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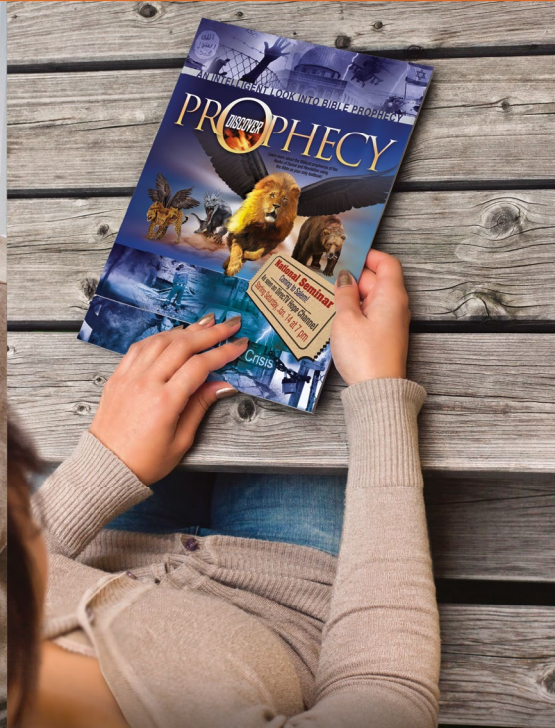
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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR PASTORS

## *All One in Christ*



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## 06 **Unity: Then and now** **A divine movement united in mission and message**

**Mark A. Finley**

In this article, we are challenged to look deep into our spirituality to maintain church unity in the face of Christ's commission.

## 09 **Preaching with authority** **Patrick Anani**

In this postmodern age, is it too old-fashioned to believe that effective preaching comes about primarily through our close relationship with God?

## 12 **The Adventist "health message" unpacked** **Lillian Kent**

Is the "health message" relevant? What does modern research reveal?

## 17 **Mentoring: A way of life** **S. Joseph Kidder**

How can experienced ministers impart their wisdom, knowledge, experience, and skills to the next generation of leaders?

## 22 **Why do we need philosophy of religion?** **Marina Fabris Garner**

To chart a clear course in pastoral ministry, a philosophy of religion focusing on religious experience, doctrine, and practice becomes crucial in a modern, uncertain, religious minefield.

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# Ministry®

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04 *Letters*

05 *Editorial*

21 *Revival and Reformation*

25 *Dateline*

29 *Resources*

30 *The Pastor and Health*

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*“I have personally learned a lot that I hesitated to try but now am encouraged to share them with my fellow ministers and even apply them in my local church. The emphasis on prayer, involvement, and commitment is so powerful to me.”*

### Church growth

I am glad and thrilled this morning going through the lead article of November (“Growing Local Churches God’s Way: An Interview with Chad Stuart”—Jerry Page). It is a wonderful article for we pastors who are interested in church growth. I thank you so much for bringing to us such a humble, precious, good minister of the flock. May God bless you and his ministry as well.

I have personally learned a lot that I hesitated to try but now am encouraged to share with my fellow ministers and even apply in my local church. The emphasis on prayer, involvement, and commitment is so powerful to me. I would feel overjoyed if I saw our churches wisely drop the offering appeals and the numerous

announcements the way Pastor Chad did for the Visalia church! I believe it really works.

—Haleimaana Naphutali, executive secretary, Western Uganda Field

### Emphasis in worship

I am deeply indebted to this article (“Reflections on Christian Worship”—Marguerite Shuster) that appeared in your July 2016 edition of *Ministry*. My father, who was a minister, as indeed I am, used to say that he would never start a service with the words, “Let us worship God.” He believed those words put the emphasis in the wrong place, on us rather than on God. He believed that in a service God serves us with Word and Sacrament, to which we respond with praise and worship, not only on Sunday (for me) but throughout the week. Of

course, I understand that we always tend to be drawn to and approve articles and, for that matter, people, who confirm our own perspective, but I did think that this article was very timely and extremely important, so much so that I am using it as a basis for what I believe is a very necessary study of what are the essential elements of a Service of Worship.

—Rev. (Retired) Michiel Groenewegen, Australia


### On forgiveness

Perhaps I overlooked something in the article on forgiveness (“The Role of Forgiveness in the Recovery of Physical and Mental Health”—January 2017 by Don Mackintosh), but I did not see any reference to Luke 17:3, 4 and Matt. 18:15–17 where we read that the offender must say, *I repent*, and then listen to the remonstrations of the offended one. Failing that, he must be treated as a “pagan or a tax collector” (NIV).

—Rev. H. L. Wipprecht, Cobalt, Ontario, Canada

### Not asking but receiving

I really appreciated Jerry Page’s editorial (“Thank God Before You See”—January 2017). My father preached the ABCs of Prayer based on Matthew 21:22 and *Education* page 258,\* among others. And he made clear that claiming a promise, was not asking but receiving. Just like claiming baggage at the airport—reach out and take it. And, based on 1 John 5:14, 15, receiving is in the present tense—not future. So we don’t believe because we see. Instead we see because we believe. If we believe only because we see the answer, we may never see the answer!

—Glenn Coon, email 

\* Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1952), 258.

Jeffrey O. Brown, PhD, is associate editor, *Ministry*.



# Bilingualism: Winning a world for Christ

I'll never forget his illustration during our seminary chapel. A cat was chasing a mouse along 42nd Street in New York City. The mouse went into a pothole. The cat's paw circled in vain to reach it. Suddenly the mouse heard a *woof, woof*. The cat's paw shot up out of the hole. All went quiet. The mouse cautiously emerged from its hole and was immediately scooped up by the cat. Holding the frightened and bewildered mouse up with its paw, the cat declared, "Little mouse, you've got to learn, you need to be bilingual to survive in New York."

The speaker was the late great George Webber, president of New York Theological Seminary. His sermonic text was "Seek peace and well-being for the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its peace (well-being) you will have peace" (Jer. 29:7, AMP). Dr. Webber had moved his family into humble apartments in New York City because he believed that Christians should be bilingual. To "preach the gospel to every creature" requires us to be familiar with the language of faith and the language of the world. Such bilingualism requires two qualifications: quantity and quality.

With regard to quantity, saving our world requires all hands on deck. In the Adventist Church, we call it Total Member Involvement.<sup>1</sup> It means pastors and members together, young and old together, men and women together, black and white together, and Hispanic and Asian together, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. The world will be reached only by using all of the parts of the body of Christ. "Every man and woman and child should be a worker for God."<sup>2</sup> If we use all of the parts, we will be united and

succeed. If we exclude any part, we will be fragmented and fail.

With regard to quality, Patrick Lencioni quotes a friend as saying, "If you could get all the people in an organization rowing in the same direction, you could dominate any industry, in any market, against any competition, at any time."<sup>3</sup> Lencioni comments, "Not finance. Not strategy. Not technology. It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both because it is so powerful and so rare."<sup>3</sup>

Side by side we stand, and we stand closely together. You cannot divide us. No wedge can come between us. We are separate individuals, but you can't separate us.

Bound together as with a tight seal.  
One is so near to another  
That no air can come between them.  
They are joined one to another;  
They stick together and cannot be  
separated (Job 41:15b–17, AMP).

The church is like a marriage. "What God has joined together, let no one separate." (Matt. 19:6, AMP) This is a mutuality that leads to a oneness unparalleled by any human institution. This is intimacy at its highest.

There's a song that's a favorite at our church's General Conference sessions: Wayne Hooper's "We Have This Hope." As popular as it is, people are always surprised that there is a verse two:

We are united in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
We are united in His love.  
Love for the waiting people of the world,  
People who need our Savior's love.<sup>4</sup>

We are united—by our love for each other and our "love for the waiting people of the world." Bilingual. Another hymn says, "We are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity."<sup>5</sup> This is the basis of our unity: blessed hope, fundamental beliefs, and love—differences of administrations but no division, diversities of operations but no independence.<sup>6</sup>

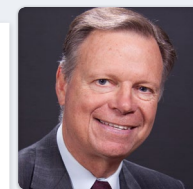
It is impossible for one person to master all languages. But the more there are of us onboard, the more people we are likely to reach. And quantity combined with quality equals the church. There should be no institution more inclusive than the church: vastly different but with all believers eligible for membership and service. And there should be no organization more intimate than the body of Christ; with passion for the mission and all rowing in the same direction. It is, as Lencioni says, the ultimate competitive advantage. It is so powerful and so rare.

Total inclusion (quantity) and total intimacy (quality). Examine yourself. Are these found in your church organization? Twin keys for equipping the church for ministry to the world. Twin imperatives for the church to survive and thrive. How bilingual are we? 🗣️

1 "No matter your age, nationality, or gender, God is calling you to be part of His mission." Ted N. C. Wilson, "God's Mission," *Adventist World*, September 2016, 5.  
2 Ellen G. White, "An Appeal to the Churches," *Review and Herald*, March 14, 1878.  
3 Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002), vii.  
4 Wayne Hooper, "We Have This Hope," 1962, [www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/h/t/whthhope.htm](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/h/t/whthhope.htm).  
5 S. Baring-Gould, "Onward Christian Soldiers," [www.hymnary.org/text/onward\\_christian\\_soldiers\\_marching\\_as](http://www.hymnary.org/text/onward_christian_soldiers_marching_as).  
6 See 1 Corinthians 12:4, 5, KJV.

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# Unity: Then and now

## A divine movement united in mission and message

One of the things that really matters to God is the unity of His church. This unity is not some peripheral matter. It is at the very heart of the gospel. Without unity, the church becomes powerless to proclaim the gospel in its fullness to the world.

In His final intercessory prayer, Jesus revealed the importance of unity when He prayed, “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:23).<sup>1</sup> One of the greatest evidences of the power of the gospel results in the unity of the church, for when people of different backgrounds, cultures, languages, and dispositions are united by the Holy Spirit in Christ, the world notices.

### The Acts model: A united church

One of the most striking New Testament examples of a unified church was recorded in the book of Acts. Although there certainly were differences of background and culture, and at times heated debates, at its very core the New Testament church exhibited unity. This unity was not a uniformity of understanding on each issue; neither was it a sweet,

superficial sentimentalism. It was not some vague, undefinable pluralistic “oneness” where each tolerated the others’ personal views to accomplish some larger, ethereal goal.

