends%20More%20on%20Health%20Care%20Than%20Any%20Other%20Country&text=Notes%3A%20Current%20expenditures%20on%20health.&text=In%202018%2C%20the%20U.S.%20spent,%2C%20Switzerland%2C%20spent%2012.2%20percent.

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CHILDREN ARE STRUGGLING WITH GRIEF

How can we help them recover?

Children experience the pain of grief and sadness after a variety of events. These emotions can be confusing, both for children and for the adults entrusted with their care. Children in your church family may have been directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps they watched family members suffer from the virus and may even have had loved ones die. Recognizing that children express grief differently from adults is important. The healing process of a child may seem confusing to adults at times. Here are some practical tips for ministering to children who have experienced some form of trauma.

SPOTTING WARNING SIGNS

Children who are grieving will often have difficulty concentrating and may struggle in social situations.¹ These can be clues that they're dealing with a sad situation.² Ask them how they're feeling and what they're thinking about. Practice reflective listening techniques.

Having an honest conversation about tough topics such as death, divorce, and bullying can make a huge difference.³ When you notice a child exhibiting a lack of ability to concentrate during Adventurers, Sabbath School, or other normal church activities, take them aside and calmly express care and concern, and that you value the child and their emotions. Uplift them, encourage them, and even give them a "special job" to help keep them occupied in a calm manner.

After discovering that a child is dealing with grief, you may wonder what you can do to help. Following are some simple, practical tools to help a child not only survive a loss but become healthy through their pain and grow closer to Jesus.

BE PRESENT

The "ministry of presence" is one of the most powerful tools an individual church member can offer. Jesus needs His church members to literally be His hands, ears, eyes, and hugs on earth, because one side effect of grief for children is low spiritual interest. *Show* rather than *tell* what Jesus' love looks like.

I (Joseph) became close to a family in my church that had a 9-year-old boy, Nathan. The whole church became excited when the family announced the birth of their second child, a baby boy. Nathan loved his little brother and looked forward to playing with him when he got bigger.

A few months later the sweet baby died from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). I visited the family many times after their loss. I often took time to play with Nathan, even teaching him soccer. Years later I received a telephone call from Nathan asking me to perform his wedding. He told me my presence had helped him deal with his sadness, and it had left a lasting impression on him.

The ministry of presence can be practiced in simple ways: sitting

With encouragement, children will be able to handle pain. With encouragement they will feel loved.

with a child after school while they wait to be picked up, or handing them a tissue when they cry. Choosing to go to a sports game or musical performance will provide support during life events where their loved one will be especially missed. Laugh with them, play games with them, eat lunch with them, or be a chaperone for school and church field trips. Presence means being in the same space, as Jesus would be, without feeling compelled to espouse any spiritual truths or explain the doctrine of the state of the dead to them.⁴

Jesus is present through our care. Your presence will reassure them and let them know they're important. God loves them and wants them to know that they're not alone.⁵ If it's not possible to physically visit someone because of the COVID-19 pandemic, you can reach out through phone calls, video calls, and even letter writing. One of the most repeated promises in the Bible is that God is with us through suffering.⁶ As His followers, He wants us to be part of His presence in the world (see Matt. 28).

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Children need to know that they can grieve without being criticized or judged, especially with the adults they trust the most.

Don't try to say something profound; children simply need an adult who cares to listen to them talk.

Sometimes a child's verbal expressions of grief may seem odd to an adult. They may share unusual memories, feel as though the loss was their fault, or long for practical answers to abstract questions. When you feel you don't have the answers, be honest in your response, pray with them, listen to their stories, and read and discuss Bible passages relating to the type of loss they've experienced.⁷

ANSWER QUESTIONS

After experiencing not only the death of her schoolmate but also of her grandfather, a first-grade girl came to my (Natalie's) office and had some ques-

tions about death that she was trying to process.

At her grandfather's funeral she'd heard that he was now in heaven with Jesus. At her Adventist school she'd heard that her friend was sleeping until Jesus comes. The contrast between these two theological views had confused her young mind. Abstract concepts about death make no sense to a child. She sat down with a puzzled look on her face, but instead of crying or expressing grief in a familiar way, she asked strange questions.

"Pastor Natalie, why did God only take Grandpa's legs to heaven?" I raised my eyebrows and asked her to explain. She described the open casket funeral service to the best of her ability. She was able to see clearly that Grandpa's torso and head were still on earth because of the open top half of the casket, and he appeared to be asleep. But to her mind, his legs were gone. Since she didn't form a concrete idea of something that couldn't be seen, she assumed that somehow her grandfather's legs had been cut off and God had taken that half of him to heaven. She didn't understand what physically happens at death, and was confused about what *spiritually* happens. But the most important aspects to her were her present concerns: Why couldn't she wake him up? and Where were his legs?

When children are confused about death, they ask questions that may seem silly to adults.⁸ Be prepared for them to want to talk about strange topics following a death or other loss in their life. Don't ignore their "silly" or unclear questions; instead, take the time to answer them in a way the child can understand with simple, concrete explanations.⁹ By spending time discussing what happens when we die, you can help a child reason through the confusing questions they have about death.

