

Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/June 1983

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Why Is Creation Important?

Letters

Adventist distinctives

Dean M. Kelley's article "How Adventism Can Stop Growing" (February, 1983) says that "tithing, the seventh-day Sabbath, foot-washing, et cetera, are the things that make the Seventh-day Adventist movement unique, distinctive, and demanding." However, a more adequate answer is found in Revelation 14:6-12. As surely as Isaiah 40:3 called for the preaching of a special message to prepare the way for the Messiah at His first advent, so surely does Revelation 14 call for the preaching of the final phase of the everlasting gospel to all the world to prepare the way for the Messiah to appear to reap the harvest of the gospel.

The decisive issue in religion today is Do you have the Lord Jesus Christ in your inmost soul as your personal Saviour? Have you responded to the call to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? No one has a true understanding of John the Baptist except as he considers him and his mission to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3. No one truly understands Seventh-day Adventists except as he considers their movement to be a fulfillment of Revelation 14:6-12.—J. L. Shuler, Chula Vista, California.

I appreciated the article "How Adventism Can Stop Growing," but I did disagree with one statement. On page six the author says, "The thing that counts in providing a meaning for life is not whether it's logical or rational or consistent or coherent or entertaining or ego-stroking. *The thing that counts is the cost.*"

I don't believe cost should enter the picture at all. When I became a Seventh-day Adventist it was a question, not of cost, but of right. Of all the things to be considered by anyone who is joining a religious organization, the question of whether that church follows Christ and His Word should far overshadow any other consideration. The thing that counts is *truth*.

I do hope, however, that we never forget what Dean Kelley has tried to tell

us: "How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church stop growing?" Be like any other church that has ceased to make an issue of how a Christian lives.—Kevin Wilfley, Siletz, Oregon.

Congratulations! You have shown Adventism for what it is—a Christless cult that depends for its success, not on the uplifted Saviour or the Holy Spirit, but upon an emphasis on peculiar doctrines. Our place is indeed with the fast-growing, successful groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons if we choose to emulate their methods. Now our ministers have your official sanction to neglect the weightier matters of the law such as faith and love. No doubt we will be much more successful with these priorities. Seriously, you have taken away my Lord, and I know not where you have laid Him. We can ill afford success at this cost. Give me failure if it attends my Lord's gospel!—Kurt D. Davis, Norwalk, Iowa.

Frankly I'm disturbed with Dean Kelley's thesis. Apparently the significant factor in church growth is distinctiveness for the sake of distinctiveness, a vivid reminder of Madison Avenue's attempt to target a narrow market. Where does distinctiveness based on truth alone fit in? I agree most heartily that the Seventh-day Adventist Church must clarify its reason for existence and let the trumpet sound clearly. But let's make sure that it is sounding the right note.—Forrest L. Howe, York, Pennsylvania.

More on growing Adventists

John W. Fowler's article "Pastor and Evangelist: Closing the Gap" (February, 1983) states that Adventists are growing at an annual percentage rate of 3.07 in North America. In the same issue Dean M. Kelley ("How Adventism Can Stop Growing") points out two groups growing faster than Adventists: Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. It strikes me as significant that neither of these conduct public evangelistic meetings and thus avoid the financial outlay these require.

Whether their church services fit the evangelistic pattern Fowler advocates I am not able to say. But obviously both groups achieve effective witness and outreach by their members.

If, as the church growth gospel affirms, there is a correlation between resource expenditure (finances, time, personnel; et cetera) and results achieved, should not more of our resources be directed toward training and equipping our membership? Could we find a way to do more with less, financially speaking? Such an emphasis would require a fundamental shift in orientation. Within the Adventist Church the major thrust of getting laymen involved focuses on members developing contacts with people in order to bring them to meetings conducted by a minister. Psychologically our people are conditioned to believe that they cannot prepare a person for baptism without a minister being the primary figure. Neither the Jehovah's Witnesses nor the Mormons apparently recognize such limitations.—Don Reiber, Heppner, Oregon.

Ritual and Adventists

I was encouraged by the inclusion of C. Raymond Holmes's article "Ritual and Adventist Worship" in the February *MINISTRY* and by its brave reference to liturgy.

At the same time I was dismayed by the article's chauvinism. We are late-comers on the religious scene and cannot create a ritual and a liturgy *ex nihilo*. No musician, poet, or painter creates in a vacuum; all are indebted to their predecessors. No less are we indebted to the generations of godly men and women who have created some of the most beautiful expressions of Christian faith in the forms that have been preserved through many centuries. We impoverish our worship if we pass by theirs. We can "create forms of worship that are distinctively ours," but we should recognize the greatness of our Christian inheritance and not act as if it all began with us.—B. E. Seton, Etowah, North Carolina.

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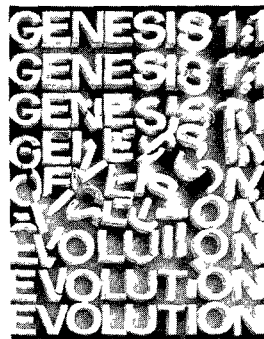
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The Sabbath, Sign of a Relationship/4. Sakae Kubo. The Called Church series has been examining anew our major beliefs and practices in the framework of the unique calling God has given to this church. In part five the author gives six valuable reasons why the Sabbath is important to the called church.

Where Theology and Liturgy Meet/8. C. Raymond Holmes. Whether or not we realize it we are engaged in liturgy every time we meet in God's house for worship and follow an established order of service. The author expresses his concern that we develop a distinctive form of Adventist liturgy that will facilitate the preaching of the Word.

Evangelism in the Sabbath School/11. Fernon Retzer.

