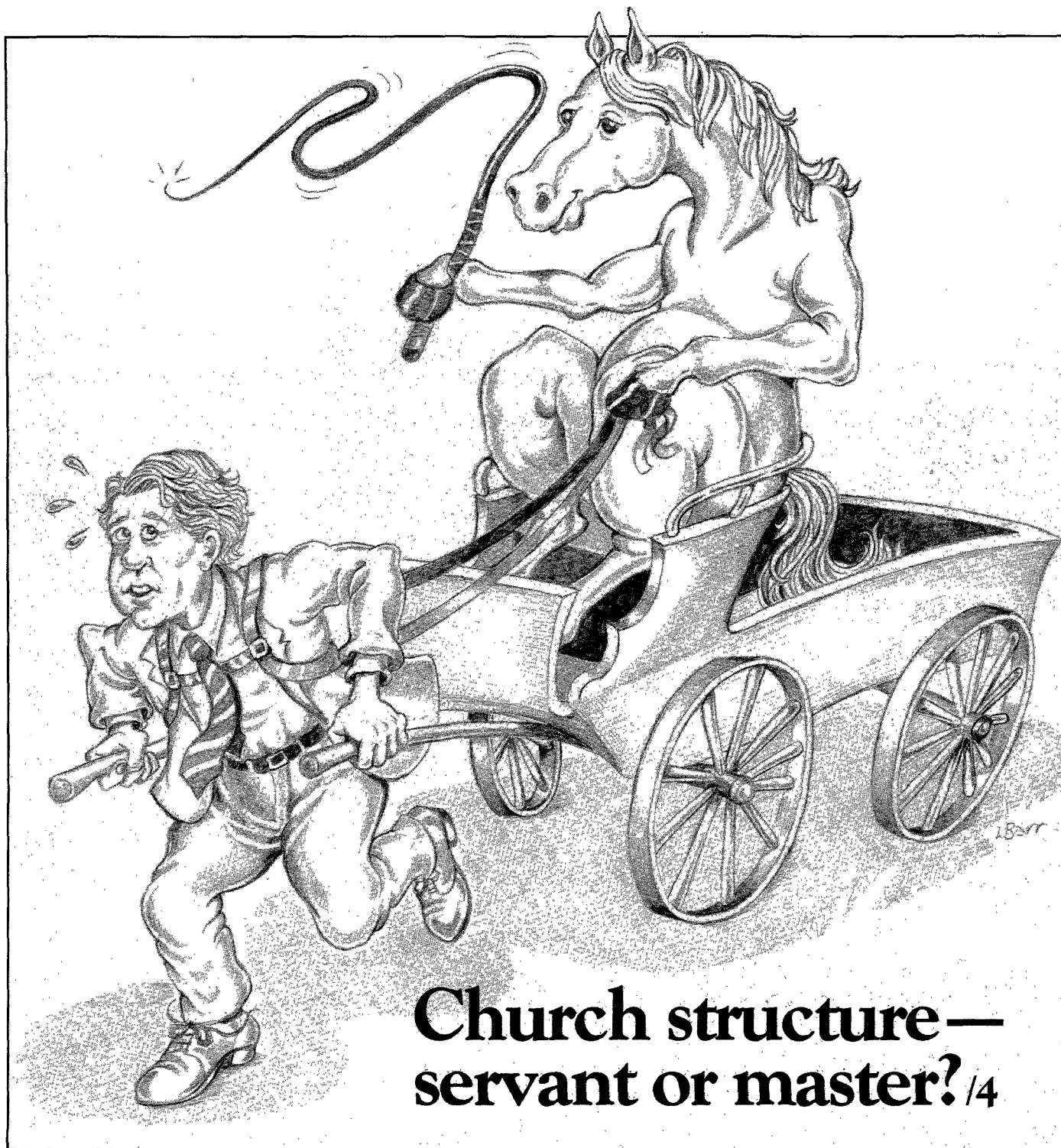


# Ministry

International Journal for Clergy

June 1989



**Church structure—  
servant or master? /4**

## Letters about Letters

I wish to express my objection to your printing the letter from the gentleman in England who stated that it was time the church put this dear little old lady [Ellen G. White] in her place. If he wants to believe that, that is his privilege. But I don't think you should publish such sentiments, unless you are of the same opinion, and using this as a backdoor approach to influencing others to believe the same way.

If this is also your opinion, then why are you professing to be a Seventh-day Adventist? I hate to think what our church would be today if it were not for the influence of the writings of Ellen White. —Al Webb, Redlands, California.

*Frankly, I wondered whether to include Shaw's letter among those we published, but I decided to do so for a couple reasons. First, Shaw's basic point concerns the use we make of Ellen White's writings, not her inspiration. And second, if we are to have a free and open discussion in the church, we must be willing to listen even to those with whom we disagree.*

*The Letters section of Ministry represents the opinions of our readers, not necessarily those of the editors. The articles come closer to reflecting our opinions—and we may not agree completely even with them. (We hope you don't feel obligated to either!)*

*Remember, Brother Webb, that we were the ones who published the article—with its use of Ellen White's writings—to which Brother Shaw was so strongly objecting. —David C. James, Letters Editor.*

■ One of my favorite parts of *Ministry* is the Letters section. I really enjoy the dialogue that takes place on its pages. The latest issue (February 1989) is no exception.

Two of the letters deserve a resounding amen! I concur heartily with Brother Newton that to compare evangelism in Africa and in the United States is like comparing apples and oranges. To imply that because in Africa pastors have 10, 12, or more churches and are experiencing tremendous growth, and therefore North America should follow suit, is at best a simplistic answer to a complex situation.

I also appreciated Brother Shaw's caution on our use of Ellen White here in the States. We must maintain our position that the Bible alone is our creed. Appreciating Ellen White does not mean that we should not use the same hermeneutical principles to understand her counsel that we use in trying to understand the biblical writers. We must not make Ellen White's writings an Adventist Talmud!

One more item caught my eye—the letters on sports. I wonder what the real issue is. If it is competition, then I'm afraid that sports has simply become an unfortunate whipping boy. Our denomination is rampant with competition, from pastoral awards for the number of baptisms, to colporteur awards for sales, to grades in school, to temperance contests, competition between schools for students and between conferences for workers, and I could go on. Perhaps interscholastic sports has become a token we can beat to death and thus salve our collective conscience as we ignore the real issue. Frankly, I believe that attitude, not competition, is the real issue. I applaud the efforts of those who are trying to include a Christian attitude in the arena of competitive sports.

Keep up the good work and keep the dialogue flowing! —Gary E. Russell, Dowagiac, Michigan.

### Does the church really care?

I was intrigued with "Did Ellen White Support the Ordination of Women?" by William Fagal in your February 1989 issue. I'm not saying I fully agree with the author's underlying philosophy, but I was impressed by the sincerity and honesty that came through in his article. I admire you for printing the article.

I had a sinking feeling, however, when I finished reading the article. I asked myself, "Does it matter to denominational leaders what Ellen White wrote about women's ministry or ordination?" I wondered who cared or was concerned or felt the loss. The reason I asked myself these questions was because the stance Ellen White took toward women's unique contribution to the Lord's work, toward paying women for this work, and toward paying a salary

to pastors' wives who do ministry is clear and has been for years (see *Evangelism*, pp. 491-494). But despite this clarity, there hasn't been much effort toward incorporating her position into church policy.

So the real issue doesn't seem to be whether or not Ellen White supported a certain policy. This article brought me to the conclusion that although Ellen G. White valued highly some form of the ministry of women, church leadership does not—except to give it lip service. —Name withheld.

■ The question of the ordination of women seems to roll on and on. I fail to understand why. Society has changed greatly since the Bible was written, since the days when women seemed to take a lesser role in the affairs of life. There can be no argument that they have a far greater say in the home, the state, and the church today.

As the Scriptures appear neither to forbid nor to uphold the principle of women holding church office, it would seem to suggest that the question revolves around the position of women in society today—and there are many women who are leaders of businesses, organizations, and nations today. This, of course, leads on to the question So why not of the church, too?

—C. Thompson, Wirksworth, Derbyshire, England.

### Has the time come?

Re: "Milk: Has the Time Come?" by Galen C. Bosley (February 1989). I was a little disappointed when I did not find the answer in his article. However, for us the time has come. In fact, it came about 40 years ago, when we found that our son was allergic to cow's milk. We were thankful that soy milk had been developed in time for him.

The same modern prophet who said, "When the time comes . . . God will reveal this" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 206), also said, "In all parts of the world provision will be made to supply the place of milk and eggs" (*ibid.*, p. 359).

Recently, while in one of our health food stores, I noted on one of the

(Continued on page 28)

“Church Structure—Servant or Master?” is probably the most significant article we have printed in the past decade. The phrase “structure follows strategy” is well known in management circles, but it seems the church gives only lip service to the principle it conveys. The wise person does not buy a building and then adapt his business to fit that structure, but first determines what he wants to accomplish and then designs the building to expedite that purpose.

The structure needed to house elephants differs greatly from one needed to accommodate dogs. But, as Robert Folkenberg points out in this article, we are constantly trying to fit elephants into doghouses. If we are going to make global strategy work (see my editorial), we are going to have to make major changes in some of our policies—and perhaps even in some of our structure.

Folkenberg’s article was conceived about two years ago in a global strategy committee meeting. We were wrestling with some innovative concepts when an individual said they would never fly because of policy, and that because of so many vested interests many policies are almost impossible to change. Folkenberg really felt strongly concerning some of our policies. Leaning over, I tapped him on the shoulder and said, “Why don’t you write an article on how structure should serve mission and not vice versa?” He agreed, and countless hours and drafts later it arrived on my desk.

Robert Worley makes this provocative statement concerning the origin of rules and policies: “Most rules and procedures were not designed to mobilize or activate members of a congregation. They were designed to maintain control by an elite minority” (*A Gathering of Strangers*, p. 51). While some will bristle at this statement a moment’s reflection will reveal that most policy changes originate from the top down rather than from the bottom up.

Worley goes on to explain that while rules and organization have their place, we usually forget that “rules and procedures do not come from God on the wings of an angel. They are creations of persons in a particular historical moment who are attempting to live faithful and obedient lives.”

Worley suggests that we learn to think organizationally and not just individualistically: “Few church professionals and lay members think organizationally. They do not see the effect that structures, political styles, polity, control of resources, and patterns of information sharing have on persons, goals, and congregational behavior. They prefer individualistic solutions when trouble is sensed. . . . Individuals and groups are isolated and ignored until they leave or organize to the extent they cannot be ignored” (pp. 65, 66).

There is nothing “sacred” about our organization or the *Church Manual*. These are simply tools to help us accomplish more effectively the mission of telling people about Jesus Christ.

May our church be willing to relegate to the museum many of our outdated programs, policies, and structures, and retain only those vital for keeping the church moving efficiently and effectively.

Other articles in this issue include:

- “Possibilities of Public Evangelism,” by W. C. Scales, Jr. (p. 10).
- “Witnessing the Old-fashioned Way,” by Norman Yergen (p. 13).
- “The Alabaster Box,” by Sally Streib (p. 14).
- “Establishing New Believers,” by Norma Sahlin (p. 17).
- “Toward a Better Weigh,” by Laurie Wright Brown (p. 22).



*Ministry* is the international journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association.

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*Ministry*, (ISSN 0026-5314), the international journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association © 1989, is published monthly by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and printed by the Review and Herald® Publishing Association, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740, U.S.A. Subscriptions: US\$19.95 for 12 issues worldwide. Single copy US\$2.00. US\$37.85 for 12 issues air mail worldwide. Member Associated Church Press. Second-class postage paid at Hagerstown, Maryland. This publication is available in microfilm from University Microfilms International. Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Ministry*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Editorial Office: 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. Stamped, self-addressed envelope should accompany unsolicited manuscripts.

VOLUME 62 NUMBER 6

# Church structure—servant or master?

**Robert S. Folkenberg**

**Has the structure of our church overwhelmed its mission? Why and how could this happen, and what can we do about it?**



*Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Charlotte, North Carolina.*

**R**ising early, Jesus and His disciples left Bethany and made their way toward Jerusalem. Along the way Jesus intended to etch a point so deeply in the minds of the disciples that they would never forget it—a point regarding the consequences of God’s people neglecting the mission given them.

Matthew tells the story this way: “Early in the morning, as he was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, ‘May you never bear fruit again!’ Immediately the tree withered. When the disciples saw this, they were amazed” (Matt. 21:18-20, NIV).

Christ’s entire life had been characterized by loving care toward others. Only in this one instance did Jesus use His heavenly power in a destructive manner. What faults could have been so serious as to impel Him to such a serious and seemingly uncharacteristic action?

A fig tree with fully developed leaves should have had edible fruit. Yet that tree, flaunting its abundant foliage in the very face of Christ, was fruitless! Jesus had directed the awesome power of heaven’s displeasure against outward show and misdirected productivity.

“That barren tree . . . was a symbol of the Jewish nation.”<sup>1</sup> Many of its spiritual leaders had lapsed into substituting impressive temple ritual and complex religious structure for compassion and personal godliness. “They brought ruin

upon themselves by refusing to minister to others.”<sup>2</sup>

God had designed the institutions of religion to function as means of introducing the world to its Creator. But these leaders came to regard them as an end in themselves, and so they took as their primary objective the maintenance of the church structure.

The Lord did not condemn the tree’s foliage, but rather its fruitlessness—its lack of mission. Should we not evaluate the foliage-to-fruit (structure-to-mission) ratio in our own lives and in the church?

## **The “iron law of oligarchy”**

While we have an outstanding system of church government, even the best of organizations deserve periodic self-evaluation. Robert Michels, a German sociologist, found that over time an organization tends to be motivated less and less by its original sense of mission, and that it becomes increasingly bureaucratic. The preservation of the structure gradually overtakes mission as its predominant concern. He called this phenomenon the “iron law of oligarchy.”

An organization operating under this law tends to resist change. And when it does change, too often it is in reaction to a crisis rather than from a desire to accomplish its mission more effectively.

I understand the mission of our church as being (1) to lead others to an acquaintance with and surrender to Christ (soul winning), and (2) to guide our members in an ever-growing, Spirit-filled relationship with Christ (soul retaining). Could it be that as a church we are gradually obeying the same “iron law”—that we

are becoming more concerned with preserving the structure than with accomplishing this mission?

What is the foliage-to-fruit ratio in the local church? How does the proportion of the human and financial resources that we invest in the mission of the church compare to what we spend on the maintenance of the structure? Are the services we provide mission- or tradition-driven? Would reducing or discontinuing these services hinder or help in the fulfilling of our mission?

We certainly do not lack "foliage." Multiplied departments promote activities, governing boards control and manage, councils meet, committees discuss and debate, and policies provide guidance to hundreds of division, union, and conference offices around the world—to say nothing of our 431 hospitals and clinics, 4,583 primary and 655 secondary schools, 84 colleges, and 56 publishing houses. Much of this enormous system has, in fact, contributed to our growth around the world.