SHOW COMPASSION

Compassion for children can be shown by recognizing their suffering and trying to relieve their pain. Be compassionate by helping them with the tasks at hand. Talk to the child's parents about their immediate needs. Offer to babysit for a few hours or to play with the child while the parents do other duties around the house or have their own quiet time to grieve.

Show compassion through intentional conversation to process the loss, dedicated time spent together, making meals or helping with other necessary activities of life, relieving stress by going

out in nature together, or encouraging a grieving family to do calming activities such as keeping a prayer journal. You can help a child color in their prayer journal and learn to write prayers.

Helping someone recover from loss can be done in simple, practical ways. Showing compassion means being unselfish with your time and energy as you help children regain their sense of wonder and excitement about the life ahead of them. The best way to show compassion and to help grieving children is by leading them to God, who can take care of all their needs. "When difficulties and trials surround us, we should flee to God, and confidently expect help from Him who is mighty to save and strong to deliver."¹⁰

GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement is important for children who are hurting. While processing grief and allowing emotions to be felt is necessary to recover, rediscovering hope and happiness also is essential. "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called 'Today,' so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Heb. 3:13). The pain that results from sin's presence on earth can cause a hardening of the heart in children, leading to a distrust of religion later in life. This is why encouraging children to hope again and helping them to see joy and goodness in life is important. Encouraging someone means giving them support or confidence.

With encouragement, children will be able to handle pain. With encouragement they will feel loved. With encouragement they won't question if God is distant, but will instead understand that He is concerned with their welfare. Remind children of the truth that God loves them, that they are treasured, and that His favor is on them. Encouragement gives them the will to carry on and helps them to experience abundant life (see John 10:10).

STAY CLOSE TO THEM

After a funeral, loss, or recent tragedy we should not immediately forget about children's grief. They will have a great deal of support in the days and weeks immediately after the loss, but will anyone be there to listen and be compassionate a month later, six months later, or a year later?

At times like these, when children may be returning to regular routines such as going back to school and extracurricular activities, they will realize their

loved one isn't in their routine any longer. This is when they need our support most. Stay close and check on them around birthdays, holidays, and important events such as graduations, sports games, or school concerts. These are moments when the loss of a person's presence in their life is felt most acutely.¹¹

SHOW JESUS' LOVE

The next time a tragedy occurs, remember the children. Take time to help them through pain, and point them to a better future. Jesus loves each child, and He wants us to minister to them through their grieving, showing them the love and hope they can have for the future, and the joy that comes from walking with Him.✍

¹ Marie Curie, "How Grief May Affect Children," Feb. 1, 2020, www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereaved-family-friends/supporting-grieving-child/grief-affect-child, accessed May 25, 2020.

² Kate Jackson, "How Children Grieve—Persistent Myths May Stand in the Way of Appropriate Care and Support for Children," *Social Work Today*, 15, no. 2 (March 2015): 20, www.socialworktoday.com/archive/030415p20.shtml, accessed May 25, 2020.

³ David J. Schonfeld and Marcia Quackenbush, "Help for Grieving Students," *American School Counselor Association*, January 2017, pp. 21-24, www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/ASCAU/Grief-Loss-Specialist/GrievingStudents.pdf, accessed May 25, 2020.

⁴ Elissa Nadworny, "Grief in the Classroom," "Saying Nothing Says A Lot," National Public Radio, Jan. 13, 2015, www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/01/13/376720559/grieving-in-the-classroom, accessed May 25, 2020.

⁵ Note on appropriate behavior: We would like to note here that appropriate behavior around children is incredibly important in order to minister to them effectively. Never spend time alone with a child. Never touch them inappropriately. Ministry to children is best done in public settings, group spaces, with parents or others present, or in ways that avoid the potential for any illicit behavior.

⁶ S. Joseph Kidder, *Journey to the Heart of God* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2019), pp. 8-14.

⁷ For more information on how to support and listen to children who are grieving, see Christine Park, "5 Tips for Supporting Grieving Students," *Edutopia*, George Lucas Educational Foundation, May 17, 2013, www.edutopia.org/blog/tips-grief-at-school-2-chris-park, accessed May 25, 2020.

⁸ Marie Curie, "Questions Children May Ask," Feb. 1, 2020, www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereaved-family-friends/supporting-grieving-child/questions-children-ask, accessed May 25, 2020.

⁹ National Association of School Psychologists School Safety and Crisis Response Committee, *Addressing Grief: Tips for Teachers and Administrators* (Bethesda, Md.: National Association of School Psychologists, 2015).

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 2, p. 268.

¹¹ Aaron Earls, "7 Things to Not Say at a Funeral," *Facts & Trends*, Nov. 7, 2018, factsandtrends.net/2018/05/24/7-things-to-never-say-at-a-funeral/.