New Sabbath School Lessons Coming in 1985/12. Leo Van Dolson, editor of the adult Sabbath school lessons, announces major changes under way in the lesson format—changes that Seventh-day Adventist pastors should know about.

A Brochure Can Introduce Your Church to the Community/14. Milton L. Perry.

When You Care Enough/16. A concept that is catching on in North America is the idea of the caring church. C. E. Bradford explains the rationale behind this emphasis.

Church Growth, the Ku Klux Klan, and You/18. Samuel Geli questions whether the church-growth movement has abandoned the needs of the inner city for the suburbs, the concerns of individuals for the promotion of the larger group.

Paul and the Women at Philippi—1/20. Ronald Springett. A look at Paul's first European convert and what his experience can teach us today.

Can Adventists Be Evolutionists?/22. J. R. Spangler.

Why Is Creation Important?/24. An interview with Dr. Ariel A. Roth, director of the Geoscience Research Institute.

Vacations—A Life Insurance Policy/28. Thelma Beem.

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The Sabbath, sign of a relationship

In many ways the Sabbath is the very heart of Adventism. Cut out the heart and you will immediately seal the doom of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Replace it with another doctrine through a "heart transplant" and you will destroy its health and vitality. But appreciate its importance and strengthen it through exercise and you will see the church continue to grow as a living, dynamic organism. Here one of the church's theologians explores the depths of this beautiful truth.

The Called Church □ 5 Sakae Kubo



he Sabbath is valueless in itself. In isolation it can be only a symbol of legalism. Keeping the Sabbath does not guarantee spirituality. People who kept the Sabbath rejected Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, and ultimately crucified Him. It was simply an empty sign without any experiential meaning. But the Sabbath, if

it is truly a sign of our personal relationship to God, can have tremendous significance and importance. It can represent a true relationship to God in the same way as baptism or the Lord's Supper. It can point to a living, vital relationship with God and Jesus Christ. This relationship emphasizes the transcendence of God and man's creatureliness and dependence. Since the Sabbath is inextricably connected to Creation, and subsequently to redemption, it points to the distance that separates God and man but at the same time to what

God has done to bridge this separation.

First of all, the Sabbath is a sign of God as our Creator. "And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation" (Gen. 2:2, 3).^{*} The Sabbath is a sign of God's rest from His creative activity, so it points unmistakably to God as Creator. We who rest on the Sabbath do so in acknowledgment of the fact that God is Creator. We recognize ourselves as creatures, and this distance between God and ourselves

prevents us from having any other gods or reducing His likeness to any creature.

People who truly keep the Sabbath in acknowledgment of God as Creator will not be tempted to think of the world as coming into existence through haphazard and unplanned evolutionary activity. The world to such cannot be a mere accident. In a society overcome by the evolutionary point of view, the Sabbath plays an important role in preventing us from falling prey to such a view or to its fruits, such as nihilism and atheistic existentialism. The Sabbath serves as a bulwark against the evolutionary view that life has no absolutes in morality or any meaning whatever because of its

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This tendency to usurp God's authority is most clearly seen in the desire to have worship services on a weekday in order to free the weekend for leisure and pleasure, making God into an idol.

haphazardness. In affirming a Creator, Adventists likewise affirm that moral principles are eternal and that there is meaning, purpose, and a goal to life in spite of its great anomalies, enigmas, and chaos. In creating man God had a purpose, and that purpose will be finally realized when Christ comes again to claim His own. The Sabbath for a called church means that we stand at the forefront of those who affirm that life has meaning, that at its root the world has a loving, beneficent Creator who is guiding it to its final destiny. It means that we reject the view that life has no meaning and will someday disappear by accident as it one day began by accident.

The Sabbath points to God's creative activity, but it also points to God's resting from His creative activity. Properly speaking, it is not a memorial of God's creative activity as such, but of His rest, for it is on the Sabbath that God rested from all His work. As a sign of God's rest it points to His setting aside a time when He and man could come together in communion, fellowship, and friendship. As a sign of His rest He asks us to rest, so that we would have time for God. Man enjoyed this perfect face-to-face fellowship with God until sin entered and disrupted their communion. Even then the God who created the Sabbath for fellowship with man put into action a plan whereby this fellowship might be restored. The disruption caused by sin did not cause God to abandon man. He sought to fellowship with him through His presence in the sanctuary.

In Jesus Christ and His incarnation we find God again, in a modified manner, coming to renewed fellowship with man and through this fellowship creating the means whereby man and God would fellowship together throughout eternity. His Holy Spirit was sent among us after the departure of Christ, so that we could still know His presence in this world of sin. He would come again, and when He did so this perfect fellowship of man and God would be perfectly restored. Thus we find in Revelation 21:3. "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his

people, and God himself will be with them." And then in verse 22: "And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb." In the new earth the fellowship begun on the Sabbath at Creation will be restored again. The Sabbath for a called church is an affirmation that God and man shall again have face-to-face fellowship.

Second, the Sabbath is the sign of God as our Lord. Metitiah Tsevat writes that the Sabbath is different from day and night, the month, and the year in that it is not connected to any natural phenomenon such as the revolution of the earth, the sun, the moon, or to the changes in the seasons and the agricultural year. It is neutral time, or the arbitrary setting apart of empty time.