However, the church at the time of Christ also had a fully developed, extremely well-organized system of church governance. But unfortunately, its leaders had long since lost sight of its heaven-appointed *raison d'être*. Because of their concern for preserving the structure, they rejected the Messiah for which that structure existed.

Tragically, we face a similar threat. We must never come to the point where we redefine the mission of the church as the preservation of the structure.

We are told that the church will go through to the end. Could it be that the fulfillment of this prophecy is conditional on our maintaining the primacy of mission over structure?

## Increasing constituent confidence

*Too many meetings.* The organizations and institutions that make up our church call a great many meetings. The frequency and location of these meetings and the number of those attending gives the impression to our constituency that we do not have adequate control of our spending.

There are at least two steps we can take to improve this situation. First, we can require the organization calling a meeting to pay all travel expenses for those expected to attend. Taking this step would have an immediate effect on both the size and the frequency of many board and committee meetings. The local organizations currently paying these travel expenses would benefit directly from the freeing up of their funds. And, with fewer meetings and fewer attendees, there would be a net reduction in costs to the denomination as a whole as well.

Second, we can, at all levels of the church structure, increase to more than

token levels the proportion of laity serving as members of the committees. Just following these two steps would contribute dramatically to increased confidence in church leadership.

*Sunset clauses.* Obviously, not all of the myriad policies, programs, and publications produced by all the conferences, unions, and divisions and by the General Conference are of equal value. Some are extremely important and others are disregarded as soon as they come into existence. We could further increase constituent confidence in the leadership of this church if we mandated that all the programs we create include sunset clauses. These clauses set a definite life span on the programs to which they are attached, and require a systematic evaluation before the programs can be extended beyond that limit. Every program and service our church offers should submit to periodic review by those whom they are intended to serve.

### Hints of a bureaucratic trend

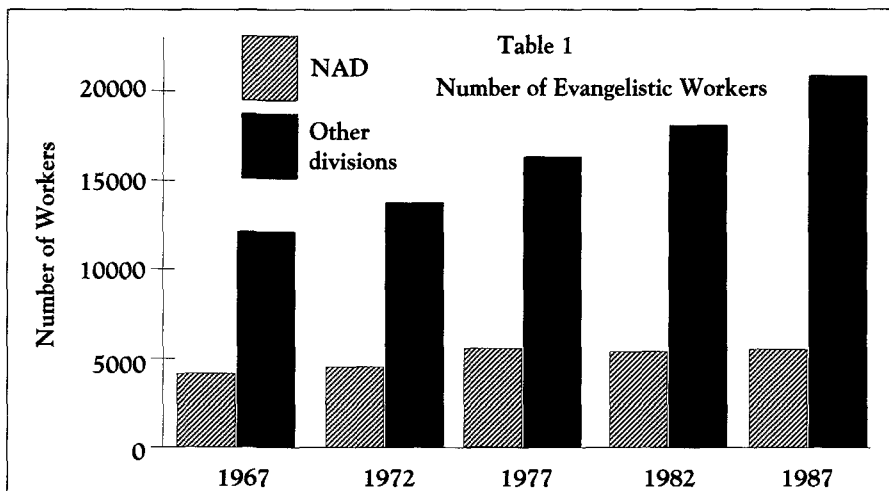
Many "Anglo" churches, whether in North America, Europe, or Australia, show little or no "kingdom growth" (i.e., growth other than that which occurs by transfer); and some, an actual decrease in membership. But the greatest indictment we face is the dropping percentage of members who attend Sabbath school and church.

As a child I remember hearing our organization called a movement rather than a church. Somehow the term *movement* doesn't seem to fit with the lack of growth in certain sectors. Could it be that over the years some programs or in-

stitutions that were established to meet very real needs have developed special interest groups that are more concerned with self-preservation than mission? If so, do these groups now have an influence on the church decision-making and resource-allocation processes that is disproportionate to their contribution to its mission? These fundamental questions deserve immediate attention.

Each level of the church organization and each of the church's institutions naturally heeds some simple rules of economics and human nature. They each (1) spend the money they have available, (2) search for ways to secure more money, and (3) increase their bureaucracies, frequently at the expense of their spiritual objectives. And, at least in the North American Division, there seems to be another major rule at work—a rule that involves accountability. The closer each organization operates to its lay constituency, the more effectively it holds the "foliage" in check. Our members insist on efficient, purposeful management. At conference sessions they do not hesitate to deal with matters about which they feel keenly, matters such as conference office overstaffing, diminished emphasis on mission, and inadequate attention to our youth and educational services.

The levels of church organization



above the local conference exist primarily to help member organizations and institutions achieve common objectives. Here the church faces two dangers: (1) that our members may misunderstand the role of these higher organizations and therefore misjudge their success, and (2) that leadership may conduct business without realizing that they are losing the confidence of the membership regarding those decisions.

While leaders at the higher levels have less direct contact with the membership of the church, the members' trust in their leadership is an indispensable commodity for the successful operation of the church—a voluntary organization. There is evidence that this trust is in decreasing supply. We must take aggressive steps to counteract this trend. Some options here include increasing to more than token levels lay membership on governing boards and key committees, and creating an atmosphere in these bodies that encourages free discussion of difficult issues.

In what areas does the pressure to maintain structure and policies take precedence over the mission of the church? I will describe three of the many that could be mentioned.

### Our literature distribution system

Many Seventh-day Adventists assume that the books our literature evangelists sell cost as much as they do because of high publishing costs. But production costs in our publishing houses are reasonable and do not explain the high price of subscription books. The Home Health Education Service (HHES) centers purchase the books from the publishers and provide them to the literature evangelists, who then sell them to the public. A

500 percent markup from the publisher's selling price is not unusual; in fact, in some areas of the United States the markup is substantially higher.

Now here's the kicker. Even the return that high-markup provides does not cover the cost of this sales system. To make up the difference, each conference must allocate a set percentage of its total tithe, and in some cases they must throw in an additional amount of tithe based on the value of the books sold.

In several unions, conference subsidies to the sales system are so large that the conferences involved could actually afford to distribute more books if, instead of using the present sales system, they used their appropriations to purchase the books directly from the publishers and gave them away! In fact, this program has become so expensive that one conference executive committee had to limit the number of books sold. Because each sale increased the appropriation of tithe dollars to the HHES, the conference simply could not afford to give its literature evangelists free rein to sell books.

Something is dreadfully wrong when we have to limit sales because of the policies governing distribution.

Please note, I am not advocating the dismantling of the HHES distribution system. I believe that it still has an important role to play. However, we must have individuals who are not bound to the current tradition-driven system review HHES's financial and distribution policies. We need a refocusing on the objective of distributing truth-filled literature as widely as possible and at the lowest prices possible. The effectiveness of the printed page in fulfilling the gospel commission mandates our search for a more cost-effective method.

### Cost of an Adventist college education

The total loss of enrollment in North American Division Seventh-day Adventist colleges during the past 10 years has equaled the closing of one college. Demographic studies show that even more difficult years lie ahead. Among the factors behind this decline are the dwindling pool of college-age young people and an apparent lack of commitment on the part of church members to provide their children with an Adventist education.

College leaders tend to view these two factors as the ones primarily responsible for the declining enrollment. But there is another factor we must not ignore: the dramatic increase in the cost of obtaining an Adventist college education. Parents consider this the primary factor.

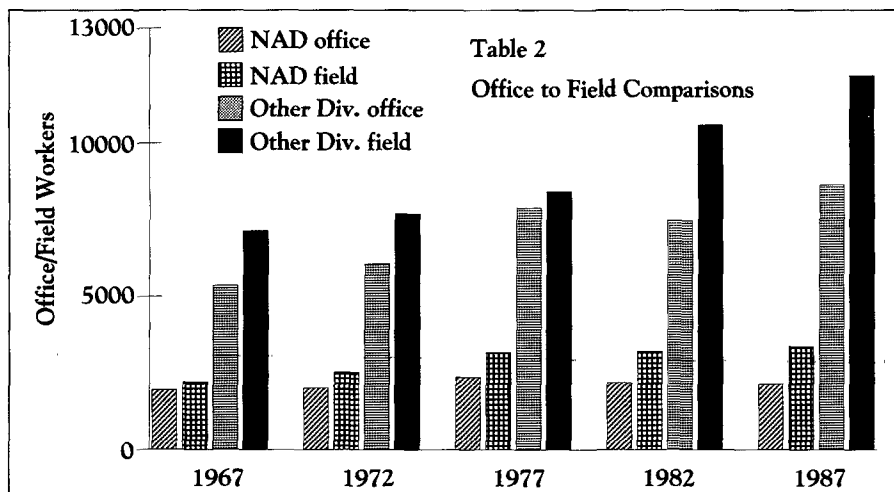
Are we providing college education as cost-effectively as possible?

A study comparing the annual inflation rate to the tuition increases of Adventist colleges since 1970 reveals that in most years tuition increased at almost twice the rate of inflation. During this same period church subsidies remained proportionate to the tithe, which increased at a rate close to that of inflation.

As enrollment decreased, reductions in operating expenses did not keep pace. College boards, forced to choose between additional staff reductions or significant increases in tuition, chose the latter. Over the years, this trend has placed an Adventist college education out of the reach of many members, further reducing enrollment—and adding momentum to the vicious spiral.

As part of their evaluation process, college accrediting associations compare what a college spends on teaching to what it spends on structure and administration. Using their results, they then compare the college with others across the United States. Recently, such a study revealed that in funds expended for nonteaching expenses, one of our large educational institutions fell into the top 2 percentile of United States colleges.

How tragic that an educational institution whose primary duty is to provide an Adventist education for as many young people as possible has demonstrated a greater commitment to maintaining the structure than to its educational mission. Since this same institution currently has less than 50 cents in hand for every dollar that it owes, it is technically bankrupt. It must



borrow regularly just to make payroll. The banks continue to lend money because they know the church will keep the dollars flowing—any other institution would have had to close its doors.

Something must be done. We know the most difficult years are yet ahead. Forecasts predict that the pool of college-age students will decrease before it begins to increase again. While we can do nothing to increase the size of this pool, we are not helpless. The General Conference-sponsored "Project Affirmation" may increase the commitment of church members to Adventist education. And our colleges should continue to aggressively communicate to our members the values of an Adventist college education. But these steps alone will not suffice.

Each of our college boards should commission independent efficiency studies of their institutions—and apply the recommendations. Also, we could learn much from a careful study of those other church-related colleges that operate efficiently.

At this time appropriations to our colleges are granted without condition. Perhaps we should amend our appropriations policies to include incentives for efficient operations. We need to establish clear target ratios relating, for example, infrastructure to revenue and faculty to students. Then we should condition the granting of operational appropriations on the colleges' attaining these target ratios. Church and college administrators need to be able to assure church members that they are doing everything they can to provide Adventist education for their youth at the lowest possible cost.

Other related questions also deserve attention. For example, what role does a college play in achieving the mission of the church? How does a college's raising or lowering of standards affect enrollment? What importance does the college give to the church's mission?

The funding policies of the church, whether they involve the education, HHES, retirement, or any other program, determine not only how much money flows to an entity but also which entities take priority. Because the funds are allocated by policy, the needs of the recipient entities take priority over all other operations the conference carries on.

This system, then, requires that the conference first pay out to these entities what the policy stipulates as theirs, and that it conduct the rest of its operations as best it can with what is left over. So

## Office and field comparisons

At the North American Division year-end meeting (1988) in Minneapolis, a conference president read a statement from his executive committee pleading for a reduction in the number of staff in the higher levels of the church. How is the church doing in the matter of office staff per field workers and per members? The following charts and analyses will enable readers to judge for themselves whether the church has become top heavy.

The figures, based on five-year intervals from 1967 to 1987, are taken from the annual statistical reports of the General Conference. These statistical reports divide all church employees into two broad categories: *evangelistic* and *institutional*. *Evangelistic* includes four sub-categories: (1) evangelistic and pastoral workers; (2) administrative and office workers; (3) Bible instructors; and (4) literature evangelists. *Institutional* includes seven: (1) university, college, and secondary school teachers; (2) primary school teachers; (3) others in educational institutions; (4) food company employees; (5) health-care institution employees; (6) retirement home and orphanage employees; and (7) publishing house employees.

The General Conference statistical reports include literature evangelists among evangelistic workers. We believe that literature evangelists play an important role in fulfilling the mission of the church. But because they are not salaried, are not assigned to a particular church, and there is no way of knowing whether they are full- or part-time workers, we have not included them in the following statistics.

**Table 1—Number of evangelistic workers**

Organ	1967	1972	1977	1982	1987	% Inc	Ratio/mem	
							1967	1987
GC	379	442	544	884	709	+87		
NAD	4,139	4,531	5,532	5,365	5,507	+33	1:97.1	1:129.9
Other divs	12,504	13,734	16,304	18,051	20,845	+67	1:107.6	1:224.0
Totals	17,022	18,707	22,380	24,300	27,061	+59	1:102.7	1:199.0

You will notice from Table 1 that the General Conference staff has increased by 87 percent, the world divisions excluding North America 67 percent, and North America only 33 percent.

**Table 2—Number of office/field workers**

	1967	1972	1977	1982	1987	% Inc	Ratio off/field	
							1967	1987
NAD								
Office	1,944	2,013	2,367	2,168	2,138	+10	1:1.1	1:1.6
Field	2,195	2,518	3,165	3,197	3,369	+53		
Other divs								
Office	5,356	6,050	7,883	7,466	8,630	+61	1:1.3	1:1.4
Field	7,148	7,684	8,421	10,585	12,215	+71		
World								
Office	7,679	8,505	10,794	10,518	11,477	+49	1:1.2	1:1.4
Field	9,343	10,202	11,586	13,782	15,584	+67		

Twenty years ago there was almost one office worker for every field worker in the North American Division. By 1987 there were 1.6 field workers for every one in the office. The world divisions have seen hardly any change in the ratio. They have been adding office staff at almost the same rate at which they have added field workers.

**Table 3—Membership**

Organ	1967	1972	1977	1982	1987	% Inc
NAD	401,970	470,622	551,884	642,317	715,260	+78
Other divs	1,345,644	1,790,781	2,397,874	3,255,497	4,669,157	+247
Totals	1,747,614	2,261,403	2,949,758	3,897,814	5,384,417	+208

**Table 4—Number of institutional workers**

Organ	1967	1972	1977	1982	1987	% Inc	Ratio/mem	
							1967	1987
NAD	21,238	24,561	27,216	33,631	40,505	+91%	1:18.9	1:17.7
Other divs	18,738	20,149	23,254	29,082	34,703	+85%	1:71.8	1:134.5

The most pressing need is the placing of more workers in the field and less in the office. As Ellen White advised 85 years ago: "There should today be in the field one hundred well qualified laborers where now there is but one" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 249).



## Ellen G. White on change

Ellen White was an innovator and never satisfied with the status quo. Her motto seemed to be "We can always do it better." The book *Evangelism* collects a number of her statements on the subject of change. While most of these are given in the context of evangelism, the principles apply just as well to church structure and policies. We print a sampling from pages 104-107.