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COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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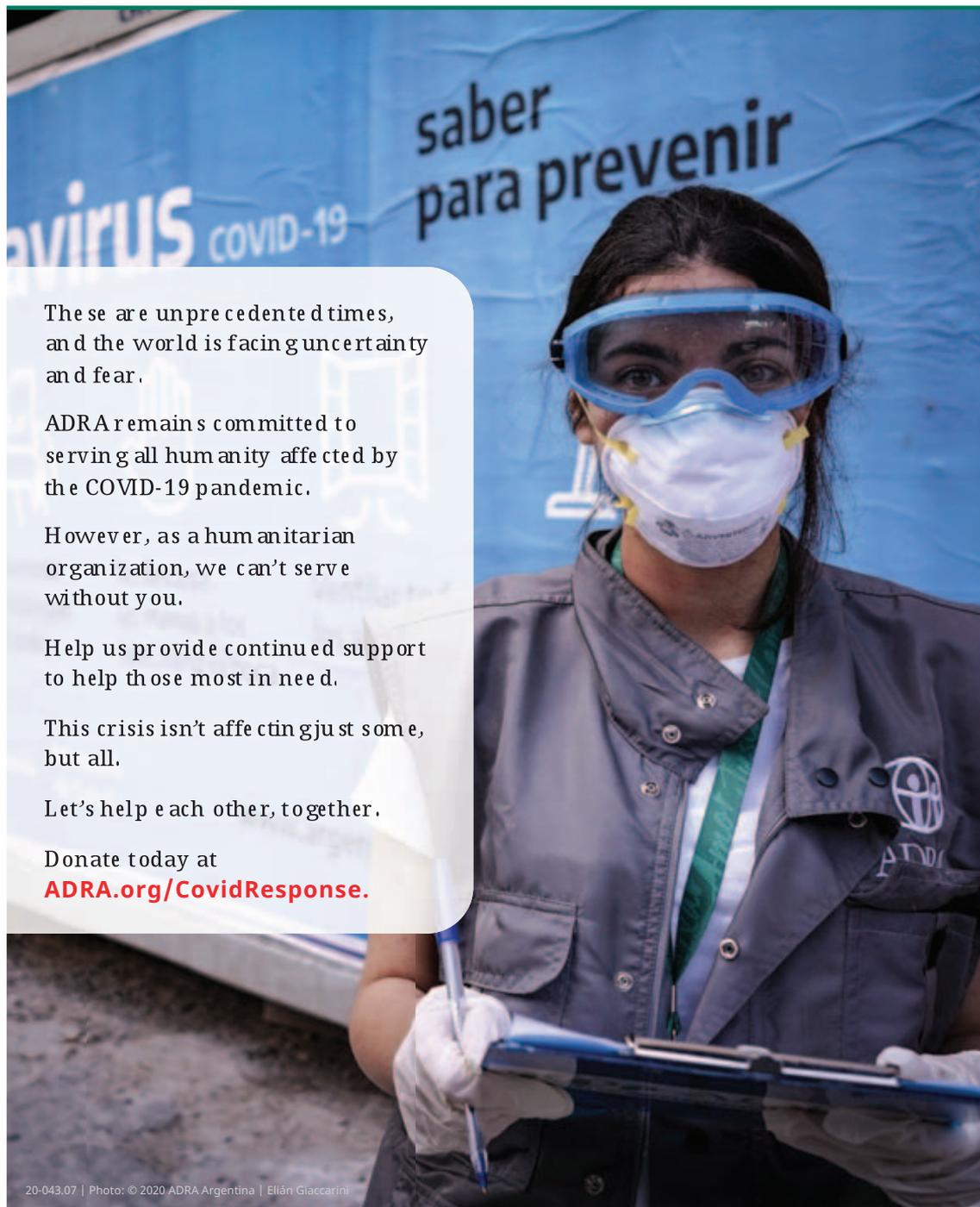
However, as a humanitarian organization, we can't serve without you.

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WHAT MASKS CANNOT DO

All Americans are urged to wear masks for health reasons, but some Christians wear masks that reveal more than they conceal. The story of Judah, the most powerful of Jacob's 12 sons (Gen. 38), includes embedded truths about the dangers of wearing masks that disgrace those who wear them.

Judah had watched the Ishmaelites carry his brother, Joseph, to Egypt. Judah could have saved Joseph from the pit and his father from the perils of grief, but he chose to mask his feelings.

Judah married a Canaanite, who bore him three sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Judah married Er, his firstborn, to Tamar, but Tamar quickly became a young widow. So Judah gave her Onan in a levirate marriage, but he also died.

Judah feared if he gave Shelah to Tamar, his last and only living son would also die. Perhaps because deception was part of his way of life, Judah directed Tamar to return to her father's house until Shelah came of age. Judah may never have intended to fulfill his promise.

When Tamar heard that Judah was coming to Timnah, she wrapped herself in colorful garments and sat at the entrance of her village. As Judah approached, all he saw was a Canaanite prostitute. In contrast, Tamar knew Judah's truth and had come to conclude that he had no intention of allowing Shelah to marry her.

She secured the pledge of a young goat in exchange for her sexual favors. For her, that young goat would enable her demand against Judah's unkept promise to her: family status to which she was never given access.