"Since the rhythm of the Sabbath is the only exception to this prevailing natural rhythm, and since the exception in no way derives from time as such or is traceable to any aspect of time experienced in the ancient Near East, it is likely that the dichotomy between the Sabbath on the one hand and nature on the other hand was not unintentional. The intention was, I suggest, to fill time with a content that is uncontaminated by, and distinct from, anything related to natural time, i.e., time as agricultural season or astronomical phase. . . . That contact, displacing the various ideas and phenomena associated with natural time, is the idea of the absolute sovereignty of God, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the rule of other powers. As man takes heed of the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, he not only relinquishes the opportunity of using part of his time as he pleases but also foregoes the option of tying it to the secure and beneficial order of nature. The celebration of the Sabbath is an act completely different from anything comparable in the life of ancient Israel. The Sabbath is an isolated and strange phenomenon, not only in the world but also in Israel itself."¹

Thus the Sabbath points unmistakably to God's sovereignty over man. Man cannot say that he worships on the

Sabbath because it represents one revolution of the earth or the moon or the sun. There is nothing in nature he can give as his reason for worshipping on that day. He can only say that he does so because God commands him. He bows down before the sovereignty of God.

The Sabbath tells us that we cannot dictate to God how we shall worship Him. We can say it is more convenient to worship Him on the first day or the third, but any day other than the seventh is a rejection of His lordship and sovereignty over our lives. In no way is this tendency to usurp God's authority more clearly seen than in the desire to have worship services on a weekday in order to free the weekend for leisure and pleasure. This is to make God into an idol that we create and manipulate to serve our needs. Such a god is not worthy of our worship. The Sabbath stands against any human desire to usurp God's place and to turn religion into a farce. We must accept His dictates for our life not only in regard to what day we must worship but in regard to every aspect of life, including what we eat and drink, what we wear, how we talk, and how we carry on our business. God calls for an obedient church, and the Sabbath is a sign of that obedience and a recognition of His transcendence over us.

Third, the Sabbath is a sign of God as Spirit. In the beginning when God sought to communicate with man, He did not select either a special site where man would meet Him or a special man, a holy man, through whom He would speak, but instead He sanctified a segment of time. Time is appropriate because time is universal, instead of confined to a particular site or person, which would have favored those who were nearby. In selecting time God made it near to everyone, since it is universal. No one stands in a place of advantage. All men are equal, when God selected time. Furthermore, in selecting time God chose something that was not spatial or material. In moving away from a thing or a place, God thwarts man's tendency toward idolatry, man's tendency to worship the thing or place

Recognizing that we have a common Creator and a common Father should help us relate to one another as members of the same family, whether we worship in America, Africa, Asia, or Australia.

rather than the One to whom these point.

Abraham Heschel writes that "the meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world."² Thus the Sabbath points to the fact that the things of matter are not as important as the things of the spirit.

The Sabbath breaks the temporal succession of man's involvement with material and spatial things and continually calls him forth to the realm of the spirit, to the eternal, and to the Person who is Spirit. In this connection then, the Sabbath must be considered from the standpoint of primacy as the *first* day. It is not the first day of the week in terms of chronology, but it is the first day of the week in terms of importance. For things of the spirit are more important than the things of space. For Adam and Eve the first full day after their creation was the Sabbath. Before their first six days of labor they came apart to meet with God *first*. And we are to place God first in our experience, in our thought, in our planning, in our life. He must have priority in our life. And if we put the Creator first in our life, then all other things will fall into proper perspective. The things of matter will not seem so important to us, the things of the spirit will transcend them.

By conceiving of the Sabbath as the first day, we confess that the things of the spirit are more important than the things of space. We do this also when, recognizing God's sovereignty over our life, we choose to keep the Sabbath even if it means the loss of a job. Thus the Sabbath points to the primacy of the spiritual dimension in our lives. Paul expresses this thought well when he says: "We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things

that are unseen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18). Thus the Sabbath keeps us from accepting not only evolution but also materialism. It is important for a called church in this materialistic age to affirm the primacy of the spirit. Matter and things of space occupy much of our attention, but we must never be deceived into thinking that they are more important than the spiritual dimension. The Sabbath serves as a constant reminder that "the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

Fourth, the Sabbath is a sign of God as Father. We mentioned previously that the Sabbath points to God as Creator and thus to mankind as creatures coming from the same hand. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father." Here all Christians are led to recognize that they are truly brothers and sisters, not merely on the basis of their creation, but on the basis of their becoming members of God's family through a new birth. Thus the Sabbath points to the equality of all before God.

The Jews had a recognition of this aspect of the Sabbath in a very strong way. Samuel Dresner brings out this point: "Although one Jew may have peddled onions and another may have owned a great forest of lumber, on the Sabbath all were equal, all were kings. . . . The uneven divisions of society were leveled with the setting of the sun. On the Sabbath there was neither banker nor clerk, neither farmer nor hired hand, neither mistress nor maid, neither rich nor poor. There were only Jews hallowing the Sabbath. The carriage driver could not be ordered to wait for his master outside the synagogue to drive him home after the service. Instead both prayed together."³

So to us also the Sabbath must become a great leveler. The recognition that we have a common Creator and a common Father should help us relate to one another as members of the same family; whether we worship in America, in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, or in the islands of the seas, it should make no difference. No one should feel that he is

superior to another by virtue of his race. In a world of racial tensions, in a world where the black and white are pitted against one another, the Christian church must show truly that the meaning of the Sabbath is realized in their experience.

The fact that we are Seventh-day Adventists should make us all the more conscious of the fact that in Christ there is no east or west, but that all are one in Him. There is no room for prejudice in a Sabbathkeeping church. In keeping the Sabbath we placard before the world that we believe in God as our Creator; so must we live before the world the implications of that doctrine in our life. The Sabbath, which points to God as Father, should point to the church as an international worldwide movement with no racial, economic, or educational barriers existing among its members. The Sabbath for a called church is important because it points to the brotherhood of all men, who have a common Father, and especially to the close spiritual fellowship of those who have joined the body of Christ. This insight from the Sabbath is so badly needed in a world divided along so many lines—economic, social, national, religious, and racial.