No, New Testament unity was a unity of faith rooted in the person, message, and mission of Christ. The story of the book of Acts includes the reciting of believers brought together by the Holy Spirit in a divinely inspired movement to impact the world. This was the history of Bible-believing, Christ-centered men and women who were passionate about God’s mission through His church.

### United in the centrality of Christ’s love

The disciples were united in their love for Christ. Committed to Christ, they were drawn together. Their bond of union was forged in Him. Christ was their all in all. Charmed by His love, redeemed by His grace, and empowered by His Spirit, they were, in spite of their differences, united in one body.

Ellen White uses an interesting expression to describe the unity of the disciples. “Christ’s name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be

recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription.”<sup>2</sup>

Christ’s name was their “bond of union.” In other words, they were “one” in an indissoluble union with Christ.

Revivalist A. W. Tozer puts it this way: “Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshippers [meeting] together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become ‘unity’ conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship.”<sup>3</sup>

Tuned to Christ, the disciples were tuned to one another. Christ became the Great Unifier. Speaking of Christ bridging the divide between Jews and Gentiles, the apostle Paul emphatically declares, “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation” (Eph. 2:14). The apostle goes on to say that in Christ, “the whole body [is] joined and knit together” (Eph. 4:16), and he pleads with the church at Corinth that there “be no schism in the body” (1 Cor. 12:25). When

hearts are one in Christ, they cannot be too far apart.

Could it be that at times our disunity results from having drifted away from the heart of Christ? Is it possible that our own personal opinions and ideas about a given subject cloud Christ's will on that thing and create dissension between us? Does pride ever obscure our vision? Might it also be that the reason the disciples were

committed to the message of Christ. Often overlooked, we find that when Jesus prayed for the unity of His church, He prayed to His Father, " 'Sanctify them by your truth. Your Word is truth' " (John 17:17). The unity of the New Testament church was based on a common commitment to Jesus' revealed truth. New Testament believers accepted the truth about the authoritative revelation of Scripture,

those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Notice two significant expressions: (1) "those who gladly received his word" and (2) "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Both of these

*When the people of God are united in Christ to proclaim the prophetic Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit, the earth will be lightened with the glory of God.*



of "one accord" on the day of Pentecost was because they unashamedly surrendered their wills to the will of Christ and were willing to surrender anything that separated them from Him and one another?

### **United in the centrality of Christ's message**

The unity of the New Testament Church was anchored in the disciples'

salvation by faith, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the second coming of Christ, the Sabbath, death, resurrection, and Christ's priestly ministry—just to mention a few of our Lord's central teachings. They were brought together through His prophetic Word, bonded in truth, and committed to the divine revelation of His will.

Luke describes the union of New Testament believers in Acts 2:41, "Then

expressions imply an acceptance of, and commitment to, the unchanging, eternal truths of Scripture. The unity of the New Testament believers was based on their common commitment to the teachings of Jesus. They were united in the bedrock, foundational truths of Scripture.

Charles Spurgeon spoke of unity in the truth in these straightforward words: "A chorus of ecumenical voices

keep harping the unity tune. What they are saying is, ‘Christians of all doctrinal shades and beliefs must come together in one visible organization, regardless. . . . Unite, unite!’ Such teaching is false, reckless, and dangerous. Truth alone must determine our alignments. Truth comes before unity.

“Unity without truth seems hazardous. Our Lord’s prayer in John 17 must be read in its full context. Look at verse 17: “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth” (KJV). Only those sanctified through the Word can be one in Christ. To teach otherwise is to betray the gospel.”<sup>4</sup>

Ellen White would agree with Spurgeon. Commenting on Jesus’ prayer for unity in John 17, she writes, “We cannot surrender the truth in order to accomplish this union; for the very means by which it is to be gained is sanctification through the truth. Human wisdom would change all this, thinking this basis of union too narrow. Men would effect a union through conformity to popular opinions, through a compromise with the world. But truth is God’s basis for the unity of His people.”<sup>5</sup>

The New Testament Church was united through a prophetic, “present truth” message. Peter’s masterful presentation in Acts 2 was a prophetic message clearly revealing Jesus as the promised Messiah. In Acts 8, Philip’s prophetic Bible study on Jesus as the Messianic fulfillment of Isaiah 53 led the Ethiopian to a decision for Christ. Meanwhile, in Acts 17 Paul’s prophetic preaching in Thessalonica for three consecutive Sabbaths touched Jewish hearts.

The truth, as written in Jesus and prophetically proclaimed, unified the church in a common mission. Truth unites. There remains something larger, something greater, and something grander than our personal opinions or even our individual convictions. The truth of the Word revealed by the Spirit supersedes everything else.

When the people of God are united in Christ to proclaim the prophetic Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit, the earth will be lightened with the glory of God. Once again, in this generation, God has entrusted His people with a prophetic, present-truth message.

The message of Christ, our Righteousness, in light of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6–12 will unite His people in one final end-time proclamation of truth. The Bible-based, Christ-centered, last-day prophetic message of present truth for this hour will move the world. So it will be written of God’s people that those “who have turned the world upside down have come here too” (Acts 17:6).

### United in the centrality of Christ’s mission

The New Testament Church was united in a single-minded passion for sharing Christ and the message of the gospel with the world. Personal preferences and opinions were secondary to the proclamation of the message of the Cross. Overwhelmed by grace, amazed by the goodness of God, and awestruck by the redemption that is in Christ, the disciples overcame their petty differences in light of Christ’s larger mission.

The one thing that overshadowed everything else was a world in need of Christ’s saving grace and the certainty of the life-changing Word. In Acts 4:20, when the authorities attempted to silence his voice, Peter proclaimed, “‘For we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.’” Acts 5:42 adds, “And daily in the temple and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” When persecution broke upon the disciples, the record reveals that, “those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

The disciples had their differences. At times there were misunderstandings and even conflict, but they were united

in Christ to proclaim a present truth, prophetic message that the world so desperately needed to hear. Their unswerving, single-minded purpose was to accomplish God’s mission. They had fellowshiped with the Savior, and His passion to “‘seek and save that which was lost’” became their passion (Luke 19:10). Their commitment to Christ, His message, and mission kept them focused on their task.

A classic statement in the book *Acts of the Apostles* powerfully portrays the purpose and the focus of the early church. “The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.”<sup>6</sup>

The clear focus, the overriding purpose of the first-century church was winning the lost to Christ. This one thing triumphed over personal ambition, the desire for supremacy, and human strivings for position or power. They were willing to sacrifice their cherished ambitions to maintain a unified focus on soul winning. The New Testament church was united in Christ with a passion for His passion—saving lost people. For them, church organization stimulated this unity by providing a structure to grow in the truth of His Word and foster the proclamation of the Word. 📖

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- 1 Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.
  - 2 Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), 28.
  - 3 A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Abbotsford, WI: Aneko Press, 2015), 79, 80.
  - 4 Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Essence of Separation,” quoted in “Quotable,” *The Berean Call* (July 1992): 4.
  - 5 Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (1892) (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1901), 391.
  - 6 White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 37.

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# Preaching with authority

**P**reaching with authority has a twofold task. On the one hand, it uplifts the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, and on the other, it assures hearers that the gospel shows the power of God unto salvation.

In order to achieve this twofold objective, the proclamation must have authority. As Paul asserts, “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake” (1 Thess. 1:5).<sup>1</sup> And again, “My conversation and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor. 2:4, NET). This article deals with the authority of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel.

Many pastors and elders may not be well acquainted with the concept of preaching with the authority of the Spirit. When pastors do their internship and elders have their training, they ought to be informed from the outset—in a proper but spiritual manner—that their success as effective preachers depends much on their dependence on God’s promises. Each prospective preacher should understand and live by the reality that God intends for His people to use His power to present the gospel effectively.

However, in our world today, preaching with authority seems to be rare. Preachers are confronted with psychological theories of persuasion.

They master all the tricks of the trade, identify themselves with the audience, utilize presumed authority, and coattail on the goodwill of a third party. But these methods continue to leave church members unfed because they lack the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, the right source of God’s power.

Consider Hebrews 13:17, “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” Here we have instruction on the kind of relationship that should govern church members and their pastors and elders. Times come in a pastor-member relationship where the pastor’s responsibility seems to be to watch over the souls of his or her members so that not one will wander away or perish. At the same time, the relation that should govern the member, with the pastor or elder, should be one of spiritual understanding and submission. The interrelationship between the pastor and the member should be in joy and not in grief; otherwise the relationship stands unprofitable.

Consider also Paul’s counsel in 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13: “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.” Here seems to be a call to recognize those who are invited to labor among believers—this call should be in love

and appreciation of the work the called ones do in and for the group of believers.

The problem does not rest with members alone. Our attitudes as pastors and elders also say a lot. Preachers, often, are not sure of what they preach. Take the popular “I think” and “I share.” These concepts do not do justice to the vocabulary of preaching in the New Testament, such as “to tell,” “to announce,” or “to proclaim.” Authoritative preaching resides as preaching a message that is not ours but God’s. Both the content and the preacher are rooted in the good news inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16). The message cannot be successfully proclaimed if that message seems “wholly anecdotal, popular, topical, philosophical, or psychological.”<sup>2</sup> Paul’s advice is timely: “Preach the Word!” (2 Tim. 4:2a).

## Calling as a source of authority

The preacher’s authority as God’s representative comes directly from his or her relationship with God and from the call of God in the life and the message God gives the herald to preach. If someone asks, “What gives you the right to say what you say?” Naturally, the response must be, “God’s call and commission to preach His will to you.” Preachers are chosen and anointed to proclaim the Holy Scriptures and present the will of God. Anyone who chooses to speak his or her word rather than God’s Word undermines that call and makes it void. No matter how sensibly articulated, propositional

truth is, at best, a cold, unexciting teaching without the quickening of the Holy Spirit.