Ironically, when Judah offered the kid

to Tamar, he failed to remember the connection with the blood of the young kid that he and his brothers used to cover his brother's coat and deceive their father. Tamar, knowing Judah well, demanded pledge symbols of his status, power, and tribal standing: his signet ring, his cord or sash, and his staff.

Three months after Judah's rendezvous with Tamar, it became obvious that she was pregnant. In a fit of self-righteous rage, Judah ordered her to be burned to death. When she was brought out to be put to death, she said, "I am pregnant by the man who owns these. . . . See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are" (Gen. 38:25). Tamar's words were similar to those Judah used when he and his brothers showed Jacob Joseph's tattered coat covered with blood: "Examine it to see whether it is your son's robe" (Gen. 37:32).

Tamar's words pierced Judah's deceptive heart like a dagger. His disgraceful actions toward Joseph, so carefully disguised, were suddenly connected to the loss of all that defined him as a respectable person. Judah was forced to connect the injustice of selling his brother to the deep pain he caused Tamar. He blurted out: "She is more righteous than I" (Gen. 38:26).

That day, Judah took the first step toward personal repentance that brought great change to him and his family's life. In return, Perez, one of the twins born to Tamar, was the first person mentioned in the Davidic genealogy (Ruth 4:18-22). The line of kingship, which included Jesus, was traced through Judah. Judah's story shows that a disguise of hypocritical respectability often brings disgrace. But the outcome of repentance is always positive and life-transforming.

Hyveth Williams is a professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary at Andrews University.

CURE FOR THE
COMMON LIFE
HYVETH
WILLIAMS



THE OUTCOME OF
REPENTANCE IS
ALWAYS POSITIVE
AND LIFE
TRANSFORMING.



PASSING IT ON

Blessed are those who know their grandparents.

“One of my biggest regrets is that I didn’t press ‘record’ enough when I was speaking with my elders.”
—Iris Craig.

JASON CRAIG

Grandparents are a blessing from God. They possess a wealth of knowledge that, when passed down to their grandchildren, has the opportunity to influence the trajectory of their lives. The oral traditions that they pass on to their posterity cannot be overstated, since they provide a glimpse, not only into how things were before the advent of technology, but also how God worked and moved in their lives. Those who are unable to observe how God worked in the lives of previous generations may not find relevance in a relationship with God for themselves.

Grandparents are a source of knowledge, a cradle of comfort, a buffer against parental discipline. We all have parents, and most likely have access to them, but interaction with grandparents is only a potentiality. As humanity does not possess the natural capability to give birth to grandchildren, the generational gap that exists between grandparent and grandchild

contains a finite amount of time until God makes the sovereign decision to call them to rest until resurrection morning. To put it simply, we were never promised that we would even know our grandparents.

UNCLE BOB

God in His goodness allowed me to know three of my four grandparents, the most influential being my maternal grandfather. Named for a disciple and a prophet, Simon Zephaniah Jackson had the most impact on my life. A man’s man, with giant stonemason’s hands but a heart of gold, Granddaddy was known as Uncle Bob, the avid fisherman, the expert grower of collard greens, but most important to me—the preacher.

Blessed with a photographic memory and the sharpest of minds, Granddaddy could recite large portions of Scripture and Ellen White’s writings. Naturally, everyone clamored to have him on their team for Bible games. My granddaddy used this

gift to preach and teach, serving as lay and professional pastor, Bible study instructor, lay evangelist, and nursing home and prison chaplain.

Though he was able to share his love of Jesus with thousands of people, this was experienced best at home. Through the medium of oral tradition, he was able to teach his children about the love of God.

The story goes that he would show his daughters pictures of heaven and ask them, "Don't you want to go?" He had also given each of them Bibles as gifts. One day, as the chimney caught fire, all three daughters ran out of the house, clutching only their precious Bibles as keepsakes from the potential inferno. To them, the Word of God was so important that clothes, toys, or other valuables were deemed secondary. This love of God's Word was passed on to my generation.

How was the Word of God passed on to your generation? A parent? Or a grandparent?

My grandfather's first encounter with Jesus was through his grandfather Calvin, who took him to the local Baptist church as a child, offering his protective hand as they walked, before taking their seats on the mourner's bench.

In Protestant church history, the Moravian bishop Zinzendorf was raised by his learned and Pietist grandmother. He said that he knew his Savior by experience from the time he was young.

GRANDPARENTS IN THE BIBLE

In the Bible, only a smattering of texts concern the role of grandparents, though highlights stress the importance of passing on God's Word to grandchildren. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Tim. 1:5). The psalmist David declared: "But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children" (Ps. 103:17).

The genealogy of Genesis 11 reveals the presence of a number of great-grandfathers. From Shem to Abraham were 10 generations, and though the knowledge of God was seemingly lost after the Tower of Babel, Ellen White wrote: "God has ever preserved a remnant to serve Him."* We can thank Abraham's great-great-great . . . grandfather Shem for providing some sort of testimony

The genealogy of Genesis 11 reveals the presence of a number of great-grandfathers.

of God's goodness throughout his lifetime. How else would Abraham have recognized God's voice when He said: "Go from your country, your people, and your father's household to the land I will show you" (Gen. 12:1)?