Fifth, the Sabbath points to God as Redeemer. We mentioned earlier that when man rested on his first Sabbath it was the day after his creation, and thus he had no works to present to the Father. He came empty-handed to the Sabbath, and God offered him the Sabbath as a gift. God had done everything. Man simply received what God had given him. In addition, the Sabbath calls for the cessation of our labors, pointing to the fact that our labors are not very important. We can cease from our labors and the world continues on. What we do is not so important as what God does. Human achievements and human efforts must be set aside in the presence of God. The Sabbath also tells us that God takes the initiative. He creates, He acts, He gives, He provides, He invites, He blesses, He sanctifies; man is simply the created recipient, the spectator, the guest of God. From first to last it is God

As God finished His creative activity on the sixth day and rested on the seventh, so Christ completed His redemptive activity on the sixth day when He cried, "It is finished."

who is everything; man is simply the recipient of His blessings.

In the light of these things the Sabbath then is a sign of God's justification. Man does nothing but receives what God has done for him. There is no room for human boasting with regard to the Sabbath, because there is no room for human work and human achievement. "Six days you shall labor . . . ; but the seventh day is a sabbath . . . ; in it you shall not do any work" (Ex. 20:9, 10). So the Sabbath leaves man empty-handed in the presence of God, without any works and without any autonomy. He has no opportunity for self-justification. In this way the Sabbath points to man's dependence and man's reception of what God has done. The Sabbath points to the fact that justification is by faith alone, without any works.

In Deuteronomy 5:15 we find these words: "You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day." This tells us that the Sabbath should help the Israelites reflect upon their great salvation from bondage; but we too have had our bondage in spiritual Egypt. The Sabbath likewise should help us to reflect upon that great deliverance, that redemption from our own bondage, the bondage of sin. Thus the Sabbath not only points to Creation, it also points to redemption. Thinking of our redemption from bondage should help us also be concerned about those who are still under bondage.

As God finished His creative activity on the sixth day and rested on the seventh, so Christ completed His redemptive activity on the sixth day when He cried, "It is finished," and rested on the Sabbath. As the Sabbath points to both Creation and redemption, so now this Sabbath that follows upon the completion of the redemptive activity of Christ is a symbol of that redemption. But that general redemption must be appropriated by us individually. And when we do that we become a new

creature. So redemption is viewed also as a creation; the two are very closely related. Thus the Sabbath memorializes both Christ's general redemptive activity on passion week and the redemption of ourselves as individuals. It deals not only with the objective act of Christ but also with our subjective response to it. This subjective response is sealed at our baptism. The Sabbath then recalls to our mind the time when our re-creation took place, at our baptism, which memorialized this once-and-for-all event.

The Sabbath weekly reminds us of the completed Creation event, our redemption by Christ, and our new creation. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of God's creative power in us; but it has no meaning at all unless God's creative power accomplishes its result in the life of the one who observes the day. Holiness of being must match holiness of time. Holiness of time must become holiness in time. Then Sabbathkeeping can never become a legalistic or nominal act. Truly the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands. The Sabbath does not become an abstract entity, a mere external sign for the Christian, for he keeps it with a realization of the new creation that it symbolizes. The Sabbath for a called church is important because it constantly reminds us of the futility of human works before God and of man's dependence on God for His grace.

Sixth, the Sabbath is a sign of God as Sanctifier. We have mentioned previously that the Sabbath is a sign of justification, of faith without works. It is a gift that is given to man, but it is a gift that man must receive. Ezekiel 20:12 says: "Moreover I gave them my sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I the Lord sanctify them." The Sabbath indicated that God had chosen Israel as His holy people. It did not stand simply for holiness of time or holy time, but holiness in time or holy people. But, as Ezekiel explains further, Israel rebelled against God in the wilderness, did not walk in His statutes, and profaned His Sabbath. The violation of the Sabbath

naturally results from rebellion and disobedience.

God can arbitrarily sanctify a temple, but this is not true with people. They must respond to God's initiative. Faith must work through love (Gal. 5:6). Therefore when God says that the Sabbath is a sign of sanctification, He means that it is a symbol that sets His people apart by their exemplary loyalty and obedience to His will and commandments. The Sabbath always points to a new creation and to a life of sanctification, holiness, and obedience. It may be possible on one level "to keep" the Sabbath while living in a way that denies any relationship to Jesus Christ, but this completely rejects the meaning of the Sabbath. It is in reality a complete contradiction of terms—like saying one can at the same time be loyal and betray his nation. If we truly understand the significance of the Sabbath, we shall feel the contradiction between our lives and what the Sabbath stands for and we shall seek God's help that our lives may be brought daily in harmony with its meaning.

Christianity today needs to take seriously the meaning of the Sabbath as a sincere call to obedience. The emphasis has centered on justification without sanctification, a spurious faith without obedience, confession without love, and love without cost. In the words of Bonhoeffer, "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."⁴

In our present world the Sabbath confronts us as God's challenge to test our seriousness in accepting Christ. Since a large part of the world structures its life and business around Sunday as its rest day, observance of the seventh-day Sabbath today demands a radical, conscious decision to follow Christ. Some such demand is always present in Chris-

(Continued on page 29)

Where theology and liturgy meet

It is in the order of service that theology meets liturgy and there they will harmonize or clash. We must always be keenly aware that it is possible to veil the eternal gospel behind the irrelevant trappings of an ornate and involved liturgical tradition. It is also possible, of course, to veil the eternal gospel in liturgical ambiguity.

□ by C. Raymond Holmes



Previous articles in this series have stressed two foundational concepts, both of which have been stated by Norval Pease in his book "And Worship Him" (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1967). (1) Worship cannot take place without liturgy. And (2) it should be the right kind of liturgy, reflecting

Seventh-day Adventist theological beliefs. It is in the order of service that theology and liturgy meet. Here they will harmonize or clash.