**Do not block the wheels**—"There are some minds which do not grow with the work but allow the work to grow far beyond them. . . . Those who do not discern and adapt themselves to the increasing demands of the work, should not stand blocking the wheels, and thus hindering the advancement of others."

**Methods to be improved**—"There must be no fixed rules; our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon. But under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unity must and will be preserved."

**Different methods from the past**—"Means will be devised to reach hearts. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the work in the past; but let no one, because of this, block the way by criticism."

**Avoid a rut**—"God's workmen must labor to be many-sided men; that is, to have a breadth of character, not to be one-idea men, stereotyped in one manner of working, getting into a groove, and unable to see and sense that their words and their advocacy of truth must vary with the

class of people they are among, and the circumstances that they have to meet."

**Individual methods of labor**—"The leaders among God's people are to guard against the danger of condemning the methods of individual workers who are led by the Lord to do a special work that but few are fitted to do. Let brethren in responsibility be slow to criticize movements that are not in perfect harmony with their methods of labor. Let them never suppose that every plan should reflect their own personality. Let them not fear to trust another's methods; for by withholding their confidence from a brother laborer who, with humility and consecrated zeal, is doing a special work in God's appointed way, they are retarding the advancement of the Lord's cause" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 259).

**Not conservative**—In *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 263, Ellen White describes the kind of leadership we need at this time: "When God raises up men to do His work, they are false to their trust if they allow their testimony to be shaped to please the minds of the unconsecrated. He will prepare men for the times. They will be humble, God-fearing men, not conservative, not policy [expedient] men; but men who have moral independence and will move forward in the fear of the Lord. They will be kind, noble, courteous; yet they will not be swayed from the right path, but will proclaim the truth in righteousness whether men will hear or whether they will forbear."

when there is a financial crunch these appropriations—protected by policy—remain unassailable even though it means that the conference must reduce office and pastoral staff or limit, for instance, educational and youth programs.

We need a process that will balance our financial policies. This process, of course, must include an evaluation of how the agencies and programs these funds support relate to the primary mission of the church.

### Our hospital system

In the United States, the entire health-delivery system has been undergoing an upheaval of mammoth proportions. According to the American Hospital Association 96 hospitals closed in 1987, 102 closed in 1988, and another 100 are expected to close in 1989. The economic pressures that forced these clo-

sures are having their impact on Seventh-day Adventist hospitals as well.

When an institution files for bankruptcy, its creditors will try to recover their losses from any potential source of revenue. Hospitals that file for bankruptcy are no exception. While it has not been tested in court, some legal experts believe that if a substantial part of the Adventist hospital system should collapse, creditors would attempt to recover lost assets not only from the medical and other assets of sister Adventist Health Systems divisions (lateral liability), but also from nonmedical church assets—in other words, from the church itself (ascending liability). It is imperative that we take steps to increase the protection from such potential loss.

But we cannot address the issue of ascending liability until we address the matter of governance. Logic dictates that

liability should rest with the same group that exercises control. When the same group does not carry both risk and control, responsibility declines and frequently disaster follows.

The fact that in our present health system control and risk are not firmly linked poses great dangers to us. The current confusing system urgently needs review. To achieve the health mission of the church, to maintain successful financial operations, and to limit liability and so protect denominational assets, we must have effective governance.

Currently, the union conferences own and operate Adventist Health Systems (AHS). We have a national organization—Adventist Health Systems/US—but its role is largely advisory. Meanwhile, the fear of ascending liability has led the General Conference to take a significant role in the governance of the health system.

The size and composition of the various AHS division boards makes this extremely complex situation even more difficult. With few exceptions, these boards have 35-50 members. The dynamics of a group this size more closely parallel those of a congregation than those of a board! Growth beyond optimum size reduces the members' participation, and more important, their sense of individual responsibility.

Further complicating this situation is the fact that many of the directors have not been placed on these governing boards because of their knowledge or because they have medical or financial skills. Rather, they have been placed there to represent various church constituencies. Such directors may face conflicts of interest that require them to choose between protecting the interests of their constituencies and those of the corporation. (These problems of size and conflict of interest are not unique to AHS governing boards. Many of the governing boards of the church's other organizations and institutions give evidence of the same problems.)

AHS hospitals vary widely in their commitment to the distinctive mission of the church. I am aware of, and deal with, several that proudly identify themselves with our church and add significantly to the Adventist influence in the community. But the mission statements of some of our hospitals commit them only to the fulfillment of traditional Christian values and not to the promotion of either the distinctive identity or



health message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The contribution of a hospital toward the fulfillment of the church's mission directly corresponds to the spiritual vision and commitment of its president. No system-wide supervisory process can supercede his influence. Some hospital CEOs who are less mission-sensitive successfully substitute platitudes and promises for decisive action. And often hospital boards are so deeply involved in the struggle for financial survival in a chaotic marketplace that little attention is given to the fundamental reasons for which these institutions exist.

On the positive side, one way in which some hospitals have been witnessing to the church's teachings is through the change from the routine with which they mark the beginning of the Sabbath hours. Guests and patients hear chimes, an announcement, or a change in the background music. Indications such as these make the public aware that they are in an Adventist institution and that the Sabbath has begun. Couldn't all of our hospitals appropriately bear this kind of witness?

Not long ago a leader of one of our larger medical institutions anxiously searched for the name of *even one* person who had been won for Christ through the influence of that hospital. This same administrator had prohibited the local pastor from visiting interests generated by hospital services! Tokenism is no substitute for a commitment to mission! It is time for the leaders of our hospitals to demonstrate as much interest in specific, mission-related activities and objectives as in the myriad of ratios and other indicators of fiscal health. The mission-related objectives of hospitals should be just as measurable and quantifiable as a cash-flow analysis. We should remember that it is medical *missionary* work, not necessarily acute care, that is the right arm of the church.

These three examples show clearly

how structure tends to take primacy over mission. We could add many more to them. If we are truly mission-driven rather than tradition-driven, we will resist the pressures of the special-interest groups and make the structural and policy changes necessary to rectify these situations.

### General Conference to be evaluated

Recently, by approving Elder Neal Wilson's proposal for an evaluation of all the services the church headquarters offers, the General Conference officers took a significant step in this very direction. Wilson's proposal called for a contract with an individual not employed at the General Conference to evaluate all these services through surveying those receiving them. This study is now under way, and the administration plans to submit the findings—and recommendations regarding which services should be continued and which should not—to the 1989 Annual Council. The savings realized from the resulting adjustments will be used for Global Strategy—the penetration of unentered areas of the world with the gospel.

All institutions and levels of the church should undertake similar procedures. The Lord established the church to achieve a specific mission. Let's be sure not only that we provide all the services that are needed, but also that all those we provide actually contribute toward the achieving of our mission. Reasserting the primacy of mission over structure will lead to both evangelistic progress and an increase in constituent confidence.

Be assured, dear reader, that I love and am proud of our church, and that I am completely committed to its worldwide mission. Furthermore, I believe that to facilitate the fulfilling of that mission, God led in the development of our system of church government.

Before writing this article, I spent hours in prayer and meditation. I am

aware that there are those who could misapply what I have written and so could undermine the confidence of some of those who have trusted the church and its leadership. I pray that such misuse will not occur and that in the search for solutions we will be sensitive to God's leading. In fact, I believe that instead of promoting disunity and undermining confidence, the net effect of discussions such as this is just the opposite. I believe that we build credibility when we are candid about problems the church faces.

No one should necessarily equate questioning the status quo with rebelling against the church, its institutions, or its leadership. Such questioning may merely be one step—an essential step at that—in the process of identifying what continues to contribute to the completion of the mission the Lord assigned His church. At a time when disunity among the believers and lack of confidence in the church pose major obstacles to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, no leader wants to appear to be causing further disunity. Yet we ought to encourage church leaders to place themselves on the side of efficient and effective leadership.

It is time for every church member, whether church employee or laity, to accept accountability before God for progress toward our divinely appointed task. We must all remember that structure is only a tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to accomplish His work on earth—it is not an end in itself! Though we can no more legislate the return of the Lord than can an earthly government legislate total justice and prosperity, we can pray for eyes that see and for hearts that are courageous enough to make the changes needed.

Remember the fig tree. Any healthy tree has a balance between foliage and fruit. Jesus did not condemn the tree because it had leaves—but because it did not produce fruit. We must each evaluate the "leaf/fruit" ratio in our own lives and in the church we serve. We must each strive to be like the tree the psalmist described "planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps. 1:3). ■

## Why not let our light shine?

A survey of the U.S. population conducted for the Adventist Media Center during 1988 revealed that the general public has a very low name-recognition of our church. Imagine how the publicity surrounding the immense contributions of the infant heart transplant program would have assisted in this matter had the reports identified these groundbreaking medical advances as taking place at Loma Linda Adventist Medical Center! Isn't it about time we deal with the obvious and let our light shine by including the name of our church in the names of its institutions—medical, educational, and others?

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 582.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 583.

# Possibilities of public evangelism

W. C. Scales, Jr.

**Public evangelism is still an effective soul-winning strategy for those with the vision, faith, and plan to make it work.**



W. C. Scales, Jr., is the ministerial secretary of the North American Division of the General Conference. Adapted from a presentation at the North American Division evangelism council, December 16, 1986.

**J**esus was sitting beside Jacob's well in Samaria. As He looked out over the fields and saw the tender, green stalks of grain touched by the golden sunlight, He realized that it was still several months until harvest-time.

But Jesus also saw groups of people coming to the well for water. He discerned in these groups another harvest that was ready to be reaped. So He drove an important lesson home to His disciples. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest," He said (John 4:35). Jesus was speaking of a spiritual harvest. Perhaps He was saying Raise your sights; look at all of the people. Look at the great potential of your ministry. Look at the possibilities of public evangelism.

During the past 30 years it has been my privilege to be involved in 37 public evangelistic efforts. For a number of these years I had the privilege of working as part of a family evangelistic team with my father, my mother, and my wife. Practically all of these crusades lasted six to eight weeks, some even longer. In 24 of these meetings I served as the evangelist, and in the other 13 I was an associate. No two meetings were alike. There were many challenges and obstacles, but God enabled us to meet every challenge and overcome every obstacle. I am persuaded that there are possibilities in public evangelism.

The Holy Spirit has distributed a variety of gifts throughout the church. These include teaching, administration, hospi-

tality, faith, wisdom, pastoring, and also personal and public evangelism. All the gifts of the Spirit are essential to the edification of the church.

I understand that some ministers believe that the days of public evangelism are in the past. But I believe that the best days for public evangelism are in the future, and that this church needs to encourage, strengthen, and support as never before the work of personal and public evangelism. The reason that I mention both public and personal evangelism is that one cannot operate effectively without the other.

Ellen White speaks of guarding against the tendency to tie up men in office work who might be a power for good in public meetings and who could do a larger and a more important work on the public platform, in preaching before unbelievers the truths of God's Word. She calls upon God's messengers to warn the cities while mercy still lingers and while multitudes are yet susceptible to the converting influence of Bible truth.<sup>1</sup>

She was deeply concerned that the church was not doing enough to help city dwellers: "When I think of the many cities yet unwarned, I cannot rest. It is distressing to think that they have been neglected so long. For many, many years the cities of America, including the cities in the South, have been set before our people as places needing special attention. A few have borne the burden of working in these cities; but, in comparison with the great needs and the many opportunities, but little has been done." She appeals: "Shall we not plan to send messengers all through these fields, and support them liberally? Shall not the

ministers of God go into these crowded centers, and there lift up their voices in warning to multitudes?"

"The cities must be worked. The millions living in these congested centers are to hear the third angel's message." <sup>2</sup> "All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in." <sup>3</sup>

In the book *Evangelism* Ellen White's counsels have been gathered together. These inspired messages give us all of the details on how to plan for and conduct public evangelistic efforts, how to get decisions, what to preach, how to establish new converts, how to work in small communities as well as metropolitan areas. She speaks of the importance of Bible instructors, music evangelism, health evangelism, child evangelism, and literature evangelism. She calls for the establishment of memorials in every city through church planting. And finally she speaks of the final triumph of this message when the earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord.

As I study the Bible, the book *Evangelism*, and other writings of Ellen White, I am more convinced than ever of the possibilities of public evangelism here in the North American Division. However, in order for all of us to realize our full possibilities and potential in public evangelism, there are three things that we need.

### Vision

The first thing we need is spiritual vision to see the invisible. Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Sometime ago a shoe salesman from the United States went to an undeveloped country to explore the possibility of selling shoes. After arriving at his destination, he sent back the following telegram to the manufacturer: "Nobody wears shoes in this part of the world. I want to come home at once." His employer honored his request and brought him back home. When another salesman was sent to that country in his place, he looked at the situation and sent back a telegram saying "Send all the shoes you can—everybody here needs shoes." And he sold shoes in large numbers. The difference in the salesmen was that one had vision and one did not.

Two men look out through the same bars. One sees the mud and the other sees the stars. Two men are walking through a

field. One man is from the city, the other from the country. The city dweller sees the soil as filth, something to be scraped off one's shoes. The farmer sees the soil as a thing of beauty, nourishment for his growing crops, the basic source of his financial security. The soil is the same, but the men are different. It all depends on the clarity of one's vision.

Two ministers look at Harvest 90. One sees only a slogan, another program being handed down from higher levels of organization, so he puts it in "File F," ignores it, settles down in his rocking chair of unconcern, and takes it easy. The other minister sees Harvest 90 as a heaven-born strategy, an opportunity to prioritize evangelism and hasten the coming of our Lord. So he prays and plans and works and reaps an abundant harvest. You see, vision makes the difference.

What kind of vision do we have? Is it blurred or is it clear? If it is blurred, then we need to put on our spiritual eyeglasses. Perhaps our eyes need to be anointed with the eye salve of the Holy Ghost so that we can see things from the divine perspective.

There are unlimited possibilities all around us. We need to pray, "Lord, open our eyes that we may see the possibilities of public evangelism." I am reminded again of the words of Jesus, "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

God's church today needs leaders with spiritual vision to see the invisible. A leader with vision sees souls in dark countries. He sees church buildings where there are only vacant lots. He sees lives changed by the power of the gospel and a harvest of souls standing on the sea of glass singing the Song of Moses and the Lamb. So the first thing we need in order to realize the maximum possibilities of public evangelism is spiritual vision to see the invisible.

### Faith

The second thing we need is strong faith to believe the incredible. One day when Jesus was on His way to the Temple in Jerusalem, He passed a fig orchard. He was hungry. He noticed a fig tree in the distance that seemed to be full of leaves. This suggested that fruit might be growing on the tree. When Jesus got closer, He was disappointed. There was no fruit. He found nothing but leaves. So He uttered a curse against the tree. The next

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**"Nobody wears shoes in this part of the world. I want to come home at once."**

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morning when the disciples noticed that the tree was withering away, they expressed their amazement at what had happened. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:21, 22).