The 600 years of Shem's life overlapped with those of Abraham's, and though we don't see personal interaction between them in the biblical narrative, Shem and his posterity in some way undoubtedly shared the knowledge of the one true God.

The importance of sharing stories of how God has moved in one's life is crucial when it comes time for God to call a modern-day Abraham into a covenant relationship with Him. "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going" (Heb. 11:8).

LEARNING HOW TO FISH

My granddaddy took my twin sister and me out on a lake to go fishing when we were about 4 years old. I imagine that he wanted to show us, being city kids, something different. I imagine that he wanted to pour something into us spiritually, though maybe he didn't know exactly how since we were so young. I can't say that I remember a single word spoken out there on the lake, but I remember that we caught a good number of fish.

He may not have known it then, but Granddaddy was showing me something of great value. Four decades later I'm committed to fishing for believers, and remembering him as I do.

Sometimes you don't have to press "record" for the message to be inscribed with full meaning. ▀

* Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), p. 125.

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EDUCATION

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PETER N. LANDLESS ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

BELIEF MATTERS

Even for your health!

Q: I heard about CELEBRATIONS® in church and that the “B” (Belief) somehow improves health. Isn’t that just a sneaky way to push religion into health?

A: We unapologetically affirm that belief in the God of the Bible in itself confers “health” to believers. Since the 1960s, scientific research has corroborated our position. But science is only catching up to what God knew all along. The nature of the God of our belief is vitally important. Religious beliefs that portray God as distant, uninterested, punishing, or vindictive provoke worse health than no belief in God at all.*

So what about belief in itself? Let’s consider two friends, “A” and “Z,” and see if their beliefs (in contemporary scenarios) lead to distinct health decisions.

Friend “A”	Friend “Z”
The hunter-gatherer “paleo diet” is the way we were evolved to eat.	A total vegetarian diet protects me from most diseases.
Mental disease is always a result of chemical imbalances.	Mental disease is spiritual and requires faith and prayer.
COVID-19 is political hype, no worse than the flu.	Hydrotherapy cured people in the 1918 influenza pandemic; it will do so with COVID.
God works through natural remedies and through medications shown to be helpful.	Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and vaccines are all poisons.
I have a right to decide what goes into my body and what I do with my body.	I have a responsibility to do no harm to anyone or to endanger others, even at my own inconvenience.
What’s wrong with a few drinks? I can still drive.	Any alcohol passing my lips is an unpardonable sin.

We hope you see that regardless of the “rightness” or “truth,” “wrongness” or “error,” of any of your “friends’” beliefs, the *content* of the beliefs will affect their actions and health. Both “friends” have strong opinions in every scenario above, i.e., distant God, vindictive God, etc. Unfortunately, things become more complicated when they urge their beliefs—founded, unfounded, or in between—on others.

Be willing to grow in your understanding of tested, reliable information.

Beliefs can motivate urgent action, good or bad; delay action, to our benefit or detriment; or cause us to avoid actions or circumstances, in our favor or against us. Our beliefs create our *personal* reality, but that “reality” may not harmonize with *objective* reality. So be neither too gullible nor too skeptical.

Instead, test and check everything you reasonably can against what’s proven to be true and reliable—the Bible; the Spirit of Prophecy; and evidence-based, peer-reviewed health science. Inquire as you did now—that’s healthy—but don’t take our word for it. Prayerfully and carefully evaluate the evidence before accepting its tenets as fact. Be willing to grow in your understanding of tested, reliable information.

What we believe and how we practice those beliefs can be a matter of life or death. But make no mistake: belief in God promotes wholistic health and well-being. To know Him is life eternal!✚

* Kenneth I. Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, and Practice* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997).

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Photograph of Braulio Perez Marcio (left), first speaker of La Voz de la Profecia, with the announcer Juan Eduardo Perez.



BROADCASTING THE GOOD NEWS

Meet the pioneers of Adventist Spanish-language broadcasting.

The history of Adventist Hispanic media is both remarkable and inspiring. Only eight years after Adventist radio pioneer H.M.S. Richards, Sr., went on the air in 1930 with his radio broadcast *The Tabernacle of the Air* in Long Beach, California, Carlos Nicolas began a Spanish radio broadcast, *La Hora Cristiana* (*The Christian Hour*), in Los Angeles. That same year, C. A. Robaina also had a Spanish-language radio program in Brawley, California, called *La Voz de la Verdad* (*The Voice of Truth*).

AN EVANGELISTIC TOOL

In 1938, Robaina was conducting a three-month evangelistic effort in Brawley, California. His radio program had captured the interest of many Hispanics in and around Brawley. During the last few weeks of his meetings he encountered opposition from the other Protestant pas-

tors in the area. He had already baptized 10 individuals and was preparing 17 more for baptism.

Just when he needed the radio program the most, he ran out of funding and had to discontinue it.

The following Sunday, Hispanic preachers, both in Brawley and Calexico, got together and started their own religious radio program to counter Robaina's preaching. They called their radio program *La Voz Evangelica* (*The Evangelical Voice*), and requested the same time slot that Robaina had, hoping that Hispanic listeners would think it was the same program.