God's last message begins with a call for His followers to worship Him as a united people (see Rev. 14:7). John describes the worship of the last-day church in this statement from his Gospel: "That He might also gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (chap. 11:52, N.A.S.B.).* The worship of the last-day church should reflect its unity of belief and give liturgical expression of that unity. Therefore, Seventh-day Adventist worship services ought to emphasize the centrality of the Word, the eternal gospel, and the three ecumenical doctrines of Adventism: the Sabbath, the heavenly ministry of Christ, and His second advent. These are the truths that will bring about the final unity of God's people. Adventist worship is more than a collection of congregations around the world, all confessing Jesus as Lord: it is

the gathering together, under His lordship, of those who are bound together in a unity of belief, set apart and identified as His body by their faith in Christ and their obedience to His commandments.

What we say and do when we worship is a collective act that defines and illustrates the truly ecumenical nature of the Adventist Church and the final gathering on Mount Zion. While other denominations are moving in the direction of similarity in liturgy, thus illustrating commonly held beliefs, we must respond more fully to the first angel's message of Revelation 14 and move in the direction of liturgical distinctiveness. The contrast must be more apparent and thus contribute to the incisiveness of the eternal gospel we are called to preach.

Seventh-day Adventist worship must avoid the extremes of formalism on the one hand and purposeless disarray on the other. Regarding the first, Ellen White affirms that God's "service should be made interesting and attractive and not be allowed to degenerate into a dry form" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 609). However, form itself does not constitute dryness or degeneration. It is the lack of interest and attractiveness caused by an absence

of the Spirit that causes this condition. Revival is not brought about by a change in the order of service. Worshipers who have been born again and filled with the Holy Spirit will bring life to the service no matter what its form may be.

Regarding the second extreme, Ellen White has also written: "There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping."—*Ibid.*, p. 491. If the worship of the last-day church is to reflect its unity of belief, it should exhibit an orderly progression toward a predetermined goal. The events of the end time are not necessarily chaotic or ambiguous. The Holy Spirit has nothing in common with disorder and confusion. The whole last-day message exudes progression and order. Events will occur according to plan and on time. Thus the worship of the last-day church should reflect the orderliness and progression of the Creator rather than the disruption and confusion of uncertain mankind. It would seem too that the gifts of the Spirit for the last day would bring about an orderliness in keeping with God's own character.

The worship of the last-day church, therefore, should be well ordered and edifying. It would not be appropriate or

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A certain timelessness of divine truth is to be evident in the worship of the last-day church. Still it must stand ready to cast eternal truth in contemporary language.

in harmony with Adventist church policy for the church as a whole, through the agency of the General Conference, to establish rules concerning the manner of worshiping and then impose them on congregations. However, it is certainly not contrary to Adventist tradition to suggest orders of service that will reflect Adventist beliefs. The revision of *The Church Hymnal* provides a clear opportunity to do so. Each congregation would do well to select a worship committee to work closely with the pastor and musicians in developing an order of service that meets its needs and that reflects what the congregation and the world church believes. The liturgical life of the congregation should be subjected to periodic review and restudy. Adventist worship ought to be worthy of Adventist theological traditions and understanding.

If we are to have liturgy but not excessive liturgy, what should be the criteria for at least minimum form? For Seventh-day Adventists our criteria must be based on the Word of God and our theological understanding of that Word and worship. The Word helps us understand what should or should not be included. Freedom in the ordering of our worship services must always be exercised within the restraint imposed by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

First of all, therefore, Seventh-day Adventist liturgy must stress the communication of the Word of God. The entire worship service should be considered a proclamatory event. Second, the structure of the service should provide opportunities to emphasize the ecumenical doctrines of Adventism, while at the same time leaving ample room for innovation and spontaneity. Our ecumenical perspective and understanding indicates that in preparation for the return of Christ there is to be a new and united institution, that a new name has been given under which we are to assemble as the people of God, that in these last days the historic message of salvation in Christ is rooted in the Sabbath, His heavenly ministry, and His coming again, and that the celebration

of His expectant church is to be reflective of these elements (see Rev. 14:12). A certain timelessness of divine truth is to be evident in the worship of the last-day church. Still it must be conscious of the times and stand ready and willing to respond to mankind's searchings by casting eternal truth in contemporary language.

The content of our worship forms needs to have an enduring faithfulness that is substantive, timeless and timely, as well as Biblically sound. The worship of the last-day church ought to bear the imprint of its Lord until the time He appears in the midst of His gathered people on Mount Zion. If, as we believe, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the true ecumenical movement calling God's people to a unity based on the Scriptures, then the form of its worship ought to reflect that conviction. The ecumenical character of worship ought to rest firmly on the ecumenical character of the message we preach. Thus the form of our worship, its liturgical expression, will be effective in the

gathering of God's people into one faithful body, an attractive movement, tending toward unity, a movement of inclusion.

It would seem, then, that we have certain obligations when it comes to planning the form of our worship services: (1) to the ecumenical character and obligation of the times, (2) to the nature and content of the eternal gospel, (3) to the tradition of the church to which we belong, and (4) to that which the Spirit would teach us on our way to the marriage feast of the Lamb.

The suggested order of service given here (see box) is an example that attempts to provide as much structure and form as necessary to emphasize the centrality of the Word; to emphasize the ecumenical doctrines of Adventism; to express the past, present, and future dimensions worship has for our existence; and to provide opportunity for celebration as the Word is heard and responses made.