First of all, we need faith in God's ability—we must believe not only that God is, but also that "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

In the book *Gospel Workers* we read: "The worker for God needs strong faith. Appearances may seem forbidding; but in the darkest hour there is light beyond. The strength of those who, in faith, love and serve God will be renewed day by day. The understanding of the Infinite is placed at their service, that in carrying out His purposes they may not err. Let these workers hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end, remembering that the light of God's truth is to shine amid the darkness that enshrouds our world. . . .

"[God] will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him." <sup>4</sup> Isn't that wonderful? Experience has strengthened my faith in God's ability. It has taught me to believe that God can do anything.

In response to God's command, Moses sent 12 men to spy out the land of Canaan. Only two out of the 12, Caleb and Joshua—a minority, if you please—were men of strong faith. They came back with an encouraging report. With faith and courage Caleb said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:20). Joshua and he were optimists. They believed in the miracle-working power of God.

The other 10 men doubted God's ability, and they came back with a report that magnified the dangers and difficul-

ties they had seen. In the presence of those tall, husky giants, they felt that they were like grasshoppers. Their faith in an omnipotent God had just about fizzled out.

I am reminded of the old story about the man who promised that he would walk across a cable that extended over Niagara Falls. He set the date, and a great crowd gathered out of curiosity to see if he could do what he promised. There was complete silence as he balanced himself and carefully put one foot in front of the other and walked slowly across the cable to the other side. Then he promised that the next day he would repeat his performance, only this time he would push a wheelbarrow across in front of him.

As the story is told, on the next day one man walked through the crowd saying to everybody he met, "I believe he can do it. I saw him walk across yesterday, and I believe that he can repeat the performance pushing a wheelbarrow in front of him." When the one who was to perform heard this man talking, he went to him and said, "Do you really believe that I can be successful?" The man responded, "Yes." He asked him again, "Do you really believe that I can push a wheelbarrow across in front of me?" The man said, "Yes, I saw you walk across yesterday, and I know you can do it today." Then the performer said to the man, "If you really believe that I can do it, then get in the wheelbarrow." The man who had been doing all the talking became frightened and embarrassed, and began to make all kinds of excuses.

That kind of faith will never bring success in public evangelism. We are living in an age when God is calling for men and women who have enough faith to believe the incredible.

When I read about a bush that burned but was not consumed, that's incredible! But I believe it because the Bible says it. When I read that a donkey talked to a man, I say that's incredible. But I believe it because the Word of God says it.

When I read that the walls of Jericho came tumbling down, that Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still, and that Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and then thrown out on dry land, that's incredible! But I believe it because the Bible says it.

When I read that Elijah called down fire from heaven, that Daniel was thrown into a lions' den and that the lions didn't harm him, that the three Hebrew worthies were thrown into a fiery furnace and

the fire didn't burn them, and that Jesus fed a crowd of 5,000 men besides women and children on two little fish and five loaves of bread, it's all incredible! But thank God I believe it because the Bible says it.

If God ordains that through the foolishness of preaching in public evangelism thousands will be drawn to the foot of the cross, I am just simple enough to believe it because all things are possible with God.

Not only do we need faith in God's ability, but we need faith to make bigger plans. "We are altogether too narrow in our plans. . . . We must get away from our smallness and make larger plans. There must be a wider reaching forth to work for those who are nigh and those who are afar off."<sup>5</sup>

During the past few years I have been following the wholistic approach in conducting evangelistic meetings. Many of the concepts that I have been following are outlined in *Evangelism and Church Growth Manual*, a book of more than 300 pages. It has just been updated and expanded, and it is available through my office.

The wholistic approach that we have been using includes the presentation of the gospel, health principles, family enrichment, youth evangelism, the ministry of music, literature evangelism, and personal evangelism with a strong emphasis on lay involvement. We usually start planning a Real Truth Crusade at least one year prior to the opening date of the crusade. First, we meet with pastors and church officers. Then we form a planning council and an executive committee. We schedule four to six mass evangelism rallies prior to the crusade. These rallies are usually held on Sabbath afternoons, and they last for approximately two hours. At these rallies our emphasis is on inspiration, information, small groups, and outreach.

One of the first things we do is launch a prayer crusade and initiate a prayer group ministry. Then we launch what we call a kindness crusade and challenge the church members to greatly expand their circle of friends through deeds of kindness. We distribute a list of 75 ways of being kind. This usually motivates church members to reach out and make new friends. Church members are interviewed each Sabbath thereafter and given an opportunity to share kindness experiences. This usually motivates

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## The first time I tried a kindness crusade in one of our churches, seven of the members each brought 25 or more non-members.

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other members to get involved in reaching out to others.

The first time I tried a kindness crusade in one of our churches, seven of the members each brought 25 or more non-members to the grand opening of our evangelistic series. One person brought 63 individuals. More recently one young man made so many friends in connection with our kindness crusade that he brought 90 non-Adventist persons to the grand opening of our crusade. Kindness really pays.

This is a powerful confirmation of the testimony of the Lord through Ellen White that "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one."<sup>6</sup>

Our wholistic approach also includes the organizing of about 20 evangelistic committees that involve church members according to their interests and spiritual gifts. Our church members enroll large numbers of persons in the Real Truth Bible Course series. We place a strong emphasis on publishing evangelism, utilizing our literature evangelists. We promote an extensive health ministry during the pre-effort work and also during the crusade. We operate a summer day camp involving several hundred young people. We feature workshops geared to meet the felt needs of the community. All of these things contribute greatly to the wholistic concept. We use the best professionals we can find to lead out and assist in these activities.

Only those with strong faith can break the barriers of small achievements and move on to do greater exploits for God. Someone has said that an organization seldom achieves more than its leaders believe it can. This places a tremendous responsibility upon each one of us as

leaders. Ellen White says, "The leaders in God's cause, as wise generals, are to lay plans for advance moves all along the line."<sup>7</sup> Only men and women with strong faith can lay these kinds of plans. A conference or church rarely exceeds the measure of faith manifested by its leaders. With one leader the work moves forward; with another leader in the same field the work stagnates.

We cannot lead our people into a latter-rain experience unless we ourselves have a faith relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. God give us faith to believe the incredible. Faith to move mountains, faith to inspire our people, and faith to ask, attempt, and expect great things from the Almighty.

### Power

Finally, the third thing we need in order to realize our maximum potential in public evangelism is divine power to achieve the impossible. In Acts 1:8 we read, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." When the Holy Spirit worked through the disciples on the day of Pentecost, 3,000 souls were baptized. That same Holy Spirit will work through God's disciples today, manifesting a divine power that will achieve the impossible.

God is still in the miracle-working business. When I was a pastor one of my members wanted to be a lay Bible instructor. But she had suffered a serious back injury in an automobile accident and had trouble balancing herself and walking up and down steps.

She heard about a special prayer and anointing service that was to take place at camp meeting. I happened to be one of the five pastors who were asked to participate in that special service. I remember it very vividly. Fifty people were in a room. When the time came for the people to be anointed, that lady was the first one I was to anoint. It had been made very clear that ministers have no power to heal anybody, but that we believed in a divine power and that God was able to heal in accordance with His will. When I anointed her, she cried out, "I don't feel any more pain." She had been experiencing pain in her back for the past 11 months. But all of a sudden the pain was gone, and she never felt that pain again.

(Continued on page 29)

# Witnessing the old-fashioned way

Norman Yergen

**B**

ecause I grew up in the church, I've been exposed to dozens of evangelism programs—each guaranteed to finish God's work in a few short years.

Some were very complex, while others were simple and straightforward. Some had extensive footnotes and bibliographies, while others read more like an off-the-cuff outline. I have on my bookshelf between 12 and 15 different plans, one for each year I've attended ministerial meetings.

If you come to my church, you'll find all kinds of evangelistic toys. The oldest I've found are filmstrip projectors and reel-to-reel tape recorders. Dukanes comprised the next generation of equipment. They came with the promise of making the giving of Bible studies simple—all you had to know was how to push buttons and turn knobs. Now our church has a videocassette recorder.

I've heard administrators and some lay leaders say that our church should operate like a business, and that for us the bottom line should be numerical growth, which we can produce through strategic planning, management by objective, and strong corporate culture. This comparison brings to mind a cover-story article that appeared in *Business Week* about a year ago.

That article reviewed the business fads of the past three decades, analyzing each theory for its strengths and weaknesses.

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Boiling it all down, the article said that it's not a program or a particular style that breeds success, but rather choosing a style and making it work—that nothing offers a better chance of success than does hard work.

Such a simple conclusion annoys those of us who have spent some time and money trying to learn the secret of success. Hard work is an old-fashioned kind of idea, one that doesn't wow people.

I have to admit that it's a whole lot more fun to preach on the radio or TV than it is to go to someone's home and fight off their dogs and cats. Working with a committee to design a strategic plan is more enjoyable than working the plan. I'd rather bring in a celebrity and impress the congregation with my connections than wrestle with them over problems in their daily living.

Observation suggests to me that anyone who can sizzle the pages of the union paper can achieve upward mobility. An article I read recently reinforced this idea, suggesting that the difference between those who are promoted and those who are not has less to do with content than with style. As J. H. Boren wrote: "If you don't have anything to do, do it with style."

The reason we in North America fail at evangelism is not because there is less interest nor because the church lacks innovative evangelistic ideas. Our problem arises because we don't want to face the fact that successful evangelism requires hard work. As the saying goes, nothing beats hard work. Perhaps it's time to witness the "old-fashioned" way. ■

# The alabaster box

Sally Streib

How to give like Jesus.



Sally Streib is a freelance writer and is assistant coordinator for Shepherdess International at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**M**

ary peered through the archway that led into a cluttered room. She searched the sweaty faces of the guests, who lounged on plush couches around tables groaning under a load of elaborate foods. Sounds of dishes clattering together and the hum of mingled voices collided in the heated air.

Where could Jesus be? Had He come to the feast? She must see Him and listen to His words.

Mary found Jesus beside a fountain talking with Lazarus. She edged close to the couch where He reclined and seated herself on the tile floor. Just to be near Him made her heart sing. Jesus had forgiven her. This fact made joy swell up within her until she felt like shouting.

Jesus' musical voice reached out and encircled her. Nothing else seemed important as she listened to each word. But when He paused to enjoy a fig cake, she found her mind racing back to yesterday's events. A smile spread across her face as her fingers sought the silk ribbon that held the precious box about her neck. She traced the outline of a dove carved in the alabaster and sighed.

"Sir!" she remembered saying to the busy merchant, "I wish to purchase an alabaster box of pure spikenard for a friend."

"You want alabaster? Spikenard? Humph!" He spat the words out, his full lips curling up into a sneer. "You can't afford such, woman!" He reached toward her with a hairy hand and felt the rough surface of her homespun garment.

"Be off with you. I'm a busy man." He

brushed her aside as one would a fly.

"But . . . please . . ." she pleaded. "I have saved so long."

She fumbled with the ties on the small leather pouch that hung at her waist beneath her outer garment, then dumped its contents onto the table between them.

The merchant's beady eyes flashed and he sucked in his breath. He twisted the edges of his stubby black beard as he sorted the coins with quick jabs of his fingers.

"Over 300 denarii. More than a year's wages for the likes of you," he said, prying his eyes from the coins and fastening his gaze upon her.

Without waiting for her to speak, he turned, parted the tapestries at the back of the booth and disappeared. Mary stared with wide eyes at his retreating form. Her mind screamed *Run! Run!* but love restrained her.

In a moment the curtains jerked apart and the merchant stomped up to the table. He placed a wooden box beside the scattered coins and flipped the top up.

Mary gasped. On deep folds of scarlet silk lay six carved alabaster boxes. She must have one.

"You have enough to buy this one," the merchant said, jabbing a knobby finger at the smallest box. "A good bargain, too. After all, spikenard is for the rich."

"Spikenard," Mary whispered. She knew she wanted this fragrant ointment to pour over the Master's bruised body. He said He must soon suffer great abuse and die. With all her heart she prayed that He would be wrong, just once.

"Going to gawk all day, woman?" the merchant grumbled as he picked up the

delicate box and thrust it into her hands.

Mary hugged it to herself and turned away. She heard the clink of coins as she fled from the dark booth and burst into the sunlight. She shook to rid herself of the stare that followed her. It didn't matter. Now she owned the alabaster box. She searched for the blue ribbon in her pocket, made a large loop around her neck, and tied it to the box. It fell against her breast and lay hidden by her robe. Only she knew of the precious secret.

Suddenly Jesus' words pushed aside her memories. What had He just said? He must die soon? Mary tried to thrust the idea away. Yet, what if —?

The presence of a new thought jolted her. Why not *now*? Why not now, while He yet lived? She grasped the box, loosed it from the ribbon, broke it, and anointed Jesus' feet. Tears burst from long-restrained reservoirs inside her and mingled with the ointment. Mary removed two combs from her hair and let it tumble onto her shoulders. She took it in her hands and dried His feet.

Sweet fragrance filled the room; all eyes turned toward her.

"Just wait until I tell Deborah about this," someone said.

"She won't believe it!"

"And such a waste!" another voice sneered.

Mary winced as the harsh words penetrated her mind. She trembled and looked at the guests in horror. Then a piercing thought gouged her heart. What would Jesus think? Would He rebuke her too? Would He understand her gift? The alabaster box fell from her hands to the floor.

"Let her alone!" Jesus' voice rang out. "Can't you see what a lovely thing she has done for Me? When I die, you will bring your spices for My dead body, but Mary has brought her gift to Me while I yet live."

"Mary," He said, turning from the astonished guests to face her. "Your gift of love and gratitude will comfort Me in the terrible days ahead."

Mary gazed with joy at the kindness shining through Jesus' eyes. She knew Jesus understood and accepted her. "Wonderful Jesus, I will serve You as long as I live," she whispered. Gathering her skirts together, she rose and slipped from the room.

As a pastor's wife, I have considered this story many times. It teaches several beautiful principles that you might consider as you seek to minister to your members.

## Motivation

The reason Mary's gift ministered so perfectly to the needs of Jesus was that it burst spontaneously from a heart full of grateful love. It mirrored so much of the kind of giving that Jesus Himself modeled. He must have perceived it as an echo of His own capacity to pour His love out upon others like spring rain. The only way Mary could minister as she did was that she moved from the basis of the forgiveness, acceptance, and love she experienced in her relationship with Jesus. Because of this, she could give; she must give.

As a minister's wife, you need to discover in Jesus the same things that will become your motivation for ministering to those church members who, like Jesus, need the courage to meet life's demands.

Jesus meets your every need. He gives security and freedom from fear. "Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change . . . though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. . . . The Lord of hosts is with us" (Ps. 46:2-7, NASB).

He gives you love and opens up the opportunity to enter into love relationships. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34, NASB).

He gives the gift of hope, hope for every day of life. "Then you would trust, because there is hope; and you would look around and rest securely" (Job 11:18, NASB).