But the station manager told them that he was saving that time slot for Robaina.

In a letter to E. F. Hackman, president of Southeastern California Conference, Robaina wrote: "When I saw what these preachers wanted to do, I wanted to go back to preach over the radio. I did not have the money, but I knew the Lord wanted me to use the radio to defend His message, so I went to Calexico and I told the church there that we were responsible before the Lord to see that the truth is preached and protected. I wanted them to pay for the radio hour for some time. I am glad to tell you that the Calexico church will pay for 10 lectures. I was glad to go back to El Centro last Sunday morning and start a new series of Bible lectures. At 8:00 we were on the air just a half hour before the other preacher came on."¹

Carlos Nicolas, pastoring in Los Angeles, realized the potential that radio had to diffuse the Adventist message to the more than a quarter million Span-

ish-speaking people in Los Angeles. In 1938, he launched his program—*La Hora Cristiana* (*The Christian Hour*)—becoming the pioneer of regularly scheduled Hispanic Adventist radio broadcasting in North America. His 15-minute program, airing from 7:00 to 7:15 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, began receiving thousands of inquiries from Hispanic radio listeners.

Nicolas' congregation began growing rapidly through the interests generated from this media.² In 1940, Nicolas unofficially renamed his program *La Voz de la Profecia*, patterning it after Richards' program, *Voice of Prophecy*. He enlisted a young pastor from Peru, Merardo León, to assist him as the announcer. Two years later, in 1942, Nicolas received a call to central California, where he pastored the Fresno Spanish church.

A MANDATE FROM HEADQUARTERS

Meanwhile, at the General Conference (GC), plans were being developed for the extension of English Voice of Prophecy radio programming into the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America. General Conference leaders were concerned about reaching the Spanish-speaking multitudes in Latin American countries, because at that time the Hispanic work in the North American Division was comparatively small.

On April 5, 1942, the General Conference Committee voted to ask William Gordon Turner, a GC vice president responsible for North America, and those associated with him in the radio work to begin arranging for the *Voice of Prophecy* to broadcast in the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America.

The Pan-American Broadcasting Company had offered to do that for \$55,000 a year.³ On June 4, at the first session of the Latin American Radio Commission of the General Conference, it was officially voted that the name of the Spanish Voice of Prophecy program be called *La Voz de la Profecia*.

Then on September 3, the commission voted to adapt and translate the English Voice of Prophecy Bible lessons and produce them in Spanish to be used by its Radio Bible School.

Three days later, the commission convened to choose the speaker for the proposed international broadcasts of *La Voz de la Profecia*. One of the General Conference leaders, while traveling in Cuba, had heard Braulio Perez Marcio on his reli-

Carlos Nicolas realized the potential that radio had to diffuse the Adventist message to the more than a quarter million Spanish-speaking people in Los Angeles.

gious radio program and was impressed. So he suggested Perez Marcio's name, and the committee voted to extend him a call. He enthusiastically accepted. At the same meeting they voted Merardo León to continue as the program's announcer.

Perez Marcio was later given authority to adapt the language, illustrations, and poetry of the new international radio broadcasts to appeal to the largely Roman Catholic audiences of Latin countries.

That same year, Perez Marcio moved with his family to Glendale, California, where *La Voz de la Profecia* was produced and recorded.

In 1944, Mexican-born Juan Eduardo Perez was called to *La Voz* as the announcer. He remained with Perez Marcio until 1950. Perez was married to Lydia Sanchez, the fourteenth of 15 children born to Adiel Sanchez of Arizona's Sanchez family, charter members of the first Hispanic Adventist church in North America (see www.adventistreview.org/1909-50).

During World War II, Perez Marcio urged those in charge of the radio work at the General Conference to change the name of the broadcast from *La Voz de la Profecia* to *La Voz de la Esperanza* (*The Voice of Hope*). "There is a world war going on. What our people need," he argued, "is a religious program that deals with practical, everyday issues and gives them *esperanza* (hope) to live by"⁴

The name change was finalized in 1954, and ever since *La Voz de la Esperanza* has been a voice of hope to a troubled world. 🍀

¹ *Pacific Union Recorder*, June 29, 1938.

² C. L. Paddock, "Spanish, Portuguese, and North American Indian Departments," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 3, 1941.

³ Minutes of the General Conference Committee, April 5, 1942.

⁴ Milton Peverini, "La Voz de la Esperanza, Resifia Historia, 55 Aniversario 1942-1997," unpublished document, p. 1.

This article is adapted from *The Untold Story: 100 Years of Hispanic Adventism*. Manuel Vasquez (1937-2005) was North American Division vice president for Multilingual Ministries until 2005.

CLOSER LOOK



The Space Between

The Space Between, Matt and Josie Minikus, 2020, available on iTunes, Amazon.com, and at www.mattandjosieminikus.com. Reviewed by Gerald A. Klingbeil, *Adventist Review*.