The service, as you can see, has two main divisions, the first focusing on the ministry of the Word of God and the second on the response of the congregation to that Word. This reflects our belief that God must speak first before man speaks, that man's proper stance before God is penitent, expectant silence broken only when God has spoken and a proper response can be made.

Following the prelude, the organist should modulate into an appropriate theme for the entrance of the worship leaders, such as "Break Thou the Bread of Life." The elders enter and stand before their seats (or kneel); the first elder then steps forward for the invocation, after which he returns to his place and joins the congregation in singing the introit, which introduces into the service the first ecumenical doctrine, the Sabbath. A hymn that could be used is:

With joy we hail the sacred day
Which God has called His own;
With joy the summons we obey,
To worship at His throne.

Then hail! thou sacred, blessed day,
The best of all the seven,

A Service of Celebration

The Celebration of the Word

- With Prelude
- With Reverence*
- With Invocation*
- With Introit*
- With Hearing the Written Word
(Scripture Text)
- With Singing (Hymn #)
- With Hearing the Preached Word
(Sermon Title)

The Celebration of Praise

- With Music
- With Prayer Response
- With Sacrifice in Giving
- With Doxology*
- With Testimony
- With Singing* (Hymn #)
- With Benediction
- With Postlude

*Standing

We must not imagine ourselves liturgically clothed when, like the fairy-tale king who believed he was robed in the finest of invisible garments, we might actually be naked.

When hearts unite their vows to pay
Of gratitude to heaven. (See Fig. 1)

Following the preached Word, the congregation enters into the praise portion of the service. All that follows now is in response to what God has spoken in the form of Scripture reading and proclamation. A fitting initial response is music by a choir, soloist, group, or instrumentalists. At this particular point in the service such special music provides a meditative transition to the spirit of prayer. The prayer, in the kneeling position, is followed by congregational singing of the prayer response. One possibility is:

Where high the heavenly temple
stands,
The house of God not made with
hands,
A great High Priest our nature wears;
The guardian of mankind. He hears.
[Adapted.] (See Fig. 2)

The prayer response thus provides the liturgical opportunity for introducing the second ecumenical doctrine, the heavenly ministry of the Lord.

The doxology that follows the sacrifice in giving may be selected each week

in harmony with the message or the theme for that Sabbath, or it may be one of the nonvarying constants in the service and be repeated every week, such as "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow." The doxology is followed with a testimony given by a member of the congregation, appointed by the pastor or the director of personal ministries. This is an addition in harmony with the counsel of Ellen G. White.

The benedictory response is sung by the congregation and introduces the third ecumenical doctrine, the second advent of Christ. One of the best in terms of both message and stirring music is:

We have this hope that burns within
our hearts,
Hope in the coming of the Lord.
We have this faith that Christ alone
imparts,
Faith in the promise of His Word.
We believe the time is here
When the nations far and near
Shall awake, and shout, and sing—
Hallelujah! Christ is King!
We have this hope that burns within
our hearts,
Hope in the coming of the Lord.

This suggested service has a minimum of form; there are but three constants: introit, prayer response, and benedictory response (with the possible addition of the doxology). The other elements are variables, providing ample room for creativity, innovation, and spontaneity. The introit, prayer response, and benedictory response should be printed in the bulletin each week, preceded by a statement such as "The introit and responses below are to be sung by the congregation; they provide the emphases that make our worship service distinctively Seventh-day Adventist."

We must always be keenly aware that it is possible to veil the eternal gospel behind the irrelevant trappings of an ornate and involved liturgical tradition. However, the Protestant Reformation taught us that if truth is not reflected in liturgy, error will be. It is also possible, of course, to veil the eternal gospel in liturgical ambiguity. We must not imagine ourselves liturgically clothed when, like the fairy-tale king who believed he was robed in the finest of invisible garments, we might actually be naked.

* From the *New American Standard Bible*. © The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, and used by permission.

Fig. 1 With Joy We Hail the Sacred Day

Musical score for "With Joy We Hail the Sacred Day" in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a steady accompaniment in the bass line.

Fig. 2 Where High the Heavenly Temple Stands

Musical score for "Where High the Heavenly Temple Stands" in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The melody is more complex than Fig. 1, with some chromaticism and a more active bass line.

Evangelism in the Sabbath school

One of the problems pastors face continually is how to integrate new members into the life of the church—how to graft the branches successfully to the vine. Here's a new program, designed to be fitted into the Sabbath school time on Sabbath morning, that will appeal to new members, old members, and prospective members alike in engendering a greater appreciation for the church and its activities. □ by Fernon Retzer



*A new graphic-arts series, *The Family of God*, has been released by the Southern Union Conference and the producers of *Mission Spotlight* as a unique concept in evangelistic programs—unique because it is designed to be presented during the Sabbath school hours on Sabbath morning!*

Through twelve Sabbath school programs, members and friends of the Seventh-day Adventist faith are introduced to and made familiar with the total picture of the church. This well-prepared series of evangelistic programs gives the pastor an opportunity to conduct a follow-up effort that begins immediately at the close of public meetings. *The Family of God* is intended to help inform, instruct, and orient new members, but at the same time it provides material that will give members of longer standing a reassurance and new insight into their church. And for those who are making their decision, the Seventh-day Adventist Church takes on new meaning as they see it through the eyes of this program. Thus the Sabbath school becomes a seasoning experience for the entire church family.

Just what is *The Family of God*? It's a thirty-seven-minute program divided into four fast-moving, interesting parts.

1. *Music and meditation (10 minutes)*. The first segment is a period for meditation—a time to think, to reflect, to pray. The presentation consists of a pro-

grammed cassette tape of music coordinated with approximately twenty nature and Bible verse slides. It requires a Kodak projector, a rear-projection screen, and a cassette player with auxiliary speakers.