Jesus promises to fill you with His presence. Psalm 16:11 says, "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." You don't need to turn to the world for its pleasures that will in the end destroy you. You are free! You are safe! You are satisfied. From this base, you can minister as effectively as Mary did.

## Need

As you walk day by day with Jesus it isn't long before He confronts you with the needs of others and your responsibility to minister to them. Shortly before I became a minister's wife, God alerted me in a startling way.

It happened at that time of year when windblown trees touched by icy fingers sent brightly colored leaves zigzagging to earth so that when you walked, the leaves sounded like cornflakes crushing beneath your feet. My nursing uniform looked new, and my heart bubbled over with that sense of awe that comes with

**"Stop!" I croaked out in a broken voice. "I don't want to hear any more."**

learning and experiencing growth in brand-new ways.

We nursing students stood mind-deep in the study of basic psychiatric concepts that nurses needed to know. We had spent hours inside wards with humans who suffered various mental disorders. Then several of us noticed a row of buildings to the rear of the main hospital complex. Curiosity urged us to request a tour.

Our nursing instructor said, "Your curiosity is understandable, but believe me, you definitely do not want to visit those particular wards. No, I will not take you."

Perhaps this answer only made us more curious, for in due time we persuaded an orderly to take us to the forbidden place. As we entered the ward the wad of keys jingled in the orderly's hands. We passed through several doors that clanked behind us. Suddenly we found ourselves in a large room.

"This is the dayroom," the orderly explained without expression.

No words could fully describe the sight that met our eyes and the sounds that assaulted our ears. Humans in all degrees of undress performed a gamut of physical actions from thumbsucking to overt masturbation. Lips screeched, moaned, sang lewd songs, or pressed together in silence. Faces seemed marred and disfigured by a life of sin and its corresponding indulgences. The stench of excrement, urine, body odor, and filth mingled into a gut-wrenching miasma. Expressions of hopeless despair, anger, or aggression characterized the occupants.

"Some of these people have organic illnesses brought on by alcohol, drugs, and the like," our guide explained. "Others probably started with various neuroses and progressed to psychotic illnesses despite treatment." He pointed out various patients and described their symptoms. "Stop!" I croaked out in a broken voice. "I don't want to hear any more!" I wanted to run from that horrible place with its terrifying human occu-



pants and to breathe in fresh air once more. I wanted nothing more than to close my mind to the fact that these broken, degraded humans even existed.

But it was true! Humans created in the image of God, now degenerated below the level of beasts, filled those rooms. Hours later I flung myself on my bed and wept. I wept for their misery and their loss and for the pain their condition caused the gentle Creator. At this time I began to realize something of the pain and suffering in my world. Because of Jesus' love, I walked in the sunlight, not in the darkness of some back ward. I must share that love.

As a pastor's wife, the needs of people are presented before you daily. Those needs must evoke compassion in you just as they do in the heart of Jesus. As His disciple, you will desire to use your particular gifts in a ministry to those needs.

### Sacrifice

The gift that evoked such joy in the heart of Jesus brought only ridicule from the crowd. They branded it as waste. Today it is no more common nor popular to give selflessly than in the days when Jesus walked the dusty streets of Jerusalem. Yet the need for this kind of ministry is greater than ever in a world that recklessly seeks its own.

Mary gave of herself. She did not count the cost. Her gift not only amounted to a year's wages, but she gave it at risk to herself. As Jesus pointed out, no one else washed His feet at the feast, nor offered Him love and praise. The guests, especially Simon, felt uncomfortable when Mary gave Jesus what met His real needs.

### Spirit-led

The Holy Spirit urged Mary to offer her gift at the particular time when Jesus needed it most and when it could help the most people. She responded to that prompting, although it may have been an unexpected idea. Because the Holy Spirit did dwell in her, she could act upon His quiet voice.

Sometimes you have probably experienced confusion and even frustration when trying to know just when and how to minister to people. The needs around you are great. It is easier when you learn that not only is it impossible to minister to every member, but it isn't even in God's plan. What a relief and joy to just allow God to lead through His Holy Spirit.

### Obedience

Most churches, in spite of a few difficult members, will accept the pastor's wife as an individual, free her to use her special gifts, and even encourage her to function in some unique ways. But they will not forgive her if she fails to communicate in some way that she cares.

We can be thankful that Mary obeyed the promptings of the Holy Spirit. What a beautiful example she gave us, and what joy she brought to Jesus. So although the merchant sneered, Mary's joy sparkled within her. That is the miracle of giving.

In the book *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, Ellen White explains the "If and All" plan. On page 101 she says, "If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day;

"If you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God;

"If with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ—the yoke of obedience and service,

"All your murmurings will be stilled,

"All your difficulties will be removed,

"All the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved."

What a relief and a joy to allow the Holy Spirit to draw us into a close relationship with Jesus so that our ministry will mirror the Lord's more closely. We become part of that great law of love described on page 97 of the same book: "God's law is the law of love. He has surrounded you with beauty to teach you that you are not placed on earth merely to delve for self, to dig and build, to toil and spin, but to make life bright and joyous and beautiful with the love of Christ—like the flowers, to gladden other lives by the ministry of love."

As we sit at the feet of Jesus daily considering His words, our hearts will be carved and shaped like the alabaster box of ancient times and prepared to contain the sweet essence of His presence. The life of Jesus, like the crushed spikenard of old, will fill our life. It is in our hands to decide if we will break this vessel and pour out as unselfishly, as lavishly as did Mary, its gifts upon the lives of those about us.

"Oh, love waits not till friends are dead

Or friendship crashes on the rocks.

Instead, kind, fragrant words are said—

We break our alabaster box."

—Adlai Esteb ■



**NANCY MELVILLE**

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# Establishing new believers

Norma J. Sahlin

**P**eople won't know these things if we don't teach them. *Welcome to the Family* contains crucial information," states Pastor J. R. Coyle of

the Waukegan, Illinois, Seventh-day Adventist Church. Pastor Coyle has led a group of 22 new and longtime members through the seven-week course.

"I've been a lifelong member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and I learned some new things about the church," commented Frank Kean, pastor of the Burlington, Cherry Hill, and Laurel Springs churches in New Jersey. "I definitely plan to use this resource with all the newly baptized in my district." Pastor Kean has worked through *Welcome to the Family* on a one-to-one basis with 10 new members.

Thomas Cusack, associate pastor of the Hinsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church, near Chicago, taught *Welcome to the Family* in a seminar format. He says, "I held the seminar on Sabbath afternoons for seven weeks. It was open to anyone who had an interest. The group started with six, and attendance grew to an average of 15. We've already scheduled another seminar for next spring."

As an adult convert, Pastor Cusack is especially sensitive to the new member's feelings. To add interest to the presentations, he used a variety of resources, including videos, slide shows, and overheads.

Home Study International developed

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Norma J. Sahlin is the director of development and marketing for Home Study International.

the *Welcome to the Family* package to assist the local church in assimilating new members. Whether used in small groups, for individual study, or as a seminar, the format of this independent learning course is flexible; the information, essential.

The North American Division Church Ministries Department has recommended this new course for use with all new members. In the nine months since its introduction, more than 4,000 of them have learned about their new church through this means.

"In Matthew 28:19 Christ commands us to 'make disciples' [RSV]. This continues *after* the person takes a stand for Christ. It is absolutely unchristian to baptize people and then just assume they will become part of the church," states Elder J. Lynn Martell, director of church ministries for the North American Division. "There is a vast difference between joining the membership and being part of the fellowship circle of a congregation.

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**Home Study International has developed a course that acquaints converts with their new spiritual home.**

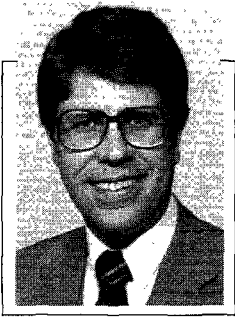
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*Welcome to the Family* is a resource to help the pastor and the congregation begin the discipling process."

Both field-testing and follow-up research indicate that the pastors who are most pleased with this course are those who use it as part of a multilevel assimilation process. Well-rounded discipling programs include at least four elements: (1) fellowship—regular interaction with a variety of church members at times other than worship; (2) faith-building study and resources; (3) small group interaction; and (4) opportunities for the new members to be involved in expressing faith through action.

Pastor Don Kack of Palmer, Alaska, used these elements in assimilating 30 new members into his church. "Before the evangelist finished his series, we began using *Welcome to the Family* in the pastor's class on Sabbath morning. We held a new members' fellowship dinner so that they met more people. In addition, I worked with 16 longtime members in a visitation program that included weekly telephone calls and monthly visits in the home. I turned my sermons into a Revelation Seminar. The Wednesday evening series included church officers explaining their jobs and sharing a personal testimony. Finally, the nominating committee is matching new people with positions in the church. The people have reacted better to this process than any other I've tried in 19 years of ministry."

*Welcome to the Family* member workbooks and instructor guides are available from Home Study International or through Adventist Book Centers. The HSI price for the member workbook is \$7.95 plus shipping (10 or more copies, \$6.95 each plus shipping); the instructor guide is \$2.99 plus shipping. ■



# Global Strategy shifts church's goal

**B**aptisms have always been the focus of the world church's programs such as Harvest 90 and One Thousand Days of Reaping. The Global Strategy Committee of the General Conference (of which I am a member) recommends a different approach.

While we may be very successful in winning large numbers of people (cur-

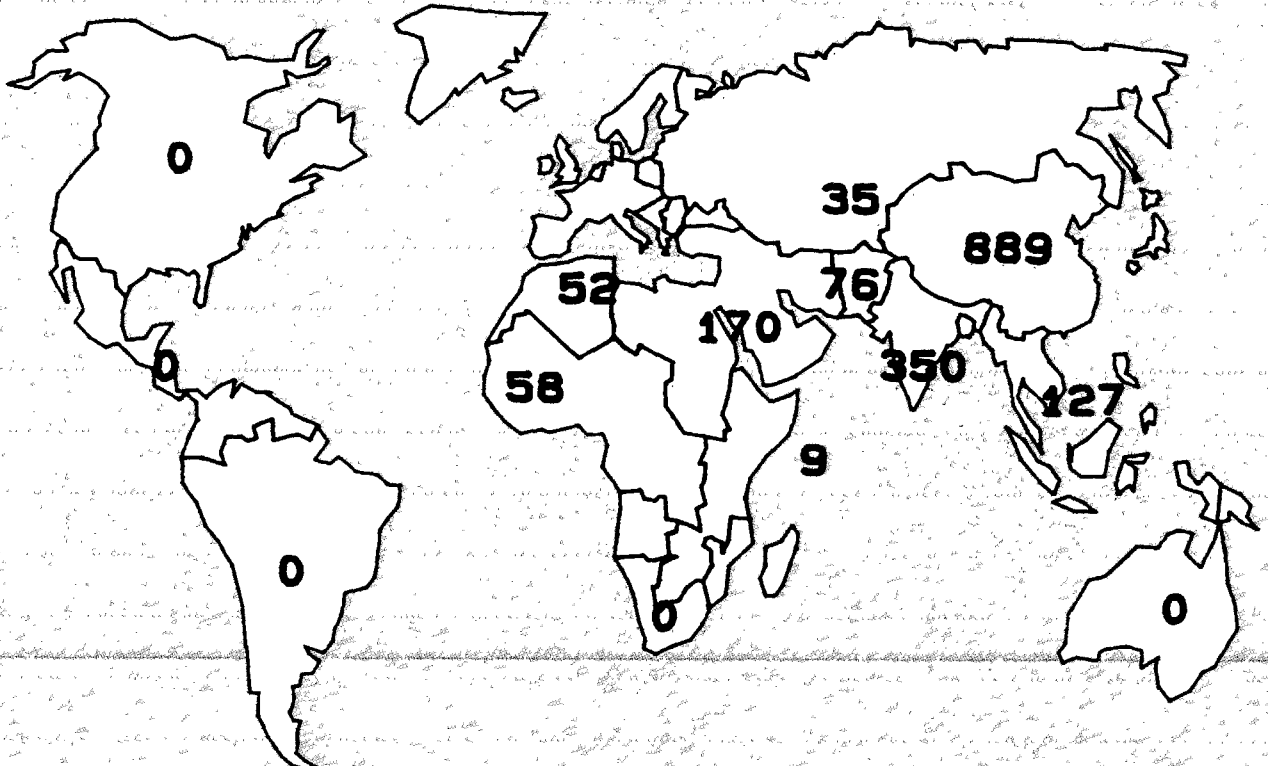
rently 1,300 a day), our baptisms originate from a small segment of the world's population. There are some 16,000 people groups untouched by Christianity, let alone by the three angels' messages. Two billion people have not even heard the name of Christ.

Three major religious groups still pose a seemingly insurmountable obstacle to the Advent message: Muslims (850 million), Hindus (650 million), and Buddhists (300 million). As long as the goal

remains baptisms, there is little incentive to penetrate these immense groups. In order to reach our baptismal goal we concentrate on those areas in which people are the most receptive. What administrator wants to attend union or division meetings and find that he is the only one short of his baptismal quota?

But Jesus commanded us to go to all the world—to places where winning converts is difficult as well as where the work is easy. Maybe what we have de-

Population segments (in millions) with no SDA presence



scribed in the past as stony or hard soil has simply been unprepared soil. Fallow land takes much work to plow and prepare for planting.

So the Global Strategy Committee recommends a goal that includes baptisms but does not make baptisms the focus. The goal is "to establish an Adventist presence in all population segments of 1 million where presently there is none."

### Adventist presence

What constitutes an Adventist presence in a population of 1 million? A certain number of Adventists? A radio program beamed into the area? An ADRA project? A colporteur selling books? Someone holding an evangelistic series? One person baptized out of that population? A company of believers? Or one local church?

The committee has chosen to define an Adventist presence as one organized church per population segment of 1 million. Some may argue that this hardly constitutes a presence, and they are probably right, but we had to begin somewhere. In addition, the committee recommends achieving a minimum density of one Adventist per 1,000 inhabitants in each population segment.

Forty-six countries with more than 5 million inhabitants each contain an Adventist population of less than 1 to a 1,000. In some countries our ratio is 1 to 11,000; in others, 1 to 500,000; and there are nations in which we have no members at all. In addition there are 1,766 population segments of 1 million or more with no Adventist presence (see map).

The recommended goal for the next quinquennium—indeed, until the year 2,000—is to plant at least one church in each population segment of 1 million where presently there is none.

This shift in strategy does not diminish the importance of baptisms; without them we could not establish these new churches. But the focus is on penetration of new territory rather than a specific number of baptisms. In one area 30 believers might constitute a church; in another area it might take 41. Whatever the number, we will be encouraged to evangelize unentered areas. Now when administrators meet, instead of discussing how many baptisms they have achieved, they will discuss what new territories have been entered or are in the process of being entered.