The herald comes directed by the Spirit to speak the King's message, not his or her own. If he or she listens to the voice of the Spirit given through the Scriptures, the preacher can be assured of his or her faithfulness as a steward of God's Word and, consequently, could be sure of the result. This is why preaching and serving as God's vessel and mouthpiece becomes tremendously humbling.<sup>3</sup> Authoritative preaching has the power to burn the heart and open the mind (cf. Luke 24:32, 45).

the preaching of Jesus, we read, "the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28, 29). Scribes were experts, skilled in Jewish law and theology. They mastered legal matters as legal scholars (Matt. 2:4; 7:29; 13:52; Mark 1:22; 1 Cor. 1:20). This was not so with Jesus. He not only taught the truth but also lived a life that demonstrated His truth. This is why preaching has been described as "truth through personality."<sup>4</sup> In the words of John's preamble, preaching is the incarnate Word that "became flesh."<sup>5</sup>

which also I delivered to you" (1 Cor. 11:23a).

### Biblical authority and purposeful preaching

Biblical preaching comes with its own authority. Albert Mohler's argument on biblical authority in preaching is worth noting: "Teaching assumes authority. After all, we have to know what it is we are to teach. Far too many preachers think this is an authority that is personal. . . . But there is only one authority that is the preachers' authority, and there is only one authority that undergirds and justifies his teaching

*Times come in a pastor/member relationship where the pastor's responsibility seems to be to watch over the souls of his or her members so that not one will wander away or perish.*

### The authority of Christ

Speaking of his speech and preaching, Paul said they were "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). The word for "demonstration" (*apodeixis*) can be found only here in the New Testament. Precisely, this word means "a showing forth," hence "proof," "evidence," and having the force of that which is proved by the possession of the Spirit.

When Jesus taught the people, the leaders could identify that He preached with powerful authority, and they asked, "Who gave You this authority?" (Matt. 21:23). The preaching of Jesus was not like that of Jewish rabbis, for the people would not be satisfied with the trivial teachings of the leaders because their teaching would lack the commanding power and authority in their doctrines. But about

Ellen White says, "Our work is to win men to belief of the truth, win by preaching and by example also, by living godly lives. The truth in all its bearings is to be acted, showing the consistency of faith with practice. The value of our faith will be shown by its fruit. . . . Thus the truth is to be made impressive as a great whole and command the intellect. Truth, Bible truth, is to become the authority for the conscience and the love and life of the soul."<sup>6</sup>

She points out that "on the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ's stead"<sup>7</sup> and further states that "Christ's ministers upon the earth . . . are appointed to act in Christ's stead."<sup>8</sup> Thus, this authority, derived from Jesus, is given also to individual preachers and shall not be exercised apart from Christ and His word. As Paul says, "For I received of the Lord that

ministry, and that is the authority of the Word of God. This Word is inerrant, infallible, authoritative, and trustworthy. It is that Word, and that Word alone, that is our authority; and it is not only the foundation, but the substance, the content of our teaching and preaching."<sup>9</sup>

The Bible is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). The sword is an offensive weapon, and, as such, the Scriptures stand as the weapon to fight in Christian warfare to its ultimate triumph. Just as Jesus used the Scriptures to win His battle against Satan in the wilderness, so should Christians be enabled with the power of God's Word to fight their daily battle. To that extent, the preacher must assert the Bible's inner authority and power and let the biblical proclamation be fully biblical, fully assertive, and never speculative

or entertaining. Ben Awbrey cautions preachers against using the Bible as just an advice manual: “They preach as though the Bible is not authoritative! They refuse to assert biblical truth! They traffic in speculation and suggestion and relativism! They will fog that which is clear! They will question that which is certain! They will suspend that which must be enforced—an immediate and complete compliance to the truth of God’s Word!”<sup>10</sup> Ellen White adds: “It is the efficiency of the Holy Spirit that makes the ministry of the Word effective. When Christ speaks through the minister, the Holy Spirit prepares the hearts of the listeners to receive the word. The Holy Spirit is not a servant, but a controlling power.”<sup>11</sup>

### Authority in preaching

Paul urges us to “preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:2). Christians are watchmen, and as such we have to proclaim God’s Word and assume that the instructions we give in exhorting and teaching are from the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of Godhead: there lies the divine authority in the ministry of preaching.

Anyone who preaches the gospel with a full commitment to its claims and power is assured of God’s authority, so that when the preacher stands before the people, the words he or she utters will not be his or her own but from the throne room of God. The preacher who preaches the inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16) thus delivers a message God has for that moment, for that people. This Source and delivery of the message makes the people responsible for their acceptance or rejection of the content of the message. When people reject the preaching from the Spirit, they are accountable to God for turning away from the divine Word. A. W. Tozer says, “A preacher under God’s unction should reign from his pulpit as a king from his throne. He should not reign by law or by regulation or by man’s authority. He ought to reign by moral ascendancy!

The divine authority is missing from many pulpits. We have ‘tabby cats’ with their claws carefully trimmed in the seminary, so they can paw over the congregations and never scratch them at all! The Holy Spirit will sharpen the arrows of the man of God who preaches the whole counsel of God!”<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the support of the content that is inspired by the Holy Spirit, preachers should preach Christologically, as Paul did: “Him we preach” (Col. 1:28). The book of Acts further shows how a message focused on the priority of Christ made a huge difference in its proclamation and results (Acts 3:20; 5:42; 8:5, 12; 9:20). Hence, Christ should be the core of the message of every preacher. Every sermon has to expound Christ as the sole concern of ministry. Stephen Olford and David Olford maintain, “The gospel message must center on Jesus Christ, and our preaching to edify the saints must draw people closer to Christ. . . . The preeminence of Christ in our lives, ministries, and messages should be evident.”<sup>13</sup>

Preaching with power comes as a continuation of Christ’s saving work. No one who serves Jesus would be sent without being equipped (cf. Luke 9:1). The Holy Spirit, given to God’s servants, offers the illumination to understand the Scriptures, the protection against demonic forces working against God’s servants, and the power to preach with full authority (Luke 9:1; 24:48ff; Acts 1:8).

Preaching becomes effective when it is Christ-centered, Spirit-controlled, and Scripture-based. W. Grundmann argues, “The goal of preaching is the exhibition of Christ’s presence by the Spirit and therefore the exhibition of God’s saving power in Christ.”<sup>14</sup> Preachers ought to seek to win people to Christ as His servants for His sake. Christ was proclaimed because He is the head of the church and the Lord of its ministries (1 Cor. 12:5; 2 Cor. 4:5; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).

### Conclusion

In summary, the authority of Christ should be exercised in preaching and teaching, while admonishing members

and the world *in Christ’s name*. The gospel messengers should abide and walk in Christ. They should not spend time preaching concepts, reflections, or even applications but focus on every word that would lead the hearer to the person and mission of Christ.

Only when a person wields “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17) does preaching become authoritative. When Jesus spoke, people had to make a decision: they either believed on Him or got ready to stone Him; He never counteracted either individuals or congregations. His utterances were both incisive and decisive, revealing that His words held evidence of heavenly authority. Preachers must make use of the full possession of God’s power at their disposal to conquer the rebellious planet for Christ. Submission to the power of God’s Spirit and a commitment to preaching “every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4), are the main tenets of preaching with authority. ❏

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# The Adventist “health message” unpacked

Since its organization as a denomination in the mid-nineteenth century, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been advocating the counsel of the church’s primary health reformer, Ellen G. White, which emphasizes the role of lifestyle in promoting health, happiness, and enhanced spirituality.<sup>1</sup> In 1905, Ellen White consolidated her counsel into this concise statement: “Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies.”<sup>2</sup> Consequently, it is not surprising that research on the health of Seventh-day Adventists since the 1950s has shown that they appear to enjoy low rates of chronic diseases and lower total mortality, despite living in areas where chronic diseases are prevalent.<sup>3</sup> Science is only now validating the significance of this nineteenth century counsel and its importance for physical and mental health, as chronic disease rates escalate in the twenty-first century. Let’s examine these elements and see what science has discovered about each of them.

## Pure air

Poor-quality air and air pollution are linked to cardiopulmonary disease (heart attacks, stroke, heart failure), cancer, asthma, and premature mortality.<sup>4</sup> This will only worsen as climate change progresses.<sup>5</sup> However, green space filters harmful pollutants in the

air and also provides cooling effects during heat waves—providing a positive effect on health and well-being.<sup>6</sup> Not only does a walk in nature benefit our lungs but it is also associated with benefits to mental health—decreased depression and perceived stress—and improved well-being.<sup>7</sup> Walking in green space dampens the subgenual prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain that elicits rumination. Instead of focusing on how bad life is, we feel more positive as we walk in a natural setting.<sup>8</sup>

Stress, an acute normal sympathetic nervous response to danger, has become chronic in our fast-paced world. During stress our breathing is shallow and rapid, but it can be switched to a relaxed or parasympathetic response through rhythmic deep breathing.<sup>9</sup> This type of breathing fills the lungs down to the diaphragm and improves overall health, including the immune system, while also reducing stress. Try doing this two to three times per day. Breathe in while slowly counting to five. Hold for a count, then breathe out slowly for five counts, again holding for a count. You should aim for four to six of these repetitions per minute. Repeat this for two to five minutes, two to three times per day—and try to get into green space as often as you can.

## Sunlight

Apart from producing vitamin D, which is important for the whole of body

health (low levels of vitamin D are linked to chronic disease—obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, multiple sclerosis, autoimmune diseases, allergies, and mental illness, as well as bone integrity),<sup>10</sup> sunlight is also important for our daily biological clock (circadian rhythm).<sup>11</sup> A condition called seasonal affective disorder (SAD), otherwise known as the winter blues (sadness, depression, and fatigue), has been observed in people living in areas where winters have shorter days and longer nights.<sup>12</sup> Being indoors all day and not getting enough sunlight can also produce SAD.<sup>13</sup>

Indoor light is about 100 lux (a measure of light intensity), but a bright sunny day produces 50,000 lux or more; an overcast day, 1,000 to 2,000 lux; and watching the sunrise or sunset 400 lux. Health authorities recommend 10,000 lux for 30 minutes daily. Light boxes delivering this amount of light can be used to treat SAD. But why not use the sun for its other benefits, such as vitamin D and blue light, which wake us up in the morning, making us alert and improving our mood and performance?<sup>14</sup> (More on the blue light later in the section on rest.) Daily sun exposure is important for the whole of body health, but to reduce skin cancer risk make sure to limit this when the sun’s UV rays are at their highest.