I first heard Matt and Josie Minikus, husband and wife, singer/songwriter duo, in the age of COVID. A relative sent me their latest release, *The Space Between*, as an early birthday gift. I fell in love with their acoustic-driven, harmonic, often deeply personal music. Eight of the 12 songs on the CD (or download, if you prefer) were written by Josie, who sings and plays the piano. Matt plays the guitar and a string of instruments, including piano, percussion, ukulele, banjo, bass, and some I had never heard of before. (Do you know what a shruti box is without googling it?)

Matt and Josie, married for 12 years, have voices that complement each other wonderfully. The words of their songs appear to be reflections on personal issues, though the CD doesn't offer additional context. In "Blessing in the Tears" Josie notes, "Where the path leads I do not know, with all its twists and turns, but I've discovered in the unknown, lessons I must learn, and that the darkness,

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Living With War

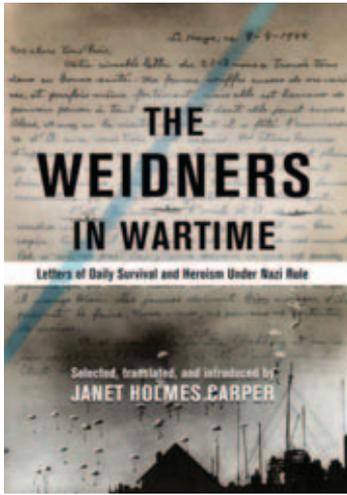
The Weidners in Wartime: Letters of Daily Survival and Heroism Under Nazi Rule, Weidner Foundation, 2020, 458 pages, \$29.95. Reviewed by Clifford Goldstein, editor of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*.

I first met John Weidner in the mid-1980s in Washington, D.C. It was the last large meeting I ever, not just of Holocaust survivors but of their rescuers as well. Weidner was one of those honored. As many know, John Weidner had, at great personal risk and cost to himself, created an underground network that saved more than 3,000 people from the clutches of the Nazis.

Much has been written about John Weidner and his family, but the book *The Weidners in Wartime: Letters of Daily Survival and Heroism Under Nazi Rule* is one that he and his family "wrote." It's a collection of letters between family members (John, his sisters, parents, and fiancé). As letters, they offer a powerful peek into the lives of ordinary people, talking about ordinary things (mostly but not always), yet involved in extraordinary endeavors (some letters use code words because of censors). Nevertheless, they offer

walked with Jesus, is as priceless as the light found." Words in "The Space Between" reflect on the distance—both physically and emotionally—we often sense in our relationships. "I hear your voice over the phone, see you hazy in the screen, but I long to take you in my arms, and not just in my dreams" could have been written specifically for all of us experiencing the social (and emotional) distancing of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the song "The Called," the duo reminds listeners that "God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called," with the warning that "you can be too big for



original material, primary sources into the lives of some amazing people during one of Europe's darkest periods.

Though some letters were written before the war, most were written during it, when they were working to save everyone, from Jews to downed Allied airmen, from the Nazis, even though there are never direct references to it in the letters, which is not surprising. We see the struggles of everyday life, for example, when Gaby, John's sister, living in occupied Paris, writes to John, "Starting tomorrow we will have ration cards for bread (350 grams), sugar (550 grams), soap (125 grams)." When we realize that there are about

453 grams in a pound, we can understand the privations.

Despite the extraordinary circumstances, we see their ordinary struggles and challenges and joys, such as when Gaby writes to John, "I don't know if I can still talk to you about my love life! which basically isn't a love life, but only an affair of the mind," as she tells about a young art teacher, recently baptized, whom she likes.

We also have a letter Gaby wrote to her parents, expressing concern for their health and saying also, "Thanks for the pasta and the apple syrup." Two days later, after a woman in their group, tortured by the Gestapo, gave her up, Gaby was arrested. One letter remains from when she was in prison. In it she asks for some things to be sent to her, including "some darnin' cotton, in the sewing kit in the drawer of the serving table, but not the scissors, and my glasses." They never heard from her again.

If you're looking for some wartime thriller, *The Guns of Navarone* or the like, *The Weidners in Wartime* is not your book. But if you're looking for an intimate peek into the daily lives of people just like us, doing things most of us will never be called to do, you have a fascinating read ahead of you. ♣

God to use, but you'll never be too small, 'cause God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called."

"All the Time in the World" sounds different from the other songs. The lyrics are profound and pertinent, yet the music feels more playful, using ukulele, banjo, bass, and percussion. "What's your worry?" Matt and Josie sing. "Why the big hurry? I've got all the time in the world, so why don't you let go, of what you can't control?"

Each song feels like part of a larger conversation between Matt and Josie. In "Together," Josie notes that "you didn't promise me a mansion, you didn't promise me a home, told me we were pilgrims here, so we'd have to roam, you didn't promise it'd be easy, told me life was going to change, you promised me

adventure, that you would keep me safe." The song is a reminder that marriage can only be lived together—in good and bad days. I especially liked the haunting fiddle played by Joni Owen on this song.