2. *Mission Spotlight (14 minutes)*. Each *Mission Spotlight* program in this series depicts the work of the church in one division of the world field. The congregation gains an understanding of the organizational structure and work of the church. The same projection and cassette equipment is needed for this part of the program.

3. *Heritage of the Adventist Church (6 minutes)*. More than one hundred years ago a people followed their convictions in order to carry the message of Christ's second coming to all the world. Experiences and miracle stories from the past and from every continent have given Seventh-day Adventists a rich heritage that binds them together in faith and love all over the world. These carefully written scripts highlight the legacies left to this generation by the pioneers and build faith in God's leading.

4. *Orientation (7 minutes)*. Our church is filled with terminology, functions, operations, and organizations that are unique to it. These can be puzzling

even to established members and certainly bewilder new ones. This portion of the program uses reports, charts, and illustrations to provide short, interesting explanations that help members and prospective members understand the functions and institutions of their church.

Following this four-part presentation to the entire Sabbath school, members go to the lesson study in classes. Regular members will be studying from the adult lesson quarterly. New members and prospective members can meet in a special pastor's Bible class, using one of several courses of study designed especially for such use—*Profiles of the New Life*; *Profiles of Christian Discipleship*; *Profiles of Faith*; *Profiles of Jesus*; et cetera.

During the personal ministries period following the lesson study, the local church may provide its own material or use the new program *Personal Touch*, a *Mission Spotlight*-type presentation highlighting the work of members in various parts of North America.

Why not put this professionally prepared package into use in your church? For more information, write: Special Services, Southern Union Conference, P.O. Box 849, Decatur, Georgia 30031.

Fernon Retzer is Sabbath school department director of the Southern Union Conference.

New Sabbath school lessons coming in 1985

Initiating changes in the adult Sabbath school lessons is like trying to change Christmas to December 15. Nevertheless, there are some significant changes under way that every Seventh-day Adventist ought to be aware of. □ by Leo R. Van Dolson



major change in the adult Sabbath school lesson format was recommended at the World Sabbath School Lesson Curriculum meetings held in Loma Linda, California, in June, 1982. This recommendation is currently being implemented, but of course, such changes cannot be accomplished overnight for several

reasons. The major consideration is that lessons are generally assigned to writers three to four years in advance, and the curriculum is planned even prior to writing assignments. Thus any drastic change forces writers who are already well into their material to spend time redoing what they have written.

Also, the world field has indicated a strong desire to keep the world church united in studying the same lessons. This fact mandates a long lead time. Until I joined the Sabbath School Department a year or more ago, I had no idea of the tremendous amount of work that goes into planning and preparing the adult Sabbath school lessons. (See accompanying box for a brief sketch of what is involved.) This careful preparation and the input from world lesson committee members, who carve time from crowded schedules to read lesson manuscripts,

ensures that the published Sabbath school lessons represent the thinking of the worldwide church.

Another factor that impinges on any format change is the natural resistance we all have to change of any kind. The Sabbath school lesson format has been revised frequently during the years since lessons were first distributed as separate publications in 1888, but most alterations have engendered protests of one kind or another from those who use the lesson quarterlies. It has fascinated me to see so much interest and attention on the part of Adventist Sabbath school members regarding what happens in and to the lessons. It is sobering, as well, to those of us who help prepare these lessons to realize how seriously what we are doing affects church members.

The current format was introduced in 1970; however, even this latest lesson plan has undergone rather significant changes on a gradual basis. For example, compare one of the 1981 quarterlies with the 1983 format. One of the changes now being incorporated into the 1984 curriculum is a set of application exer-

cises that will come at the end of each lesson. These are being prepared by Lester Bennett, of the Northern California Conference. The reactions we have received when minor changes of this kind are made cause us to be concerned somewhat about the reaction we are sure to get when we implement the far-reaching changes in format conceived at the Loma Linda meetings. Here is where you as a denominational leader can do much to help prepare church members to receive these planned changes enthusiastically. We believe the new format will be an exciting improvement that will make the Sabbath school lessons more challenging and interesting.

What changes are envisioned? Two major proposals surfaced at Loma Linda for the adult lesson curriculum. First, a challenge to do something that had never been attempted in the Sabbath school before—a plan for studying every book of the Bible in a given period of time. Second, a decision to shape the curriculum to meet a list of felt needs expressed in a survey of 2,118 Sabbath school members from the entire world

Leo R. Van Dolson, Ph.D., is an associate director of the General Conference Sabbath School Department and editor of the adult lessons.

We believe the new format will be an exciting improvement that will make the Sabbath school lessons more challenging and interesting.

field. The adult lesson subcommittee decided to accept both challenges and came up with a combined curriculum designed to meet the list of felt and observed needs uncovered in the survey, while at the same time studying all the books of the Bible. Some of these Bible studies will be approached exegetically, whereas others will be handled topically. There also will be room in the curriculum for the historical-narrative method of study.

How this twofold goal will be accomplished is illustrated in the lessons planned for 1985. The new curriculum will be introduced in the first quarter with the study of the Gospel of Mark. These lessons will concentrate on how Christ meets human needs. The second quarter's lessons will be based on the Christian's need to deal with religious life as he finds it in this contemporary age. In a time characterized by cults and the occult, as well as by the introduction of many new religious movements, the lessons for the second quarter of 1985 will focus on the contributions made by the book of Second Timothy in helping Adventists understand what is happening in the religious world. The third-quarter lessons will develop a topical approach to marriage and the Christian home, turning to the book of Ephesians and its theme of unity in order to help Christians sense the importance of security in home relationships. Because of the need for each Christian to discover his personal identity, purpose of existence, and the power God has given each of us over our own destiny, the fourth quarter's lessons will concentrate on what the book of Genesis has to teach concerning who we are and the purpose for our existence.