## Temperance

*Temperance* means to be self-disciplined, abstinent, or sober. The

desire for more and more is not only driving stress and affecting our mental and physical health but is also destroying the planet. Temperance involves abstaining from alcohol, harmful drugs, and unhealthy foods. It includes the avoidance of eating more than our bodies require, as well as the wrong types of foods, which fuel low-grade systemic inflammation, contributing to the development of chronic disease leading to premature death.<sup>15</sup>

Reduced calorie intake (fasting), without sacrificing nutrient intake (best achieved with a low-fat, whole-food, plant-based diet), is a predictor of longevity.<sup>16</sup> There are many ways to achieve calorie restriction, but intermittent fasting is the easiest to implement and seems to be just as effective as other more stringent methods. It is achieved by exposing the body to 12–16 hours without food each day—most easily achieved by not eating after dinner until breakfast.

Temperance, however, is more than diet and abstaining. It involves finding

balance in all our activities and behaviors that may be, in themselves, good in nature. Temperance is about avoiding any harmful substance and using with balance even those things that are good. It is more comprehensive than diet. It includes temperance of time management in work,<sup>17</sup> ministry, exercise, healthy eating, and any other activity. It is inclusive of food but not limited to it.

### Rest

Rest includes avoiding overwork, adequate holiday time, proper relaxation, and sufficient sleep. Sleep is important for processing of information and experiences to form memories, optimizing body metabolism and maintaining body weight, maintaining a healthy immune system and mental health, and reducing the risk of chronic disease.

We are not getting enough sleep in this fast-paced world, and blue light at night contributes to this. Sunsets and fires (the only source of light at night

for most of earth's history) are red-orange and produce a calming effect. Light globes and modern technological devices, such as TVs, computers, iPads, and mobile phones, emit blue light, which disrupts our circadian rhythm, hormones (low melatonin is associated with cancer), and sleep. Even dim light (8 lux) from a table lamp can interfere with a person's circadian rhythm and melatonin secretion. Melatonin is important for effective sleep at night and for good mood and alertness during the day.

Melatonin levels can be protected by exposure to bright light during the day (as discussed in the earlier sunlight section), wearing blue-light-blocking goggles, and installing programs on your devices that change the blue light to red by following the rising and setting of the sun. Aim to get seven to eight hours sleep per night.

Rest also includes the Sabbath, which is our way to remember our need of the Creator and to reconnect with Him, family, and others. Not only



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is it a day of refreshing and an antidote to stress but its observance brings many health benefits. Studies on Israeli residents found a significant reduction in the number of deaths among Jews toward the weekend, culminating in fewer deaths on Saturday and more on Sunday. This trend was not found for the non-Jewish Arab population or around other national or religious festivals. Studies on Seventh-day Adventists highlighted the benefits of Sabbath keeping for physical and mental health. These were mediated in part through four pathways: religious

Study identified the key lifestyle factors associated with increasing longevity by ten years as being physically active, not smoking, eating nuts regularly, being vegetarian, and maintaining a healthy body weight.<sup>23</sup>

For greater health benefits, the physical activity guidelines recommend being active on most days of the week, with 150 to 300 minutes (2½ to 5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity (for vigorous physical activity, only half the time is needed).<sup>24</sup> A 20-minute brisk walk after each meal would meet the requirement for moderate activity and

mortality from the diseases common in other western countries—including much lower rates of dementia.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike the other four areas, which have been around for thousands of years, Loma Linda Adventists live in mainstream North American culture. Despite being surrounded by unhealthy lifestyle practices and burgeoning chronic disease rates, they live on average ten years longer and with less disease than do their neighbors. Therefore, practicing the Adventist diet and lifestyle is possible for people living in cultures where chronic disease is rampant. After all, food changes our biological “software” for better or for worse with every single bite. So think about what you put into your mouth: eat the food that God made, including a great variety of colors and types, but stay away from the foods that man made, which are the processed foods high in sugar and fat.

*Temperance is about avoiding any harmful substance and using with balance even those things that are good.*

coping, religious support, diet, and exercise.<sup>18</sup> Benefit from this guilt-free day off each week.

### Exercise

Exercise is good medicine. People who exercise enjoy a higher quality of life, improved health status, and lower hospital admissions compared to people who are sedentary. People who exercise regularly enjoy less chronic disease, arthritis, and respiratory illnesses,<sup>19</sup> less joint pain, better immunity,<sup>20</sup> lower risk of premature death, and better thinking skills and memory.<sup>21</sup>

Physical inactivity has been ranked the fifth leading cause of disease burden in Western Europe and is more important than smoking, obesity, and high blood pressure as a cause of heart disease. In fact, exercise may be just as important as drug interventions in the secondary prevention of coronary heart disease, rehabilitation after stroke, treatment of heart failure, and prevention of diabetes.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the Adventist Health

would decrease blood glucose levels at the same time! For optimal health, muscle strengthening activities should be done on at least two days each week. Time spent sitting, as typically found in the western lifestyle, is also linked to premature death. So if your lifestyle does not include moving, make sure you break up each hour of sitting time with just two minutes of light-intensity activity.<sup>25</sup>

### Proper Diet

The five blue zones are five areas of the world where people live the longest: Japanese in Okinawa, Italians in Sardinia, Costa Ricans in Nicoya, Greeks in Icaria, and Seventh-day Adventists in Loma Linda. One of the common ingredients for each of these groups is the consumption of a largely whole-food, plant-based diet, rich in legumes, whole grains, fruit, vegetables, nuts, and seeds, with very few or no animal foods. And as a result they are living to more than 100 years and have the highest life expectancy or the lowest rate of middle-age

### Water

The human body can last weeks without food but only days without water. Water is essential for every cell and body process. Water maintains the integrity of every cell, helps eliminate waste products, regulates body temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, aids digestion and prevents constipation, carries nutrients and oxygen to the cells, maintains the flow of blood, moistens the skin to maintain its structure, and moistens the membranes of the lungs and mouth. The body can't store water and loses up to three liters every day, more in hot weather, through the lungs (breathing), skin (sweating), urine, and feces. Once thirst is experienced, the body has already started to dehydrate. To prevent this, the average adult female needs about two liters and the average adult male needs about two and a half liters of fluid, ideally pure, clean water, every day. More water is required during physical activity, in times of vomiting and diarrhea, in warm or hot environments, and for pregnant women coping with the demands of a changing body.

Drinks containing caffeine, such as tea, coffee, energy drinks, and

sugar-sweetened drinks act as diuretics, increasing the loss of water from the body and contributing to dehydration, and should be avoided. Intake of free sugars, particularly sugar-sweetened drinks, increases overall energy intake and may increase the intake of nutrient-poor, high-calorie foods, leading to an unhealthy diet, weight gain, and increased risk of chronic disease and tooth decay. Sugar-sweetened drinks have been linked to almost 200,000 deaths worldwide every year. Therefore, the World Health Organization has strongly recommended that in sugar-sweetened drinks, no more than six teaspoons should come from free sugars.<sup>27</sup> Free sugars include sugar added to foods and beverages commercially and at home and sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices, and fruit juice concentrates but not sugars naturally occurring in plant foods.<sup>28</sup>

## Trust in Divine Power

Belief in the existence of a personal, transcendent God who loves and cares about humans, is responsive to their needs, is in control, and will ultimately work all things together for good has positive effects on mental and physical health. Beliefs about where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going give meaning to life and remove anxiety about the future.

Trust in divine power boosts positive emotions and helps neutralize negative emotions, serving both to enhance life and increase coping skills as negative life events are put into proper context. Individuals with these beliefs have greater well-being, happiness, hope, optimism, and gratefulness and are less likely to experience depression, suicide, anxiety, psychosis, substance abuse, delinquency, crime, and marital instability.<sup>29</sup> Ellen White stated, “Faith in God’s love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowliest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings.”<sup>30</sup>

## Conclusion


The emerging science of epigenetics has shown us that our genes are not our fate. Our genes have a switch that can be turned on and off by diet. This switch, called the epigenome, sits on top of our DNA. But it is not only diet that can turn our genes switches on and off. A week of sleep deprivation was found to alter the function of 711 genes, including some involved in metabolism, inflammation, immunity, and stress.<sup>31</sup>

Even just 20 minutes of exercise changed the epigenome and gene expression in human muscle cells for hours.<sup>32</sup> Just 45 minutes of moderate exercise four times per week for three months was able to alter the genes involved in energy metabolism, insulin response, and inflammation.<sup>33</sup> Brisk walking for about an hour per day can cut the effect of 32 obesity-promoting genes in half.

Smoking, stress, and pollution also affect the epigenome. In a classic experiment, men with prostate cancer were allocated to lifestyle intervention (low-fat, plant-based diet; physical activity; stress management; and social support) or watchful waiting.<sup>34</sup> In just three months, 500 cancer promoter genes were turned off and 50 cancer suppressor genes were turned on in the intervention group. Lifestyle is medicine, and our Creator is now showing us through science how His prescription enables us to live life to the full (John 10:10).

The science is in: the principles enunciated in this article really do help us physically and mentally. And no wonder, considering that God is their ultimate source. The body, mind, and spirit interact with each other, and what affects one part affects the whole being. Ellen White further tells us, “It cannot be to the glory of God for His children to have sickly bodies or dwarfed minds.”<sup>35</sup> But believing in something, even having scientific “confirmation” of it, is not the same as making it our own, a choice that we each, ourselves, have to make.

Clearly, to be effective shepherds of Christ’s flock, pastors have a responsibility to thoroughly examine and live

the health message for themselves. Then they are to be examples as they impart this knowledge to His church so that Christ cannot say, “‘My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge’” (Hos. 4:6, NIV). My prayer for pastors is “that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well” (3 John 2, NIV). 