You will not appreciate *The Space Between* while vacuuming your home—you will need to listen carefully, pay attention to the lyrics, and allow the music to take you on a journey that finally leads to my favorite song, "Let Jesus In." Piano-driven, with an evocative cello line played by Dale Bradley, the Minikuses sing, "Let Jesus in, let Jesus in, let Jesus into your heart, don't turn Him away, don't wait another day, let Jesus into your heart." That's a good ending for all journeys. ♣

UNIQUELY EQUIPPED

Our lives are evidence of God's creative genius. Not only did He create us with unique talents and abilities tailor-made to our individual personalities, but He offers limitless opportunities for us to reveal those abilities to others. Every day is an adventure of discovery as we explore ways to serve God and reflect His character to others.—Editors.

"You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.
You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully
made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your
book

before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you. . . .
Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

KING DAVID (PS. 139)

"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."
AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, EARLY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN

"There is no one who is insignificant in the purpose of God."
ALISTAIR BEGG, CHRISTIAN PASTOR

"God does not give us everything we want, but He does fulfill His promises, leading us along the best and straightest paths to Himself."
DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN

"If you believe in a God who controls the big things, you have to believe in a God who controls the little things. It is we, of course, to whom things look 'little' or 'big.'"
ELISABETH ELLIOT,
CHRISTIAN AUTHOR AND MISSIONARY

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."
HELEN KELLER, AUTHOR AND ACTIVIST



**“We are all woven together
in the great web of
humanity, and whatever
we can do to benefit and
uplift others will reflect in
blessing upon ourselves.”**

ELLEN WHITE,
COFOUNDER, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
(*PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS*, PP. 534, 535)



“If you can’t fly, then run; if you can’t run, then walk; if you can’t walk, then crawl; but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.,
CHRISTIAN PREACHER, AUTHOR, AND ACTIVIST

“If God is your partner, make your plans big!”

DWIGHT L. MOODY, CHRISTIAN EVANGELIST

“The greatest tragedy in life is not death, but a life without a purpose.”

MYLES MUNRO, CHRISTIAN EVANGELIST

“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”

JOHN PIPER, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN AND AUTHOR

“Your potential is the sum of all the possibilities God has for your life.”

CHARLES STANLEY,
CHRISTIAN PASTOR AND AUTHOR

“I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking God to do His work through me.”

HUDSON TAYLOR, CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

“Remember who you are. Don’t compromise for anyone, for any reason. You are a child of the Almighty God. Live that truth.”

LYSA TERKEURST, CHRISTIAN AUTHOR

“When you feel strong, the admonition is, ‘Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.’ 1 Corinthians 10:12. But when you feel weak, too weak to do anything of yourself, you are in a position to gain the victory.”

ELLET J. WAGGONER,
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST WRITER AND EDITOR

MY AMBITION TO DO GOOD IN THE WORLD

In the early 1990s, which currently feels about 500 years ago, I went to work on a weekly youth magazine. The job was in an Adventist institution, but regardless of that, I felt an instinctive desire to encourage my colleagues by my attitude and demeanor and be the most constructive presence I could. So I consciously smiled and greeted people and stayed positive in meetings and cheerfully and promptly fulfilled my responsibilities. Many of my colleagues, I must say, were similarly a positive presence and encouraged me.

Was this a virtuous display? I don't know. Maybe. It was no credit to me. It seemed like the natural thing I wanted to do.

I'm not a naturally bouncy person (see my passport photo), but I found that when I was consciously cheerful with people, I felt good myself. It wasn't something I forced myself to do. From somewhere in the depths of the consciousness that I asked God to dwell within, I had a desire to bring a bit of light if I possibly could.

Fast-forward to the coronavirus pandemic. My wife and I go out of the house early in the morning to walk for an hour in the neighborhood. We see a few other people with masks, and we walk on the other side of the street and say "Good morning" or "How are you doing?" We're trying to convey, from a distance of 30 meters (100 feet) or so, a smile and concern for the person through a rectangle of cloth held on to our ears with elastic. We don't get to pet the dogs.

Is this a virtuous display? I don't know.

Maybe. It's difficult to make any kind of display at this juncture.

I'll be honest. Sometimes this year I've had to prompt myself quite sharply to be a bit of light. Sometimes I don't feel like doing it. Staying home, I'm not feeling the whole "constructive presence" thing. What is this malaise, and what can be done?

The apostle Paul greeted people with such phrases as "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ," which, if it weren't factually true and a solid witness, would sound a little over the top. Consider that the church planter spent more than two years in prison and about the same amount of time under house arrest. I'm going out on a limb here and speculating that he didn't feel deep joy every single day of those years. It's almost certain that Paul was imprisoned in Rome when he wrote to the Colossian church members, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak" (Col. 4:2-4, NASB).*

Under every type of life condition, I will pray for the way I ought to speak. In every unexpected circumstance, I will ask for grace and for the strength and will to be gracious.

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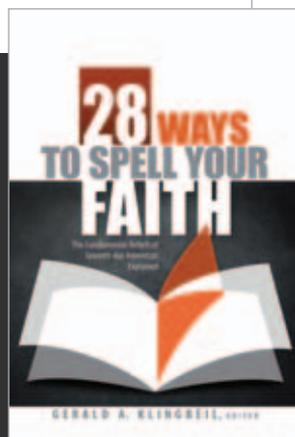
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