### Financial help

The strategy calls for each level of the church to support financially evangelization of target groups within its territory based on the size of the group. Thus the General Conference will target groups with more than 20 million people, while divisions or attached unions concentrate on groups of 5 to 19 million. Unions will take responsibility for groups of 1 to 4 million. Conferences and local fields will support the work of groups of 100,000 to 1 million, and local churches will be responsible for smaller groups.

The Global Strategy Committee also recommends prioritizing the order in which we enter these areas. People groups without a Christian presence should be our first priority. Second priority should go to those areas with no Adventist presence. Encouraging growth where Adventists reside will also be a part of the second priority.

If the church implements this strategy, it will require a change of thinking on how we plan evangelism. We usually find it easier to win converts from Christian groups than from other religions. This poses a dilemma. While we must baptize as many people as possible, this must not

be done at the expense of neglecting the hard-to-win groups. But if we shift our focus from the easy-to-win, to the hard-to-win we may then neglect the former.

### Witness is the goal

It all depends on how we interpret Matthew 24:14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." What does it mean to preach the gospel? And what is a "witness unto all nations"? Christ's incarnation provides the clue. God did not simply announce the gospel direct from heaven or through angels, but He came Himself and lived among the people He came to save.

Thus, to preach the gospel in all the world means people, Adventists, moving to live the gospel in every community. Whether people respond or not is not up to us—"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow" (1 Cor. 3:6, NIV). What God wants is for every person on Planet Earth to have the opportunity of seeing the gospel lived in the life of a fellow human being. All the world needs to see are multiplied incarnations of God's love.—J. David Newman.

## Following cows

One day, through the primeval wood,  
A calf walked home, as good calves should;

But made a trail all bent askew  
A crooked trail, as all calves do. . . .

That trail was taken up next day  
By a lone dog that passed that way;  
And then a wise bellwether sheep  
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep  
And drew the flock behind him, too,  
As good bellwethers always do.

And from that day, o'er hill and glade,

Through those old woods a path was made;

And many men wound in and out,  
And dodged, and turned, and bent about

And uttered words of righteous wrath  
Because 'twas such a crooked path.

But still they followed—do not laugh—

The first migrations of that calf. . . .

The years passed on in swiftness fleet,

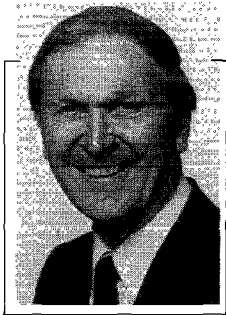
The road became a village street;  
And this, before men were aware,  
A city's crowded thoroughfare. . . .

Each day a hundred thousand rout\*  
Trailed that zigzag calf about;  
And o'er his crooked journey went  
The traffic of a continent.  
A hundred thousand men were led  
By one calf near three centuries dead. . . .

A moral lesson this might teach,  
Were I ordained and called to preach;  
For men are prone to go it blind  
Along the calf-paths of the mind,  
They work away from sun to sun  
To do what *other* men have done.  
They follow in the beaten track,  
And out and in and forth and back,  
And still their devious course pursue,  
To keep the paths that others do.  
But how the guardian angels laugh  
Who saw the first primeval calf!

—Sam Walter Foss

\**rout: tumultuous crowd*



# Ministerial evaluation: good? or bad?

Floyd Bresee

**E**valuation is essential to growth. Practice does not necessarily make perfect. It may only make permanent. If you do anything wrong often enough, it becomes the only way that feels right. Pastoral or any other kinds of skills are best learned by practice, followed by evaluation, followed by a plan for improving, followed by practice that tests and implements that plan, followed by evaluation, etc. Evaluation is essential in helping us identify our strengths and weaknesses and in providing us a foundation on which to develop a plan for personal improvement.

It is important to the pastor that not only he be evaluated, but his church also. Peter Wagner makes the bold assertion that seminary training is inadequate because it doesn't train a minister to diagnose a congregation's needs and potential.

Evaluation is frightening to some ministers. Evaluation ought to be taken seriously—but not too seriously. You will never be able to do *perfectly* everything expected of a pastor. No one is that talented. You're always going to be strong in some areas and a little weak in others. God gives each of us enough strengths to give us courage and enough weaknesses to give us humility. On the other hand, you can grow to where you are able to do *acceptably* everything expected of a pastor.

Paul's counsel is encouraging: "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a

man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. 8:11, 12).

Two lessons: First, Paul talks of a "readiness to will" and a "willing mind." God doesn't judge us by our performance, but by our willingness to perform. He smiles on those brave enough to face the limitations of their performance because they show a willingness to improve.

Second, our text speaks of performance out of "that which ye have" and according to "that a man hath." God doesn't compare a particular pastoral performance of yours with someone else's, but with the amount of talent He's given you to perform in that area.

In His parable of the talents, Jesus taught that God is as happy with His two-talent servants as He is with the five-talent ones so long as they are doing their best with what talents they have. He is disappointed with one-talent servants, not for having only one talent, but because, having so little, they try so hard to hide the fact. They give up on themselves and do nothing with what they do have.

Evaluation is often unavailable to the minister. In many professions there is a rather automatic numerical evaluation built in. The salesman knows how many sales he's chalked up. The businessman knows how much money he's made. But the only numerical evaluation of a pastor's success may be the number of persons baptized. This is one good indicator, but a very incomplete one. Conference administrators who seem to evaluate ministers on the basis of baptisms alone may not do it so much because they think it is a complete evaluation, but because it is the only means readily available.

The Seventh-day Adventist minister's paycheck doesn't evaluate his effectiveness. It is based not on how well he's doing his work, but on how long he's been doing it. The congregation doesn't volunteer much unbiased evaluation. It's not easy for the minister to get honest, accurate evaluation.

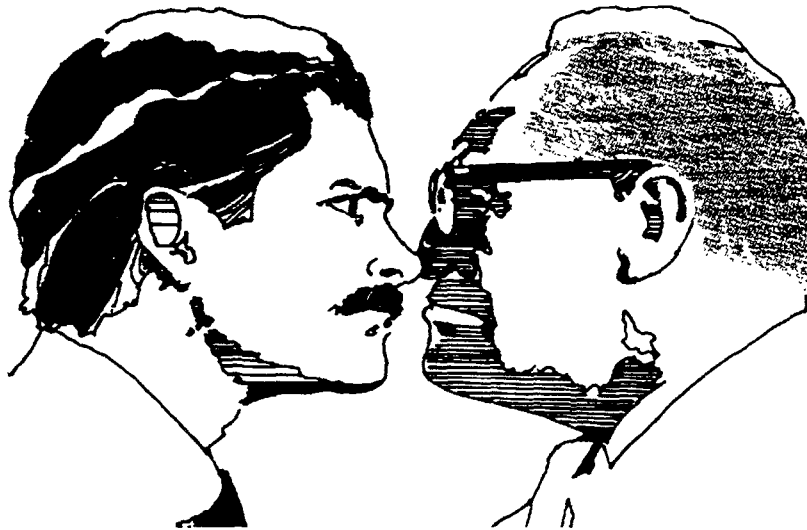
Evaluation is now available to you through a notebook prepared by the General Conference Ministerial Association. We have found that no one test or instrument fits every pastoral personality or every situation, so we have taken the cafeteria approach in preparing this notebook. One of the 16 different instruments it offers should suit your needs and personality.

There are tests included for six areas: pastor evaluated by himself; pastor evaluated by his church; pastoral job description; pastoral objectives; church evaluated by itself and/or the pastor; and church administrator evaluated by pastor, himself, or others.

One of the tests was prepared by us, but most came from conferences and were gleaned from responses to a survey of the world field. We thank those who submitted them for their good work and willingness to share.

Some conferences may use forms such as these to evaluate their pastors. This is where evaluation is sometimes perceived by pastors as bad—and it may be if not done in the right climate. At any rate, our emphasis is on self-evaluation.

These evaluation instruments come to you accompanied by our prayer that you and the Lord together may use them as a means to help you grow ever more effective in His service. See the advertisement on the opposite page for ordering information. ■



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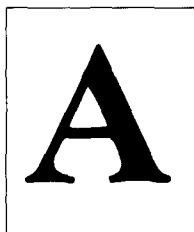
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# Toward a better weigh

Laurie Wright Brown



As a pastor, almost every day you must deal with problems that concern your church and the personal lives of your parishioners. Today's frenetic pace of life adds to the mental and emotional stresses these problems entail. On top of this, social commitments and obligations never seem to end. There's a potluck to attend, and dinner at Sister Smith's—not to mention the cooking school being planned.

Stresses and social commitments such as these may be part of the reason that your belt no longer fastens on the same notch it did last year. But with the proper motivation, and attention to nutrition and exercise, you can control your weight and live the healthy life God desires for you.

## Find lasting motivation

Whether your path to weight control involves a commercial program or individual effort, your motivation plays a leading role in determining your success. The most common motivators are social pressure, the desire for health, and a need for self-worth.

Obesity increases the likelihood of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, back problems, arthritis and other joint-related disorders, and diabetes, and makes surgery more risky. These dangers are very common initial motivators, but

motivation born out of fear seldom lasts. To keep success from fading away, you need to find other motivators.

As a pastor, you may also be motivated by social pressures, such as the actual or anticipated reactions of church members or conference officials to your increasing weight. Although, as is true of the fear of ill-health, these pressures often start the quest for weight control, after some initial success self-esteem frequently takes over as the prime motivator. The glow of satisfaction that accompanies initial weight loss perpetuates the process.

The assurance that God will give you the strength, courage, and conviction to achieve the desired weight can enhance these motivations. When confronted with temptation, it is important that you be willing to ask the Lord for His strength—and then to give Him the glory for success.

Once you have made a serious commitment to losing weight, pursue it with determination. Repeated cycles of weight loss and gain appear to make losing weight increasingly difficult.<sup>1</sup> Although you can never eliminate stress entirely, you will have a better chance of succeeding if you wait to begin your weight-loss program until stress is at a minimum.

## Choose the best foods

Having made the commitment to pursue weight management, a natural place to begin is with dietary habits. One pound of body fat stores 3500 excess calories. All other things being equal, eating 500 calories less each day for a week would produce a one-pound weight loss.

But eating some kinds of food will cause you to gain weight faster than will eating other kinds—even though you

consume the same amount of calories in each. The body must spend a lot of energy to convert the carbohydrates in potatoes, breads, and cereals into fat, but it can quite efficiently turn the fat in butter, margarine, salad dressing, mayonnaise, nuts, peanut butter, and cheese into body fat. Some researchers have reported that on a normal high-carbohydrate mixed diet the body must expend seven times the calories to convert dietary carbohydrates into a pound of body fat as it does to convert dietary fat into a pound of body fat.<sup>2</sup>

In one recent study researchers maintained the caloric level of the subjects' diet but reduced the fat content, replacing it with complex carbohydrates from vegetables, grains, and fruits. In the resulting diet only 20 percent of the calories the subjects consumed came from fat. This simple change brought about an average 13.3-pound weight loss over a period of 16 weeks.<sup>3</sup>

Dieters, then, need not deprive themselves of hearty meals in order to lose weight. They can simply replace the fatty foods in their diet with unrefined carbohydrates.

High fat intake not only promotes weight gain, but has also been implicated in heart disease and cancer, especially of the colon, breast, and prostate. The American Heart Association and the American Institute of Cancer Research recommend that a maximum of 30 percent of calories should come from fats. Few food labels disclose the percentage of the calories in the food that come from fat, but from the information on the labels you can determine it for yourself.

The label probably will tell you how many grams of fat are in the food. Multiply the grams of fat by 9 (fat has 9 calories

Laurie Wright Brown, M.P.H., R.D., is a nutrition consultant in private practice. This article is provided by the Health and Temperance Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



per gram; carbohydrate and protein, 4). Then divide the fat calories by the total calories. Say, for instance, a label shows 90 total calories and 5 grams of fat. Multiplying by 9 reveals that 45 of the 90 calories come from fat—45/90, or 50 percent.

Some of the “lite” foods are high in fat, and therefore not the best choice. For example, fat comprises about 74 percent of the calories in regular cheddar cheese. Kraft Lite ‘n Lively cheese derives 51 percent of its calories from fat, and Borden’s Lite-Line only 36 percent. But in New Holland’s “reduced fat” cheese, fat accounts for 80 percent of the calories!

You can replace visible fats with some widely available low-calorie products. For instance, you can save 100 calories by substituting butter-flavored sprinkles for a tablespoon of butter or margarine. Use the sprinkles on foods like cooked vegetables or pastas. They are also good on baked potatoes: pour a little skim milk on a baked potato, sprinkle the powder on, and mash it in with a fork.

You can save another hundred calories of fat daily by using low-calorie salad dressing in place of regular salad dressing. Substituting three cups of skim milk for the same amount of low-fat (2 percent) milk will save you another 100 calories from fat.

When recipes call for cream, try substituting evaporated skim milk. In recipes calling for an egg, substitute two egg whites—saving about 50 calories, not to mention about five grams of fat (equivalent to one teaspoon of margarine) and

270 milligrams of cholesterol.

A change in cooking methods can also reduce fat intake. Instead of frying, steam, bake, boil, or broil. When you do fry, use the low-calorie, no-stick sprays to reduce the amount of oil you need.

Since unrefined and whole-grain breads and cereals aid weight loss, look for the word *whole* in the list of ingredients of the foods you buy. In other words, buy bread made with *whole-wheat flour* rather than simply *wheat flour* (which is white flour). One study found that participants choosing whole-wheat bread lost six more pounds at the end of eight weeks than did their counterparts who chose refined bread.

Similarly, eating fruit considerably increases the satiety level (reducing hunger) as compared with consuming an equal number of calories in the form of fruit juice (see table). The fiber in whole-grain cereals and fruit increases gastric and intestinal distension. This in turn delays the onset of hunger pangs. Unrefined foods also produce less of an insulin rise and therefore lessen the hypoglycemia that produces the desire to eat again.

Since sugar contains no fiber, avoid sugary foods as much as possible. Not only do they stimulate the appetite for more sugar, but they also greatly increase the secretion of insulin—an antagonist to the enzymes that break down fat.

The best nutrition advice is to eat a wide variety of whole, unrefined foods, a good-sized breakfast and lunch, and a very light supper. Look for ways to reduce

## Unrefined foods lessen the hypoglycemia that produces the desire to eat again.

fat intake from the current average of 37 percent of calories to below 30 percent.<sup>4</sup> Over the period of a year, every 100 calories of fat eliminated from daily intake will yield a 10-pound loss.

### Plan for temptation

Many occasions focus on food. To control your weight, you must learn how to respond in these situations. As most people trying to lose weight quickly learn, a simple “No, thank you, I’m on a diet” seldom stops the persistent hostess. If the offer of food comes between meals and a simple “No, thank you!” has not worked, a polite “Thank you anyway, but I have made it a rule not to eat between meals” should be helpful. Then stick to your guns.