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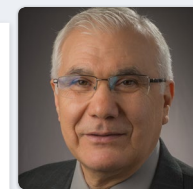
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# Mentoring: A way of life

Until recently, mentoring<sup>1</sup>—the process by which an experienced person counsels or trains another to help in their professional development—was a way of life between generations. “Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deut. 11:19).<sup>2</sup> Some biblical examples of mentoring are Jethro to Moses, Moses to Joshua, Eli to Samuel, Elijah to Elisha, Mordecai to Esther, Jesus to His disciples, Barnabas to Paul, Paul to Timothy and John Mark, and Timothy to all the faithful Christians who mentored others. This mentoring chain equipped believers to carry on the work of God.

In this article, we will deal with the art of professional mentoring—how experienced ministers, paid or volunteer, can impart their wisdom, knowledge, experience, and skills to the next generation of leaders. I will give biblical and personal examples of how this can be done. I will also list the qualifications of the mentor and of the mentee and the expectations of the relationship.

## Biblical examples of mentoring

A Christian mentor is known as someone who supports another believer, friend, or fellow worker through a relationship for the purpose of long-term, developmental growth.<sup>3</sup> Christian mentoring in the church

becomes important for the spiritual and professional growth not only of the person being mentored but the one mentoring.

Note how Jesus and Paul and the rest of the disciples mentored the new generation of ministers and the lessons we can learn from them. Jesus modeled wholistic and effective mentoring relationships with His twelve disciples. The group watched how Jesus modeled living in the will of His Father, His nights of prayer, the journeys they took together, and how He treated people. Because He was with them constantly, He was able to impact them by using teachable moments. They also had plenty of opportunities to watch each other, contrasting their behavior with that of Jesus. The disciples were able to learn from each other as Jesus sent them out two by two. They became sources of support and encouragement as they shared life experiences with each other.

Robert Coleman summarizes how Jesus mentored His disciples. Through intense prayer, Jesus selected the disciples to be with Him as He taught them about the heavenly Father and how to do ministry. Christ sent them out with the power of the Holy Spirit to make a difference in the world, to preach and have authority to drive out demons (see Mark 3:13–15). Jesus also expected His disciples to reproduce His likeness and to lead others to Him, teaching them to make new disciples (see Matt. 28:18–20). God’s method included men and women, not programs, ceremonies,

or organizations. That is why Jesus spent three and a half years mentoring disciples.<sup>4</sup>

The apostle Paul also was a great mentor. He never did ministry alone; he always took someone with him to build the person into a leader and help him become all that God wanted him to be. He captured the essence of mentoring in 2 Timothy 2:2: “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” This passing of the torch has gone from generation to generation through our time, and it will continue until Jesus comes again. The church exists today because of this chain of mentoring and witness that includes Jesus and continues today.

## The need for mentoring

During 2016, I talked to more than 50 young pastors from three different conferences. Only five of them seem to have received adequate mentoring in preparing for ministry.<sup>5</sup> Seasoned pastors must take time to share their wisdom and skills with the next generation of pastors in order to be certain that effective ministry and preaching are ensured and that church growth remains progressive and strong.

God introduced mentoring as part of the training of the younger Levites. Listen to what God instructed Moses to do in preparing and mentoring the next generation of Levites in the ministry. “The Lord said to Moses, ‘This applies to the Levites: Men twenty-five years

old or more shall come to take part in the work at the tent of meeting, but at the age of fifty, they must retire from their regular service and work no longer. They may assist their brothers in performing their duties at the tent of meeting, but they themselves must not do the work. This, then, is how you are to assign the responsibilities of the Levites' ” (Num. 8:23–26).

Retirement at the age of 50 did not end the Levites' work.<sup>6</sup> They were to start a new phase of ministry:<sup>7</sup> assisting their brothers in the tent of meeting in carrying out their duties (Num. 8:26). By designing that mentors to the younger Levites should pass on their judgment, wisdom, and skills, God built a universal mentoring system.<sup>8</sup>

Thus mentoring becomes a significant part of the DNA of the church, where experienced and young pastors learn how to engage in this art. This can be successful only if accompanied by reasonable accountability and evaluation.

## Personal journey

Mentoring has been a part of my life since I became a pastor. When I was studying at the seminary, three of us ministerial students met two hours a week to share our problems and needs and to minister to one another. We spent the first hour in worship, Bible study, and prayer. Then we shared effective ministry ideas, discussed books we were reading, and preached to and then critiqued each other. That was one of the best things I did at the seminary. I grew in knowledge, skills, grace, and spirituality. All three of us benefited from the experience so much that we continued to do it for many years, two of us even to this day. I look forward to the times when my friend and I meet in person or on the phone. We definitely receive a blessing.

When I graduated from the seminary and went to my first church, I asked from my ministerial director the names of the five top pastors in the conference. I called each one of them

and asked whether they could mentor and coach me to be a better pastor. Three of them agreed. Most of the time, I called them to find out how to do ministry effectively. That experience was invaluable in learning new ministerial skills and in avoiding many mistakes that may have negatively affected my ministry. I learned and grew from the experiences of those who had gone before me.

Since I benefited so much from being mentored, I, too, decided to mentor younger pastors who served with me later. I spent considerable time with them to build up their skills and help them become effective in ministry and grow in their love for Jesus and commitment to Him. We spent Monday mornings in prayer and Bible study. During this time, we shared ideas about ministry and discussed the challenges of pastoral life. We went out to minister once or twice a week. I was blessed to take the time to share what I had learned and watch those pastors

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mature and become effective in their own ways. They too, I am sure, felt a sense of growing in ministry.

Now while teaching at the seminary, I continue the tradition of mentoring—this time, with future pastors. I begin about noon with one hour of prayer walking, circling the Andrews University campus. I take three students (that is about the maximum for effective mentoring), and as we walk together, we share our lives with each other. We talk about classes, ministry, and spiritual growth. Then we spend about 15 to 20 minutes in prayer and sharing Scripture with each other. In addition to prayer walks, I make myself available to many students who are ready to go into the field. Our conversations cover such fields as prayer for different occasions, coaching in performance of ministerial duties, training lay leadership in churches, encouraging witnessing by church members, or just being a listening ear. These experiences have been a source of great joy and growth for all of us.

### Mentoring colleagues

Lately, I have been convicted that I need to mentor four or five teachers so that they can teach my classes on spiritual growth both here at the seminary and in different parts of the world field. Right now, I am mentoring friends who plan to hold training sessions in Spanish-speaking areas, Romania, parts of Africa, and the Philippines. I have shared all of my class materials, PowerPoint presentations, and exercises with these potential teachers and invited them to sit in on my classes to observe. I sat with them for hours and shared what I have learned, encouraging them to improve on my materials. Sharing our own experiences becomes essential for knowledge to pass on from generation to generation with the hope that it will be improved upon by the next generation.

### Mentoring church members

I never conduct ministry alone. I always take somebody new to the ministry, with the hope that he may learn

something new. Last year, I took Craig with me to give Bible studies to a family in our area. I showed him how to give Bible studies and lead people toward a decision. When this family got baptized, I had Craig with me in the baptistry and told the whole congregation about his

essential role in bringing this family to the Lord. This year, Craig is doing the same mentoring to another person.

This lies in harmony with what Jesus did. Jesus gathered His disciples, showed them how to minister to others, and sent them out to do the same. I

## How to be an effective mentor

1. Be able to communicate what you know. Let what you communicate be on a level that the mentee can understand.
2. Be prepared. Know from your mentee what topics or subjects he or she wants to talk about beforehand, outline the key focus points, and have a plan ready for effective delivery.
3. Select a mentee whose philosophy of life you share. Make sure you are philosophically and theologically compatible.
4. Choose a person with potential in which you genuinely believe. The secret to mentoring would be to help a person get to where he or she wants to go.
5. Evaluate a mentee's progress constantly. Be objective in your appraisal.
6. Be committed, serious, and available to mentees.<sup>10</sup> Establish a set day and time for regular sessions or meetings. Keep your commitments wholeheartedly and be ready to listen with an open mind, with willingness to provide counsel and guidance.
7. Be honest and gracious, candid and straightforward. Help facilitate an open, lively dialogue. Give constructive feedback. Say what the mentee *needs* to hear from you, not what he or she *wants* to hear from you. No matter what you do, always allow the mentee to make his or her own decision.
8. Be a lifelong learner. Continue learning about what's going on in your field, as well as the world at large. Keep an eye on trends and culture, especially as it relates to the relationship you have with the mentee. If your mentee asks a question for which you do not know the answer, make that an object of team research.
9. Be transparent and fair. Ensure there is no hidden agenda or ulterior motive involved in this relationship. You do not owe your mentees any favors, and they do not owe you anything except gratitude.
10. Show compassion and genuineness. Convey your interest and desire to provide one-on-one help and guidance. Be selfless about sharing what you know. Model positive behavior and successful performance, and offer guidance and advice toward reaching a specific goal.<sup>11</sup>
11. Motivate and inspire. Support, validate, and encourage your mentee. When you help link your mentee's own goals, values, and emotions to the kingdom of God and the mission of the church, the mentee becomes more engaged in his or her work and development.<sup>12</sup>
12. Set professional boundaries. Mentors should stick to mentoring. Boundaries should be set in order to avoid dependency upon one another for emotional support.<sup>13</sup>

have been mentoring in one way or another for more than 36 years. I define *mentoring* as “a relational process between a mentor and mentee for the purpose of transferring knowledge, wisdom, and skills gained through experience in order to facilitate continued growth in spiritual, professional, and overall wholistic development.”

## Eight things a mentor does

The following are eight principles I learned from experience, reading, and reflection about successful mentoring:

1. *A mentor listens.* *Listening* means the mentor tries to get inside the other person’s perspective or worldview and to understand how the other person thinks and feels. This listening is done with unconditional acceptance of the person.

Often we tend to think of what we are going to say or the advice we are going to give rather than listening. Listening helps us know the heart of the issue and conveys to the mentee that we care.

2. *A mentor intercedes.* After listening well and understanding the other person, the mentor takes that person’s needs to God in prayer. I often pray for all my mentees daily and claim Bible promises on their behalf.
3. *A mentor models.* *Modeling* does not mean that the mentor seems to be perfect but that the mentor is growing. Let your mentee see your flaws and watch you deal with them. The greatest gift you can give your mentee contains your sincere example of a fellow pilgrim who also travels on a journey.

4. *A mentor asks questions.* Asking questions encourages critical thinking and self-reflection. This practice elicits feedback and promotes self-disclosure and self-learning.
5. *A mentor teaches.* Teaching happens through many venues, such as sharing each other’s joys and concerns, reading, and going to seminars together. However, the ultimate goal is not to impart information but to transform through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit.
6. *A mentor sets the pace.* As a mentor, you may be a step ahead in areas of personal, professional, and spiritual growth. Lead the way in being transparent in your mentoring relationship. Model spending quality time with God. Share your experience of a balanced life and impart professional skills.
7. *A mentor involves the mentee with other Christians.* Expand the relationships of the mentee to include others. Contact with others will prevent your mentee from being merely an echo of yourself.
8. *A mentor gives options, not answers.* Guide your mentee through the decision-making process by discussing options together, sharing multiple perspectives, and talking through any potential consequences, allowing the mentee to ultimately choose the best. Do not assume that your mentee will want to do exactly what you want. “The most effective mentors guide rather than direct their mentees.”<sup>9</sup>

## How to be an effective mentee


Because mentoring relationships are reciprocal, we also find it important to know how to be an effective mentee. Just because you have reached a certain level of professional growth does not mean that you cannot benefit from being a mentee. Here are some practical steps for being an effective mentee:

1. Learn from the mentor how to ask the right questions, where to look for the right places, and how to stay interested in searching for the right answers.
2. Focus on improvement, not perfection.
3. Accept a learning position. Do not let your ego get in the way of growing.
4. Respect the mentor, but do not idolize him or her.
5. Immediately put into effect what you are learning: learn, practice, and assimilate.
6. Be disciplined in relating to the mentor. Arrange for ample time, select the subject matter, and do your homework to make the sessions profitable.
7. Reward your mentor with consistent progress. If you show appreciation but make no progress, the mentor feels as if he or she has failed. Your progress comes as the highest reward.
8. Learn to ask critical-thinking questions that prove you have been thinking between sessions and show progress in your perception.
9. Do not threaten to give up. Let your mentor know that you have made progress. Then he or she knows they are not wasting their time.
10. Expect accountability. Growth implies responsibility for one’s own progress and a willingness to be held accountable for one’s own goals.

## Mentoring: The resurgence of an age-old art

Mentoring is an ancient practice that involves a relational process where experience and values pass from one generation to another. Throughout the Bible, mentoring was the primary means of passing on faith, knowledge, and skills. It has also been the means of passing on the torch of faith from generation to generation.

Mentoring can happen in a variety of ways and with a variety of people.

What seems to be required is a willingness by both parties to engage in a developmental relationship for the purpose of learning and growth. 

1 There are many definitions of *mentoring*, but the essence contains a trust relationship between two people where one is willing to take the time to impart knowledge and skills (mentor) and another individual seems interested in receiving that instruction. The trainer becomes the mentor, the receiver is the mentee. According to the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary, the definition of *mentor* is “someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person.” (*Merriam Webster*, s.v. “mentor,” noun, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor).) According to Grads of Life, in the mentoring relationship, the mentor moves beyond imparting and skills to making sure that the mentee grows and is successful in applying what he or she has received. “Mentoring is a development strategy for a young person’s successful path to adulthood. It’s all about developing a structured, trusting relationship between a professional (mentor) and an aspiring professional (mentee).” (“Mentoring Guide,” Grads of Life, accessed June 28, 2016 [gradsoflife.org/tools-to-act/mentoring-guide/?gclid=Cj0KEQjwwMi7BRDGptbvW0CDj8oBEiQAIAl\\_yDLh\\_kZooVik5o4893r5hh1055VsN-tWjleAk](http://gradsoflife.org/tools-to-act/mentoring-guide/?gclid=Cj0KEQjwwMi7BRDGptbvW0CDj8oBEiQAIAl_yDLh_kZooVik5o4893r5hh1055VsN-tWjleAk))

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- 5 Thom S. Rainer found that mentoring was missing in more than 90 percent of church leaders today. Thom S. Rainer, “The One Common Factor of Effective Church Leaders,” January 20, 2016, [thomrainer.com/2016/01/the-one-common-factor-of-effective-church-leaders/](http://thomrainer.com/2016/01/the-one-common-factor-of-effective-church-leaders/).
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## A modern-day miracle

After He delivered me from a life of depression and atheism at the age of 22, it became apparent that God was calling me into full-time ministry. Soon after, I went through the greatest trial of my life. While leading a three-week mission trip, I experienced pain every hour, every day. However, as I preached nightly, the pain miraculously disappeared until after the message was finished.


I was later diagnosed with cancer, which was treated with surgery and chemotherapy. My immune system collapsed, and I developed a septic infection. My blood pressure plummeted to 55/27, and my life hung by a thread. Thousands of people around the world prayed for me, and

my students fasted and conducted a prayer walk around the hospital. The next morning, I had a lifesaving breakthrough, explained only by divine providence! Miracles continued, and against all odds, I was soon cancer-free and back to ministry.

While I was lying on my bed in ICU, God taught me numerous lessons about complete surrender to Him. After wrestling with Him, I determined that whether I lived or died, I would trust and praise Him in the outcome. I learned to ask, “How can this bring me closer to You and bring You glory?” rather than, “Why would this happen to me?”

Humanly speaking, I should be dead, but God’s love is greater than

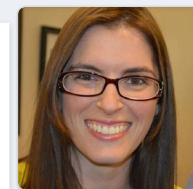
death. He is the Life and Resurrection and still works miracles! He loves us ministers intimately and draws close to us in every difficulty. He will increase our faith as we trust Him in everything, not merely the good.

Will you surrender all and allow Him to strengthen your heart in the personal trials you face today? 

—Wes Peppers is currently studying for his masters in pastoral ministry and pastors in Lansing, Michigan, United States.

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**Marina Fabris Garner** is a graduate student at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, United States.



# Why do we need philosophy of religion?

**H**is appearance was striking. Tall, with blond hair and blue eyes, he already stood out from the rest of his theology class in Brazil. However, his profound understanding of the Bible and incessant curiosity stood out even more to whoever talked with him about the Bible. Thus, it came as no surprise when he was selected to be a professor at the university that we both graduated from. He was going to be, I was certain, a brilliant theologian and fascinating professor.

However, when his interests led him to do a master's degree in philosophy at a secular university, it was downhill from there. Five years after I saw him last, I learned he had become an atheist. He gave back his pastoral credentials and moved far away from the institution where we had had so many uplifting conversations about God. Reflecting back on my conversations with my friend after his abandonment of faith, I see that his struggle with faith was not emotional, or even institutional, but intellectual. He had genuine questions that, as far as he was concerned, remained unanswered.

The first reaction of many Christians to stories like my friend's is to condemn the course of study, the idea being that anyone who studies philosophy becomes destined to leave his or her faith behind.

It is not so simple, though, and with this article I want to look at one crucial field of philosophical study that can be very helpful in strengthening faith: the philosophy of religion. This is a branch of philosophical inquiry that looks at the logical and rational beliefs that form the foundation of religious experiences, doctrine, and practice. I will look at five reasons why the philosophy of religion can be useful to pastoral ministry. I have built my arguments based on interactions with five different Seventh-day Adventists, whom I have named Adventist 1, 2, 3, and so on.

## 1. Addressing objections

Adventist 1 is a close relative, and while we were talking, he suddenly responded to a moral comment of mine with the claim that "truth is relative to the place and time when spoken!" Although this objection came from an Adventist, these types of objections generally come from nonbelievers, such as atheists and agnostics. Both philosophy in general and philosophy of religion in particular have, for centuries, produced plenty of material about relativism and absolutism, and about the critical consequences of each for human belief and action.<sup>1</sup>

Philosophy of religion has addressed not only objections to Christianity, such as relativism, but all types of objections that we hear almost every day from

our friends, family, and colleagues. According to 1 Peter 3:15, we must "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (NIV). There are very few Christians in the world we live in today who can honestly say that they have not encountered objections to their faith. Until a few decades ago, we lived in a pretty uniformly religious society. Unfortunately, in the post-Christian world of today, that is no longer the case. In the United States alone, the number who self-identify as atheists has doubled in the past several years,<sup>2</sup> a reality far from uncommon in other countries as well. Armed with solid arguments for faith, the believer and the church can help many thinking people know biblical truth.

For example, an important objection to the relativism suggested by Adventist 1 could be the following philosophical argument, among others<sup>3</sup>:

- P1. Moral relativists claim that there are no absolute moral standards.
- P2. The claim "All moral standards are relative" proposes an absolute moral standard.
- P3. To propose there are no absolute moral standards using an absolute moral standard is illogical.
- C. Therefore, the relativist's claim "All moral standards are relative" is illogical.

Hence the relativist claim that all truth is relative undermines itself.

## 2. Better understanding of doctrine

Adventist 2 has been a church member all her life. In the midst of a conversation, she asked this question: "I wonder how evil will not start again in heaven. I mean, if we will continue to be free, how can we be certain that it won't happen again?" This is a serious philosophical question. That is, what

God but, rather, a natural response of love. More importantly, while studying our understanding of freedom of will, we will become not only biblically but also philosophically prepared to respond to Christians who challenge this notion of free will.

## 3. Addressing heresy

Adventist 3 is a studious and faithful member of the church who, in a Sabbath School class talking about evil and God's foreknowledge, asked

*Until a few decades ago, we lived in a pretty uniformly, religious society.*

kind of freedom of will do we have, and what kind of freedom will we have in the afterlife? The question about the freedom of the will, as well as freedom in heaven, comes as an extremely fruitful subject in philosophy of religion.<sup>4</sup>

A Seventh-day Adventist member who studies profoundly the Christian and Adventist doctrine from a biblical and theological perspective should have a much deeper understanding of this issue than would those who do not. And those who complement the theological study with a biblically sound philosophy may enjoy an even deeper understanding. If we believe in this total freedom, the options would seem to be either God will take away our freedom in heaven or we will still have the possibility to sin in heaven. None of these options seems adequate, according to biblical evidence. After a little more thought, we can see that other possibilities are open to us, such as the overwhelmingly attractive vision of Christ in heaven, His love and majesty, which would inadvertently remove our freedom, not as a direct act from

this question: "Do you think God knows everything that will happen in the future?" Before I could open my mouth to respond, he continued: "I don't believe God would allow evil to occur if He knew about it, so I think God knows all the past and present; however, He does not know the future. And that is why tragedies occur."