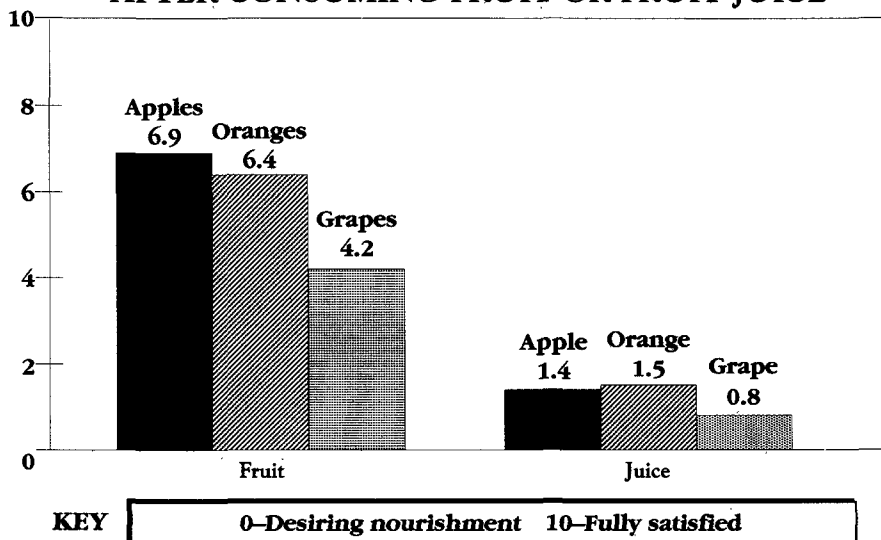
When you have been invited to a meal, plan ahead. Size up the various dishes and choose wisely. Then, to avoid being prodded into seconds or a large serving of dessert, leave a small portion of food on your plate as an indication that you are full. When asked for seconds, reply that you simply cannot, and point out that you really haven’t finished what you already have taken. Assure your hostess that the food was tasty.

When confronted with potluck dinners or meals at which there is a large variety of food, step back and assess the situation. Decide first which are the best choices. Limit yourself to no more than five items, and try not to consume liquids with your meal. If you take dessert, keep your portion small.

Keeping a written record of your food intake through the period of a week can help you identify problem practices, such as snacking, and help you determine what you can do to change them.

Snacking can be a problem of timing,

**THE FEELING OF SATISFACTION AFTER CONSUMING FRUIT OR FRUIT JUICE**



convenience, or frustration. Some find that the temptation to snack strikes them at particular times of the day. They can successfully meet that problem by making food unavailable or staying busy during those times. Others simply react to seeing food—and the answer for them lies in keeping foods stored out of sight.

You can help yourself control frustration eating by taking a five- to 10-minute delay when the urge strikes and finding something to do to fill this time. This tactic helps in two ways: First, it develops

### Percentage of Calories From Fat in Food

Food	Percent of Calories from Fat
Raisin bagel	5
Pretzels	8
Fruit Newtons	16
Pepperidge Farm Mint Milano cookies	51
Microwave popcorn	52
Milk, whole	52
Doughnuts	55
Ice cream	55
Milk chocolate	60
Potato chips	61
Eggs	64
Beef, average	70
Pork, lean	70
Cheese, cheddar	72
Hamburger	74
Cheese, cream	90
Butter	97
Margarine	99
Shortening	100

## Take the "Die" Out of Diet

### Do's:

- Eat breakfast
- Get 50 to 65 percent of your calories from carbohydrates
- Exercise
- Use whole grains

### Dont's:

- Use the "rhythm method of girth control"
- Follow high-protein, high-fat diets
- Skip meals
- Eat more than 25 percent of your calories after 1:00 p.m.
- Overindulge in sugar

a tolerance to frustration that gives you a feeling of greater self-control. And, second, snacking urges are usually of short duration and the delay allows them to pass. As you deny these urges, they will strike with decreasing frequency until you can go through a day without snacking.

The problem of snacking also often involves other problem habits, such as eating on-the-go or eating during some other activity—like watching television. In neither of these cases is the mind concentrating on eating. Eat at a time when you can savor your food—and are paying attention to what you are doing.

Research indicates that the time at which you eat affects weight control. One study found that the participants who consumed most of their calories at breakfast lost substantially more weight and body fat than did those who consumed most of their calories at supper.<sup>5</sup> In another, some participants ate a 2,000 calorie meal at breakfast, while others ate the same meal at supper. The former were able to lose weight, while most of the latter gained.

Kenneth Cooper's Aerobics Institute tells its clientele that for maximum weight control they should eat 75 percent of their daily calories by 1:00 p.m.<sup>6</sup> This advice agrees with Ellen White's counsel to eat a large breakfast and lunch and a smaller supper—if any at all.<sup>7</sup>

### Burn off those calories

Basal metabolic rate (BMR) is especially important to weight loss. When you consume fewer calories, your body reacts by slowing down the BMR—a self-

preservation reaction somewhat analogous to turning down the thermostat on a furnace to conserve energy. This reaction explains why many people find that, after a few weeks of dieting, their weight loss tapers off, even though they have maintained the same caloric intake. The discouragement this lack of progress engenders causes many to give up. But if you will exercise regularly while maintaining the reduced caloric intake, you will continue to lose weight at a more regular rate. When you exercise, your body burns extra calories not only during the exercise period itself, but also throughout the day.

Regular exercise offers benefits extending far beyond that of weight control. Some have found a relationship between keeping the BMR up and better scholastic performance and increased productivity. Many find exercise to be a great way to release stress. Exercise also regulates the appetite, actually helping it to match one's energy needs.

Regular exercise aids blood pressure regulation, while its lack puts one at risk of coronary heart disease. Because exercise puts stress on the bones, the body supplies them with additional calcium—a step toward preventing osteoporosis. Further, the practice of exercising regularly provides the body better control of the hormonal system, including insulin, which helps regulate blood glucose, and the stress hormones, adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. It also affects favorably the various sleep neurotransmitters, thus improving sleep.

For overweight people, walking,

swimming, and bicycling comprise some of the best forms of exercise. While these activities exercise the large muscle groups, increasing circulation and respiration, they do not put too much stress on the joints, which the overweight commonly complain of when they start an exercise program.

It is generally recommended that you exercise at least 30 minutes per day, preferably four to five days per week. You should aim at a brisk pace, but one that still allows you to carry on a conversation. It is always wise to confer with your doctor before beginning any new exercise program.

Many people argue that they don't have time to incorporate such a program into their daily schedule. Actually, you can use this time very productively.

While you are exercising, you can sort through the priorities of the day, mull over sermon ideas and material, meditate, or, if done with your spouse, communicate without interruption. The millions who exercise regularly report that it just plain makes them feel better, and that they wouldn't start their day without it.

**In summary**

Being on a diet implies that someday your present practice will end. But if your behavior becomes a series of habits, you are less likely to abandon it—and then maintaining your proper weight will be a byproduct of your healthful lifestyle.

You can confidently ask the Lord's

blessing and help in this endeavor, knowing that it is His will: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health" (3 John 2). He is able, ready, and willing if you will allow Him. ■

<sup>1</sup> Kelly Brownell and S. Steen, *Physician Sports Medicine* 15 (December 1987): 122.

<sup>2</sup> Danforth, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 41 (May 1985): 1136.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Hammer, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 45 (January 1989).

<sup>4</sup> *Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition and Health*, 1988.

<sup>5</sup> Chan and Barter, *Journal of the American Medical Association* 245 (1981): 371.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth H. Cooper, *The Aerobics Program for Total Well-being* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 65.

<sup>7</sup> See e.g., *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1923), p. 156.

## Substitutions That Make a Difference

For this:	Substitute this:	
	calories	calories
Butter or margarine (1 tbsp.)	100	Molly McButter sprinkles or light spreads 4 50
Mayonnaise (1 tbsp.)	100	Light mayonnaise 50
Italian salad dressing (1 tbsp.)	100	Low-calorie Italian dressing 7
Whole milk (1 cup)	160	Skim milk 80-90
Cream cheese (1 oz.)	99	Weight Watchers cream cheese 35
Sour cream (2 tbsp.)	40	Nonfat plain yogurt 16
Processed American cheese (1 oz.)	110	Borden's Lite-Line cheese 50

**Remember:** In the course of a year you will lose 10 pounds for every 100 calories per day that you save—all other things being equal.

**Watch the terminology:**

*Light or lite*—In many of the examples listed, *light* or *lite* refers to products that contain fewer calories and less fat than the standard products they replace. Meat or poultry labeled *lite* must contain at least 25 percent less fat than similar products. But the government does not regulate every use of these terms; they may refer to foods containing less sodium, smaller serving sizes, or a lighter color.

*Low-calorie*—These foods must contain no more than 40 calories per serving (serving size may vary).

*Reduced-calorie*—These foods must contain one-third fewer calories than the standard products they replace. Those foods regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture must have a 25 percent reduction in calories.

Because we knew that reactions to Dr. Ralph Larson's book would vary widely, Ministry selected reviews from two different scholars. Herbert E. Douglass is a former associate editor of the Adventist Review and is now president of Weimar Institute, Weimar, California. Eric C. Webster is director of the Bible correspondence school in Cape Town, South Africa, and author of Crossroads in Adventist Christology.

## **The Word Was Made Flesh, One Hundred Years of Seventh-day Adventist Christology 1852-1952**

Ralph Larson, *The Cherrystone Press, Cherry Valley, California, 1986, 365 pages, \$11.95, paper.*

Reviewed by Herbert E. Douglass.

The author's purpose is to ascertain what Seventh-day Adventists have historically believed on the "specific Christological question, Did the incarnate Christ come to earth in the human nature of the unfallen Adam, or in the human nature of fallen man?" Rather than a primarily scriptural or theological study, the author sought "to establish what Seventh-day Adventists have believed, not why they have believed it."

In perhaps the most thorough examination yet made, he analyzed the books and periodical articles written by Ellen White and other Adventists between 1852 and 1952.

His research revealed four specific categories of statements: (1) those that use the words "sinful nature" or "fallen nature" to describe the humanity of Jesus; (2) those that use "unmistakable equivalencies"; (3) those that would be "difficult to understand or utterly meaningless if applied to Christ in the nature of unfallen Adam"; and (4) those that "specifically reject the idea that Christ took the unfallen nature of Adam." He concluded that "our spiritual ancestors agreed heartily" with the position that Christ took the fallen nature of man rather than the unfallen nature of Adam and that Christology and soteriology are "inseparably and intimately linked together. . . . When we change one, we inevitably change the other."

The author's definitions of terms, es-

pecially as they are used by Ellen White, prove helpful. He defines terms such as *sinful, sinless, sinfulness, sinlessness, imputed righteousness, the Fall, besetments, transmission of sin, inherited fallen nature, passions, and propensities*, giving special emphasis to the last two.

With his usual irenic approach, Larson addresses the phenomenon of the "Baker letter" (a letter written by Ellen White to Pastor W.L.H. Baker in 1895 that includes the sentence "Not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity") and its use and misuse since its publication in the early 1950s.

Dr. Larson felt the need for this historical analysis because of a widespread uncertainty (in spite of a century of denominational consensus) as to what modern Adventists should believe regarding this central biblical doctrine that affects all other questions involving why Jesus came and how men and women are saved. He described the "new milestone" in the history of Adventist thought on Christology as occurring in the middle 1950s when certain editorials appeared in *Ministry* magazine (anticipating the publication of *Questions on Doctrine and Movement of Destiny*) as part of a dialogue with "evangelical brethren in Christ." After analyzing the materials used by these publications in their original context and the procedures used in their rearrangements, Dr. Larson felt compelled to draw "a most painful conclusion" because he felt that they represented "a methodological monstrosity."

The author believes that the influence of these publications has been "incalculable" and provides the basis for the widely believed misconception that "the Seventh-day Adventist people, aside from a poorly informed minority, had never believed or taught that Christ came to this earth in the nature of fallen man"—a conclusion that "virtually every Bible department in Seventh-day Adventist colleges is now teaching."

Realizing that such a sea change in theological thought must be connected with other currents, the author reflects on the fundamental, mutually exclusive differences between Calvinistic presuppositions and Arminian-Wesleyan

thought (the heritage traditionally espoused by Seventh-day Adventists). Although many have tried to merge these two theological tectonic plates, it seems to this reviewer that the author is correct in noting that invariably the result has been disastrous.

But Dr. Larson does not leave his scholarly work at this point—as if it were a mere theological exercise. He believes that the shift of viewpoints on Christ's human nature has confused Adventists the world over, leading them to believe that Ellen White speaks in contradictory terms and that historical Adventist positions regarding how men and women are saved have been erroneous. He asks for others to verify his findings—not to accept them or reject them without personal study—to determine from the evidence itself whether a mistake made in the third quarter of the twentieth century should not be courageously admitted for the sake of clarifying the mission and message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A slight oversight in the author's review of the material on the subject caused him to leave out what I believe may be the strongest and clearest statement substantiating his conclusions. I refer to Ellen White's manuscript 1, 1892, at times quoted sparingly in published materials (a document written at the height of discussion regarding Christology and soteriology), but published in its entirety for the first time in the *Adventist Review* of June 17, 1976.

This historical analysis will assist anyone who is determined to understand the watershed change of emphasis that has divided the Adventist Church for more than a quarter century.

Reviewed by Eric C. Webster.

In this book Larson endeavors to give a historical survey of Christology in Seventh-day Adventism during the period 1852-1952, with special emphasis on the humanity of Jesus Christ.

The book consists of eight sections, the main one being section 3, which covers 184 pages. This section consists largely of statements on the humanity of Christ gathered from Adventist authors (including Ellen White) of the period

1852-1952. Larson is convinced that the consensus of opinion among Seventh-day Adventists during this period was that the incarnate Christ came to earth in the human nature of fallen man.

In section 4 Larson proposes that a different view on the humanity of Christ was introduced into the Adventist Church beginning in 1952. He suggests that this change was introduced by F. D. Nichol's editorials in the *Review and Herald* during 1952, extended by certain Ministry articles during 1956 and 1957, and climaxed with the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* in 1957. Larson then proceeds to examine these sources and to analyze the evidence. He concludes that a faulty methodology produced invalid interpretations and led the church into the new position that in the Incarnation Christ took the sinless nature of Adam before the Fall.

In the last three sections of the book Larson shows the link between Christology and soteriology. He believes that the shift in our Christology has thrown us off course in our soteriology. He believes that the church is at fault and must move back to the 1852-1952 position. Larson views the members in the pew as the best hope for this turnabout.

Section 8 is devoted to appendices in which Larson analyzes the Baker letter and deals with original sin and with Paul's presentation of Romans 7.

In reading Larson's book one has the feeling that he has ignored the fact that the Christian world at large had understood Adventists to say that Christ had not only come in fallen human nature but that He Himself possessed a sinful human nature. They understood us to say that there was something sinful about the person of our Lord. Larson appears unconcerned about public opinion, whereas many of our leaders during the 1930s to 1950s became convinced that we had a responsibility to let the world know that we believed in a sinless Saviour.