The name of this concept is open theism—the assertion that God knows all that can be known. Because the future cannot be known, God does not know it. Unfortunately, I have heard this idea not only from lay members but even from some pastors.

We recognize that philosophy does not exist to subjugate theology. On the contrary, the Word of God is the final authority. In the case of open theism, the Bible has a sufficient amount of instances that clearly go against this alternative, such as the many prophecies that show God's detailed knowledge of the future. However, philosophy allows a wider array of answers to many issues. The tools to refute open theism and other theological

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misunderstandings are available in reputable philosophy of religion publications.<sup>5</sup> Philosophy may supplement biblical evidences with arguments, such as the following, using the idea of God being the most perfect being imaginable:

- P1. God is the most perfect being imaginable.
- P2. The most perfect being imaginable should be perfect in all perfect-making attributes.
- P3. Full knowledge of the past, present, and future is a perfect-making attribute.
- C. Therefore, God has full knowledge of the past, present, and future.

Also, a large portion of heresies are based on weak arguments. When the Christian learns how to evaluate arguments with logical and theological scrutiny, the possibility of being deluded by false teachings becomes less likely.

#### 4. Evangelism and preventing apostasy

Adventists 4 and 5 are a couple. They had been married for 20 years and had left the church. The church they had formerly attended held a series of meetings directed toward nonbelievers, and the church invited me to lecture on the philosophical arguments for the existence of God. That night, Adventists 4 and 5 were in the audience and were blown away by the evidence. One year later, they personally told me that as soon as they got home, they knelt and delivered their lives back to Christ. Here, too, a philosophical defense bore great fruit for the Lord.


#### 5. Good reasons for faith

Evidence from the book of Acts suggests that argumentation in favor of the truthfulness of Christianity was the norm, to both Jews and pagans (Acts 17:2, 3, 17; 19:8; 28:23, 24). When dealing with the Jewish public, the apostles referred to the fulfillment of prophecies, the miracles of Jesus, and especially the resurrection of Jesus to give evidence that He was the Messiah (Acts 2:22–32). When speaking

to non-Jews who did not believe in the Old Testament, Paul demonstrated the existence of a Creator God through His works in nature (Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:20) and pointed to eyewitnesses of the resurrection as evidence that God had been revealed through Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30, 31; 1 Cor. 15:3–8).

What should we do about those who do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God? Or those who do not even believe in God? In 2011, the Barna group revealed that 36 percent of youth who had left the church said they were not able to ask their most pressing life questions, and 23 percent said they had significant intellectual doubts about their faith.<sup>6</sup> Philosophy of religion can help break down some intellectual barriers and open up persons for the reception of the truth.

No question, we need to live by faith. But our faith is an intelligent faith, and the right use of philosophy can

show people just how intelligent that faith really is. 

- 1 Paul K. Moser and Thomas L. Carson, eds., *Moral Relativism: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Peter Kreeft, *A Refutation of Moral Relativism: Interviews With an Absolutist* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1999).
- 2 Michael Lipka, "10 Facts About Atheists," Pew Research Center: Factank, June 1, 2016, [www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/01/10-facts-about-atheists/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/01/10-facts-about-atheists/).
- 3 P stands for premise and C stands for conclusion.
- 4 James F. Sennett, "Is There Freedom in Heaven?," *Faith and Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (January 1999) 69–82, doi: 10.5840/faithphil19991617; Kevin Timpe and Timothy Pawl, "Incompatibilism, Sin, and Free Will in Heaven," *Faith and Philosophy* 26, no. 4 (October 2009): 398–419, doi: 10.5840/faithphil200926437.
- 5 Thomas P. Flint, *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). Paul Helm, *The Providence of God: Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).
- 6 "Six Reasons Young Christians Leave Church," Research Releases in Millennials and Generations, Barna Group, September 27, 2011, [www.barna.org/barna-update/millennials/528-six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church#.V6StB-IFIVs](http://www.barna.org/barna-update/millennials/528-six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church#.V6StB-IFIVs).

### Ten books for a beginner's philosophy of religion library:

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## ► Pastor leads out in refugee assistance program



Photo Credit: ADRA

**Bern, Switzerland**—Before 2013, Pastor **Christian Molke** was leading the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the German federal states of Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz, and Saarland, with 34 pastors, 65 churches, and 4,600 members. In 2016, he found himself signing a contract with the Greek government to build a refugee camp. What a difference three years makes! Molke now serves as managing director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Germany.

More than 60 million people around the world are internally displaced, seeking asylum, or living as refugees in other countries. The United Nations has described the Syrian crisis, which has displaced approximately half of the country's population, as the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era.

In December 2016, Molke signed a contract with the Greek government to build a camp in Ktima Iraklis. Iraklis is centrally located with easy access to shopping, a hospital, and schools. At the camp there will be 85 heated residential containers, the size being approximately 25 square meters, each with its own electricity connection, kitchen, and sanitary facilities. In addition, service containers are set up that, among other things, will be used as rooms for social activities, laundry, education, and medical examinations. This is designed to ensure the people privacy and protection and to provide them with facilities to become self-sufficient. The refugee camp is expected to be ready for occupancy by the end of February 2017 and will accommodate up to 550 people.

ADRA has appealed to the international community to find a timely

and humane solution to resettling the refugees stranded in Greece and other parts of the world and has called on the international community to address the circumstances that cause people to become refugees. ADRA also calls on pastors to talk to their congregations about what the Christian response should be to these events and how to follow Jesus' example, even in difficult times.

Seventh-day Adventist churches in Europe have partnered with ADRA on projects to support refugees in their communities. ADRA challenges all pastors and churches to consider whether they have a role to play in reaching out to the millions of displaced people around the world and in our own communities. For Pastor Christian Molke, the answer was yes. [Adapted from Anna Lefik | EUDNews]

## ► Brazil's Seventh-day Adventists meet community needs

**Manaus, Brazil**—Following events in Brazil—a New Year's Day massacre at a prison as well as flooding in the state of Rio Grande do Sul—Seventh-day Adventists in the nation are working to help meet human needs and share an affirmation of faith in the process.

A group of volunteers from the Seventh-day Adventist Church distributed water, food, and the outreach book *In Search of Hope* while standing in front of a banner stating “We’re here to pray with you” as a way of helping relatives of massacre victims from the prison riots that took place on January 1 in the city of Manaus. The volunteers prayed with family members.

Many of those present were trying to get information about their relatives, while others were there to identify those who perished. A total of 60 inmates were killed.

“Many people were unable to eat, in addition to their emotional breakdown. We went to the place to show our solidarity and share hope. We tried to provide aid and spiritual support,” said Pastor **Fabiano Denardi**, regional publishing ministries director.

**Tobson da Silva**, a volunteer, said relatives’ mood was one of sadness,



Photo credit: ASN

pain, and anguish, as some were uncertain whether their relatives were dead or had escaped. “We were there to, in some way, bring comfort in a sad moment such as this.”

This is the second-largest massacre in the history of Brazilian prisons, coming only behind the Carandiru prison massacre, when 111 inmates were killed in 1992.

Five days after the Manaus prison tragedy, thousands of people in and around Rolante, a city in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, were affected

as flooding caused major damage to roads, bridges, and thousands of homes.

The Brazilian office of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency brought a truck from São Paulo to Rolante as part of relief operations. The truck contained a kitchen capable of preparing 15,000 meals a day, as well as a laundry that could process 88 pounds (40 kilograms) of laundry an hour. The truck also had an area where people could receive counseling. [news staff | ASN]

## Church planting: The focus of South Pacific Division conference

**Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia**—A church planting conference, held at the Avondale College of Higher Education in Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia, became a heady mix of tough facts and inspirational solutions.

“Yes, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a problem in the South Pacific Division (SPD),” said SPD president Pastor **Glenn Townend** in his opening address. “In many parts of

our region, Adventists are practically unknown. In Sydney, one of the most extreme examples, you’d need to gather a crowd of 500 people before you’d have a statistical chance of finding an Adventist. Just one.”

“God is trusting us with resurrection power,” said Pastor Townend, citing the apostle Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 1. “It’s like we’ve been given a Formula 1 car and we’re just putt-putting along.” Judging by the keen attention and

hearty amens, the audience—mostly male but representing a broad spread of the SPD—seemed to resonate with what Pastor Townend was saying and relish the challenge he presented.

“We’ve got just a bit over 200 people here; we had to turn a lot away,” said Dr. **Wayne Krause**, the SPD’s church-planting liaison and one of the conference’s key organizers. “We’re excited about the number of church members who are here—not just pastors

and administrators—it's around half church members. Because unless church members are planting churches, we're never going to advance the work. We do not have the resources. And it's not biblically correct that only pastors plant churches. So we're trying to encourage many of our church members to see that they can either plant a church or be part of a church-planting team."

"Have you hung a 'Do Not Disturb' sign on the door of your life?" asked seasoned church planter **Kathy Hernandez**, pointing out the spiritual barriers we can put in God's way. Dr. **Kleber Goncalves**, director of

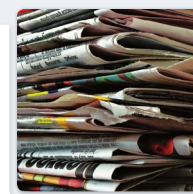
the General Conference's Center for Secular and Postmodern Studies and one of four presenters from outside the SPD, made a stark comparison: "We are living in a fairytale when we call each other 'brother' and 'sister' but

only meet for an hour per week. We don't really care about one another. Jesus never said, 'Go into the world and make church members.' He said, 'Go and make disciples.' There's a big difference."

*"We are living in a fairytale when we call each other 'brother' and 'sister' but only meet for an hour per week."*



Photo credit: SPD



The conference included a number of church-plant case studies. Pastor **Lloyd Grolimund** related how the New Hope Adventist church in Sydney's northwest has grown from "under a dozen" people to a congregation of 300 in less than two years using community service door knocks, a quality worship experience, and live-streamed and televised church services.


Pastor **Faafetai Matai**, from the Trans Pacific Union Mission in Fiji, recalled his visit to the Lau Valley Adventist Church on the outskirts of Honiara, Solomon Islands. Church members there are successfully reaching people in the seven squatter settlements that surround their church building, establishing regular Bible studies, evangelistic video

viewings, worship services, and even a school.

"I think we've made the mistake of focusing on membership," said Pastor Townend. "Being a member is important, but being an ongoing disciple grows out of that. We've also focused on knowledge—knowing the fundamental beliefs—again, important, but actually living them and learning how to be a 'loving and loveable Christian' and involved in the different disciplines of being a disciple is what we're focusing on. And it's very biblical, and many people are realizing the need and seeing results by following the biblical plan."

"Multiplying Disciple Planting Churches" was the official title of the conference. Repeated communications

coming from Pastor Townend and other church leaders have made it abundantly clear that "discipleship" is a key theme for the SPD. But how does this fit into church planting?

"The reason we plant churches is that they're the best place to grow disciples, to make disciples," said Dr. Krause. "New disciples go best into new communities." So what is so special about new church communities? Dr. Krause explains: "It's new. It's something I can get involved in. The jobs aren't already filled. The same person hasn't held the eldership role for many years. New people, young people, are encouraged to get involved. There's an excitement because no one has told them it can't be done." [Kent Kingston | *Adventist Record*] 

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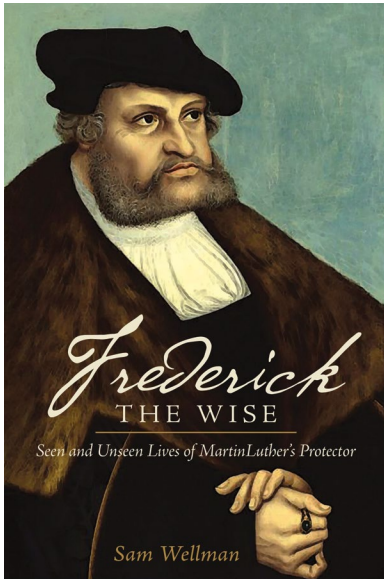
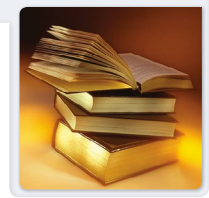
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This year Martin Luther is remembered for posting his ninety-five Theses and, of course, starting one of the most important reformation movements in the history of Christianity. While Luther's contributions need to be recognized, we must also acknowledge that Luther did not work in isolation. Many others made significant contributions to his mission or gave him needed support.

Sam Wellman has written a book about Frederick the Wise (1463–1525), who gave life-saving support to Luther and consequently enabled him to move forward with his mission. How was it that Frederick—a loyal member of the Roman Catholic Church, faithful to the papacy and an ardent collector of relics—came to support Luther? After all, Luther attacked the papacy and relics, and though he denied attacking the church itself, his actions were interpreted as an attack on the church. This book addresses those and some other questions.

Before highlighting some central themes of the book, I will point out several features—some helpful and others somewhat distracting. The author provides a helpful list of Luther's contemporaries (ix–xiv)—rulers, church

## Frederick the Wise: Seen and Unseen Lives of Martin Luther's Protector

by Sam Wellman, St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2015.

leaders, and others. Additionally, the chronological list (xv–xxi) up to the death of Frederick (1525) is a bonus. On the other hand, while the author uses English versions of personal names, when he refers to Charles V, Holy Roman emperor, as Karl, he uses the German version of the name. No reason is given. In addition, the author, without giving adequate support for some of his conclusions or views, all too often uses “surely” (9), “no doubt,” or “possibly,” “might” (10), “probably knew,” “could have” (11). The reader needs to detour around these expressions.

Frederick became the Elector of Saxony in 1486, three years after Luther's birth. If he had not become Luther's protector, he most likely would be remembered for the castles he built, the start of the university in Wittenberg, and his immense collection of relics. Pope Julius II (pope 1503–1513) issued a bull in 1507 directing various church officials throughout the empire “to send parts of their relic collection to the Frederick” (117). Wellman writes that even while he built his relic collection, Frederick “opposed indulgence preaching, because the so-called Turkish Crusade money somehow would land in Maximilian's [emperor] hand for yet another war against anyone but the Turks” (105). The Turkish invasion was an ongoing threat to Europe, and neither the emperor nor the pope found an effective way to repel it.

Yet Frederick's relic collection of more than five thousand items should not be dismissed as merely outward piety. His focus on the spiritual was also exhibited by his Holy Land pilgrimage, a venture desired by many Christians yet experienced by few (53ff). The trip was also an opportunity to acquire more

relics. He never married but did have a mistress, Anna, with whom he had two children (94ff). Frederick nevertheless interpreted their relationship in a spiritual context. Upon his death he left money for Anna, whom he referred to as his “God-given wife” (228).

Frederick was enthusiastic to have Luther as a professor, but Luther made his entry onto the world scene with the posting of the ninety-five Theses in 1517. Frederick was at times bewildered by Luther's positions and manner; and it was Frederick's secretary and chaplain, George Spalatin, who presented Luther in a positive manner. Three years after Luther posted the ninety-five Theses, Frederick, with Spalatin present, examined Luther's teachings with Desiderius Erasmus, the Dutch humanist (1466–1536). Frederick wanted to know whether Luther had erred. Erasmus responded positively since according to him, Luther assailed the pope's crown and monk's bellies (199). In the same year, Frederick stopped collecting relics, and the next year, 1521, he protected Luther at the Diet of Worms and took actions that saved Luther's life. Frederick did all this even though most likely he first met Luther personally the next year, 1522.

The author introduces the reader to a man who at first somewhat reluctantly protected his subject, Luther. Without Frederick's actions, Luther may not be remembered as a reformer and without Luther's actions, Frederick may not be remembered as a believer. By the time he died in 1525, Frederick had also gone through a spiritual transformation. The Reformation that changed the one also changed the other.

—Nikolaus Satelmajer, DMin, now retired, served as editor of *Ministry*. 

Fred Hardinge, DrPH, RD, is an associate director of the General Conference Health Ministries department, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.



# Mr. Peptic Ulcer

One of the all-time favorite stories my father told while I was growing up involved an experience he had as a young physician. During residency, he and a classmate were assigned to do autopsies for the local coroner of those who had died without a physician in attendance or in the case of a violent death. These examinations were done at local funeral homes.

At one venue there was a mortician's assistant who was always unpleasant, complaining, and grumbling about the world. Nothing could be done to satisfy him, and they dreaded meeting this man each time they went to his facility. Between themselves, they gave him the nickname "Peptic Ulcer."

One afternoon, my father was called to perform an autopsy at the funeral home where this man worked. He approached the door with a sense of dread. Yet, to his surprise, a most pleasant and helpful assistant was there instead. Hesitating to inquire about Mr. Peptic Ulcer lest he show up, he did his work and left. On the third such visit, his curiosity got the better of him and he asked about "Peptic Ulcer" without using his nickname. The new helper replied the man had not been feeling well, went to his physician, and was found to have a peptic ulcer!

We laugh at the coincidence of this anecdote! Yet, we rarely realize that the biting words and acrid disposition were no more acid than the secretions that eroded his stomach wall. In your ministry, you meet many people who go through life carrying resentment, jealousy, anger, hate, and discontent—all emotional disorders that may significantly contribute to physiological problems.

Solomon declared, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken

spirit saps a person's strength" (Prov. 17:22).<sup>1</sup> A cheerful heart promotes feelings of inner peace, joy, happiness, and contentment—all of which promote good physical and mental health.

Several decades ago, a county health officer and his colleagues conducted a now famous study. They inquired about the health habits of thousands living in their jurisdiction. One of the questions asked whether respondents were "very happy," "pretty happy," or "unhappy." After a follow-up of nine years, in the "pretty happy" group, 15 percent more men and 10 percent more women had died compared to those who responded they were "very happy." But of those who rated themselves as "unhappy," 55 percent more men and 56 percent more women had died when compared to the "very happy" group. These findings embraced all causes of death and ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic differences.<sup>2</sup>

A contented mind and serene spirit do wonders to prolong life. The attitudes of the mind profoundly influence conditions in the body. The tone of muscles, the rhythm of the heart, the regularity of respiration, the wavelike contractions and secretions of the digestive system—all these and more are modified for better or for worse by the attitude of our minds, either happy or unhappy.

Today, science recognizes the importance of laughter as a therapeutic agent in recovery from a variety of diseases. A trend in modern hospital design is for rooms to provide a pleasant, informal home environment to encourage more rapid recovery of the sick and suffering. Inspired counsel has long supported this kind of setting: "To afford the patient the most favorable

conditions for recovery, the room he occupies should be large, light, and cheerful."<sup>3</sup> And "all who have to do with the sickroom, should be cheerful, calm, and self-possessed."<sup>4</sup>

In the now classic book *The Stress of Life*, Dr. Hans Selye said, "It seems to me that, among all the emotions, there is one which, more than any other, accounts for the absence or presence of stress in human relations; that is the feeling of gratitude—with its negative counterpart—the feeling of revenge."<sup>5</sup>

Ellen G. White states, "Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life forces and to invite decay and death."<sup>6</sup> "Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise. It is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings—as much a duty as it is to pray."<sup>7</sup> "Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul."<sup>8</sup>

Are you a happy person? Is that happiness contagious to others in your ministry? "Joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, and whose hope is in the LORD their God" (Ps. 146:5). 📖

1 All Scripture is taken from the New Living Translation.

2 Nedra B. Belloc and Lester Breslow, "Relationship of Physical Health Status and Health Practices," *Preventive Medicine* 1, no. 3 (August 1972): 409–421.

3 Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1942), 220.

4 *Ibid.*, 221.

5 Hans Selye, *The Stress of Life* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1956), 284.

6 White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 241.

7 *Ibid.*, 251.

8 Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1957), 344.

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list of local channels on [hopetv.org/local](http://hopetv.org/local)

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# Mack's favorite part of being a maintenance man? Bringing people to Jesus.

God gave Mack a calling.  
**SALT** gave him the confidence.

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**SALT Offers:**

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"SALT taught me about effective door-to-door witnessing and the wonderful blessings we can receive from it. God is willing to use anyone, regardless of age or experience!"

– Mack Ruff, **SALT** Graduate