Larson's book also reveals a sharp contrast between Ellen White and some respected Adventist writers. Whereas some of the latter used unfortunate or ill-chosen expressions concerning Christ, Ellen White was far more guarded and careful in her terminology. For example, she always used the biblical expression "in the likeness of sinful flesh" when referring to our Lord rather than the common expression used by many Adventist writers, "in sinful flesh." Likewise, she never used the ex-

pression "propensity to sin" or "propensity of sin" when referring to Christ.

The Baker letter has proved to be somewhat of a thorn in the flesh for Larson. Throughout the book he approaches it gingerly, only to drop it again. He endeavors to minimize its importance and eventually tackles the letter in the appendix. I believe that his treatment of the Baker letter is open to criticism.

After reading the book, one gains the impression that Larson believes that almost everything written by Adventists during 1852-1952 is without fault. Surely truth is dynamic and not static. God's revelation is progressive, and our human understanding of truth can grow and change.

Larson's lack of confidence in Adventist theologians, church administrators, and pastors appears unfortunate. His appeal to the masses of church members to rectify the theological scene could be misdirected. I have confidence in the Lord's ability to guide the church and its leadership, and I believe that our dedicated Adventist theologians are well situated under the blessing of God to give guidance in the ongoing task of doing theology.

Perhaps this book will challenge Adventist theologians to endeavor once again to put in words the Adventist understanding of the Incarnation. And let us remember that in this world of sin, no Christological statement will ever reflect the ultimate truth.

### **Heralds of New Light, Another Prophet to the Remnant?**

Roger W. Coon, *Pacific Press, Boise, Idaho, 1987, 29 pages, paper. Reviewed by Mel H. M. Matinyi, former evangelist and currently a theology student at Solusi College, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, Africa.*

The author, an associate secretary at the White Estate of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, writes on a subject that confronts the church with several questions: Will there be other prophets as we near the end-time, or is Ellen White the last and final prophet? How true and authoritative are her writings? Did she exercise the gift of prophecy, or was she "only a very spiritual and gifted writer" who got her facts as other writers got theirs?

This book was written as a brief but important contribution to the Contemporary Issues in Prophetic Guidance Library. However, it overemphasizes some points that may lead the reader to con-

sider it apologetic rather than answering the question it raises: Will there be another prophet to the remnant?

In dealing with objective evidence of Ellen White's credentials as a prophet, Coon resorts to the overused story that she "held a large, heavy Bible above her head for an extended period of time." Questions could also be raised about such comments as that her writings "go beyond what the Bible teaches." That she "revised" and "deleted" some of her books and provided "certain extrabiblical details" needs more explanation. How does a prophet "revise" and "delete" heavenly messages?

Although he had previously referred to a statement by Ellen White that it was revealed to her that what she had written was sufficient to carry the church through triumphantly to the Second Coming, the author cautiously concludes that "informed Seventh-day Adventists" speak of Ellen White as "further" fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 and not as the "final fulfillment."

Apart from the questions I have raised, I feel the book is beneficial to pastors and laypersons because it provides a basis for faith in the ministry of Ellen White. It will be useful in teaching about an individual who did much under inspiration to lead a prophetic movement from what could have been utter discouragement at the time of the Great Disappointment to a worldwide movement engaged in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus.

### **Recently noted**

Eerdmans' Book of Christian Classics: A Treasury of Christian Writings Through the Centuries, *Veronica Zundel, compiler, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1985, 125 pages, \$12.95, hard cover.*

This book has a most laudable purpose—to provide selections from leading Christian writers of the past 1,800 years. However, to include 105 selections from 63 authors in a book of only 125 pages means that each selection must be brief, especially when accompanied with a large number of colorful illustrations. For this reason it is more of a coffee-table type book and makes an excellent and inspirational gift (for new members, to show appreciation to lay workers, etc.). Though not a book for those looking for great insight into Christian literature, the index does provide a useful guide to some of the literary jewels of Christian history.

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## Letters

From page 2

shelves six different milk substitutes prepared from vegetable sources: Almond Milk, Tofu White, Soygen (no cane or beet sugar), Soygen All-Purpose, Soygen Carob, and Better Than Milk, and I know of at least one other, Solait. —Dr. and Mrs. Forest C. Port, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

■ I am very concerned about the article "Milk: Has the Time Come?" As leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we need to be first in moving toward better living. This article, however, promotes a static lifestyle.

When Sister White wrote, "In a short time it will not be safe to use anything that comes from the animal creation," was she necessarily referring only to salmonella poisoning, aflatoxins, or microbes? The fats and cholesterol dairy products contain may be the real hazard. Unfortunately, only about 2 of the 60 column inches of this article addressed this very real issue.

Research shows that any consumption of animal products (i.e., milk), dramatically increases a person's chances of developing heart disease — no matter how "safe" the milk may be. Unfortunately, the first sign of heart disease for most people is sudden death!

Let's focus on the real issue. God gave some guidelines about diet in Genesis 1 that did not include the ingestion of any animal products. The closer we follow those guidelines, the better will be our lives and health.

Is it time to eliminate milk totally from the diet? Only if you want to live healthier and longer! —Lawrence R. Kellie, Assistant pastor, White Memorial Church, Portland, Maine.

*Because of the fat and cholesterol they contain, dairy products do pose a significant threat to the health of those who use them immoderately. But if Ellen White had these substances in mind when she wrote her counsel, why did she indicate that the danger milk products posed was yet to come? The milk of her day also contained fat and cholesterol. We think Bosley has better identified her concern. —Editors.*

### **A friendly warning**

I want to say thank you for a very fine magazine. It is, in my opinion, a very

fundamental Seventh-day Adventist periodical.

Perhaps it won't hurt to express a concern — not a criticism, just a concern. It sort of worries me that Kenneth Wade has spent so much time delving into the New Age movement, which is obviously motivated by the devil. I can't help remembering Moses Hull, who, after debating so successfully against the spiritualists, finally joined them. Certainly Wade needs our prayers for God's protection. Do you really think it is necessary, or good, to go so deeply into such error? May I suggest a rereading of *Evangelism*, "Combating Erroneous Teaching," pages 623, 624. —Beatrice Reinke, Candler, North Carolina.

### **Presbyterian**

We've gotten mail condemning the church's use of Roman Catholic legal counsel in our trademark cases. The references, of course, are to Vincent L. Ramik, our special counsel, who, in my opinion, has more of a Christian spirit than is revealed in many of the letters we receive on the trademark question.

When we met recently to discuss our trademark agenda, I discretely raised the issue of religion, and he expressed his surprise at the reaction coming from some quarters of the church.

He said, "When I was in my late teens, I began to question my authoritarian Roman Catholic upbringing. I married a Baptist who joined the Presbyterian Church. Today I am not a Roman Catholic in thought or practice. I am officially a member in good and regular standing in a Presbyterian church in Annandale, Virginia."

And even if he were a Catholic, we need to remember Ellen White's admonition that we shouldn't make hard thrusts at the Roman Catholic Church, as it contains many people who live up to the truth they have and thus are truly God's children waiting for greater light to fall upon them. —Robert W. Nixon, Office of General Counsel, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington, D.C.

### **Relating to the aged**

What a welcomed surprise to see the February 1989 *Ministry* devote its cover to D. A. Delafield's article "It Isn't All Yesterday!" The subject of the aged in church life has been virtually absent from our publications.

Delafield is correct in underscoring our older members' needs of fellowship, attention, and the opportunity to serve their church. And, a local Adventist senior citizens' club does seem like a great way to meet those needs.

However, pastors unable to have a senior citizens' club should have at least caught Delafield's two underlying principles: 1. Those who are aged still hold a potential for ministry. 2. There is a need to serve our senior saints. —Steve Durkac, Collegedale, Tennessee.

### Make Ministry more Adventist

I wonder if it really is a good idea under present conditions in our church to have *Ministry* serving as a vehicle of public relations directed toward the Protestant ministry.

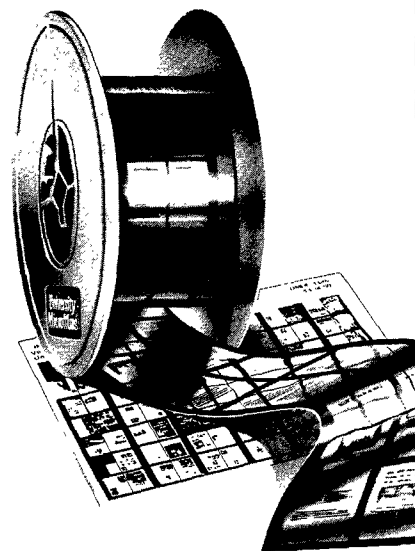
Our mission is to give the three angels' messages, and in the parts of the world where this is being done most forthrightly we are having the largest numbers of baptisms. This involves calling God's people out of Babylon into the remnant church. It seems to this reader that the three messages are not proclaimed above a whisper in *Ministry*. And the readers of *Ministry* are not being urged to proclaim those messages with a loud voice.

The general tone of the magazine reflects an effort to emphasize those things wherein we agree with other denominations. You don't bring people out of Babylon that way.

Also, we have too many Adventist ministers who tend to follow in the general direction of *Questions on Doctrines* and Desmond Ford. Their letters and articles appear in the magazine and help to set the tone of compromise. That might fit in well with the outreach thrust, but it does nothing to encourage our Adventist ministers to proclaim the unpopular but essential truths that justify our existence as a people.

Please don't think I am trying to tear down this fine magazine, of which I have been a reader for almost a half century. Rather, I am concerned about the few baptisms in this division as compared with those places where the trumpet is being given a more certain sound. —Stewart I. Bauer, Redding, California.

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## Possibilities of public evangelism

From page 13

That summer she worked as one of my lay Bible instructors, and the largest number of souls that were baptized came from this dear lady's visiting list. Once in a while she still calls up the conference president who had charge of the anointing service to remind him of what the Lord did for her. What a demonstration of divine power!

In describing the final triumph of God's message, Ellen White wrote these words, "Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers." "Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord."

"The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it."

"Let Christians . . . ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the former rain, and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant."<sup>8</sup>

My fellow workers, I am expecting an evangelism explosion in the North American Division. I believe that it can happen—when we follow the blueprint, when we realize possibilities in pre-effort preparation, possibilities in teamwork, possibilities in child evangelism, and in health evangelism, possibilities in literature evangelism and personal evangelism, possibilities in follow-up evangelism.

May God grant us spiritual vision to see the invisible, strong faith to believe the incredible, and divine power to achieve the impossible so that the work can soon be finished and we can all go home. ■

<sup>1</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 22-26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>4</sup> *Gospel Workers*, pp. 262, 263.

<sup>5</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189.

<sup>7</sup> *Gospel Workers*, p. 351.

<sup>8</sup> *Evangelism*, pp. 700, 701.



# LOVE

*unleashed will do it!*

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## Finding new residents

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Services and charges vary among these companies; some charge by zip code area covered and others per address supplied; some allow multiple use of the names and others only a one-time use. Addresses are usually provided monthly and may be supplied on labels or on computer diskette, depending on the company.

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Phone (616) 247-1161

—Submitted by Gary Russell, pastor, Dowagiac and

Glenwood Seventh-day Adventist Churches, Dowagiac, Michigan.

## For your baby dedications

Carl Sandburg wrote: "A baby is God's opinion that life should go on. A book that does nothing to you is dead. A baby, whether it does anything to you, represents life. If a bad fire should break out in this house and I had my choice of saving the library or the babies, I would say, 'What is alive?' Never will a time come when the most marvelous recent invention is as marvelous as a newborn baby. The finest of our precision watches, the most supercolossal of our supercargo planes, don't compare with a newborn baby in the number and ingenuity of coils and springs, in the flow and change of chemical solutions, in timing devices and interrelated parts that are irreplaceable. The baby, here, is very modern. Strictly. Yet it is also the oldest of the ancients."

—*Remembrance Rock* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1948).

## How was your Sabbath?

Since your Sabbath services reflect the days and weeks of preparation that preceded them, the answer to the question How was your Sabbath? tells a lot about your ministry in general. Keeping track of the following five indicators can help you see both your accomplishments and those areas that need more work:

**1. Attendance.** While a decline or increase in total attendance tells you something about the quality of your services, having a deacon record each week the

attendance of each member (perhaps on the membership list) will afford you even more valuable information.

**2. Guest list.** You or some other responsible person should man the church lobby to greet each guest warmly and secure their names and addresses. Again, the raw information about their attendance will reflect something of the quality of your services. But even more important is the fact that anyone who makes the effort to attend a program on your premises deserves in return your visit on theirs!

**3. Giving.** The treasurer's report is an indicator of the spiritual as well as the economic status of a congregation. Receiving this information weekly will enable you to offer praise and encouragement during your visitation and when you consult with church officers.

**4. Pastor's Bible class.** Non-Adventist visitors to your Sabbath school would be best served by a special class designed for their needs. When you cannot be present, you would do well to have the coteacher you have appointed update you early in the week as to how the class went. "Warm" information is doubly useful.

**5. Sermon.** Your spouse can offer constructive criticism. And tape recordings, or videocassette recordings if you're really brave, offer you the opportunity to analyze your performance in terms of words, pronunciation, grammar, tone quality, volume, emphasis, demeanor, mannerisms, content, clarity, and relevance. A tape in the hand is

worth a hundred comments at the door! — Jack Bohannon, ministerial secretary, Uganda Union Mission, Kampala, Uganda, East Africa.

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## LET'S GET BACK TO THE BOTTOM LINE . . .

. . . Alcohol Is A Poison That Destroys Body, Mind And Soul

- *The human suffering brought about by its consumption cannot be measured.*
- *Its victims cannot be counted.*
- *Its relationship to vice, crime, accidents, death, moral disintegration, family breakdown and economic ruin cannot be denied.*
- *The number of souls lost for eternity because of it is known only to God.*

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"Our ministers should be intelligent upon this question. They should not ignore it or be turned aside by those who call them extremists."<sup>1</sup>

"The THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE, is to be proclaimed with a LOUD VOICE, as we approach the great final test. This test must come to the churches in connection with true medical missionary work."<sup>2</sup>

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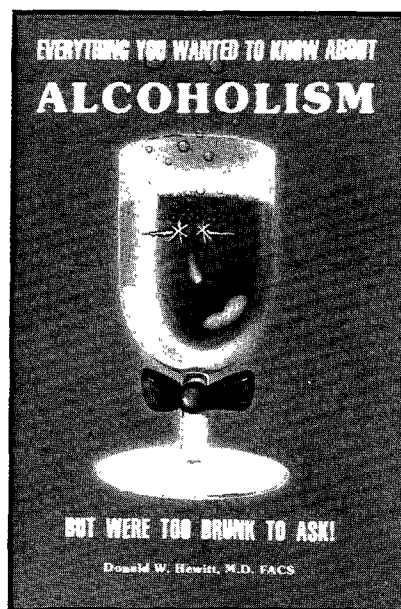
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<sup>1</sup> Temperance p. 245    <sup>2</sup> Loma Linda Messages p. 602