In the meantime, more in-depth Bible study is being worked into the 1983 and 1984 quarterlies, particularly in the lessons for the fourth quarter of 1983, which are on the book of Psalms. These lessons and the new curriculum come at an appropriate time. In North America, at least, a resurgence of interest in Bible study is becoming evident, not only

among adults but among teen-agers. In other countries this interest has been manifested on a continual and growing basis. Certainly, Seventh-day Adventists worldwide need to become better acquainted with the Bible as we near the coming of our Saviour.

In order to prepare the members of the worldwide Sabbath school for this new emphasis on in-depth Bible study in the lesson quarterly, you, as a part of the Adventist ministry, need to be informed about these plans. But even more, our challenge is to prepare our churches to appreciate and take full advantage of this

emphasis. One means of doing so is the You Can Understand the Bible course now available through conference and mission Sabbath school directors. This material has been field-tested thoroughly, upgraded, and is proving to be effective in getting members involved in personal Bible study. Not only are instructors' manuals, syllabuses, and textbooks available for group seminars, but the course has now been put on tape cassettes for individual study.

The following spectacular promise

(Continued on page 15)

How the Adult Sabbath School Lessons are prepared

1. Curriculum planning and scheduling (five-year lead time).

2. Assignment and orientation of writers (manuscript due three years before circulation).

3. Approval by resident committee. Manuscript is duplicated and distributed to twenty-five resident members of adult lesson committee. After a preliminary reading and discussion decision is made to publish or not to publish, whether major revision is needed, and suggestions for change are considered.

4. Initial revising or editing.

5. Manuscript preparation. Editorial secretaries compare all quotations with original sources, mark the manuscript for publishing house style, type, proofread, duplicate, and mail to sixty-seven members of worldwide adult lesson committee.

6. Publishing house copy editing. While manuscript is being read by world committee, Pacific Press does copy editing and verification of all quotations so that their comments and queries reach the editors along with comments from world reading committee.

7. Revision and final editing. Manuscript is reedited and revised, taking into account comments from committee members and the publishing house.

8. Distribution of manuscript. Manuscript is then retyped, measured for correct number of lines, proofread, duplicated, and mailed to 108 publishing houses, division offices, and translators for publication.

9. Publication. During the process of publishing the English-language quarterly at Pacific Press, the editors read galley proofs, check page proofs and dry prints, and approve covers and advertising.

10. Teaching aids, youth lessons, and popular language editions. A copy of the manuscript is then supplied to the writers of the adult teaching aids, youth lessons, and the popular language edition. When these manuscripts are submitted, they receive the same verification, copy editing, typing, and proofreading process as the standard edition. They are then duplicated and sent to translators and publishing houses for publication.

11. Circulation. English-language adult quarterlies from Pacific Press Publishing Association, domestic and foreign, number 444,500. World Sabbath school membership as of 1981 was 4,405,370. In 1980, 46.5 percent of Sabbath school members were adults. Most of these use prepared lesson materials of some kind.

A brochure can introduce your church to the community

If a newcomer asks for information regarding your church, do you have an attractive brochure to offer him? Take note of these suggestions. □ by Milton L. Perry



You're the pastor of a very active church. You have an attractive church building, a good Community Services program, an interesting pastor's class, an active Pathfinder Club, and a growing tenth-grade school. But you also have a problem that you have discovered in your visiting throughout the area. Not many people in the community know anything about your church or its programs.

The problem haunts you. The big question is: What can our church do to make people more aware of itself and its ministries? Newspaper ads? TV and radio programming? More personal contacts by members with neighbors and friends?

One very effective way of telling others what you are doing through the various ministries of your church is a simple, well-designed brochure. It may not fill every need, but a brochure with interesting pictures and brief copy will be read. It will, in a few short words and pictures, tell the community what your concerns are, what services you offer, and the times for weekly worship and other church meetings. It will provide you with something to give to people who ask about your church.

Milton L. Perry, at the time this article was written, was pastor of the Yuba City, California, Seventh-day Adventist church. He is currently pastoring the Miranda, California, Seventh-day Adventist church.

Now that my church has developed such a brochure, we are finding many possibilities for its use. Here are some of the ways that we have been using our brochure: in weekly calls on visitors to our Sabbath services; to give to Bible-study interests when we are ready to invite them to our church; in a direct-mail program to each home within a one-mile radius of the church; as a primary item in a packet of materials for a "welcome wagon" type ministry to the newcomers in our community; to respond to various requests for information regarding our Community Services; in the literature racks of our doctors' and dentists' office waiting rooms.

Perhaps you and your church have been interested in such an idea already, but you felt stopped at the very outset by the lack of a model to go by or even a procedure to follow in planning. Let me briefly outline the way that my church, the Yuba City Seventh-day Adventist church, went about designing its church brochure.

First, the pastoral staff, in conjunction with the board of elders, analyzed our church and its programs. We set out to discover and define our purpose for existence, what our particular mission to Yuba City should be. We asked ourselves such questions as: "What does our church have to offer the community?" (This forced us to realize that if we didn't have anything to offer, we desperately needed to reevaluate our ministry.) Why

We asked ourselves such questions as: What does our church have to offer the community? Why would, or should, anyone be interested in our church? What do we have to be proud of?

would, or should, anyone be interested in our church? What do we have to be proud of? These questions are the basics for creating the brochure. It is upon these questions that the brochure must be based. Focus your attention on the good points of your church and its programs and build them up.

Next the lay ministries council appointed a committee of three to develop the brochure. They asked a member who was an amateur photographer to take a large number of pictures of the church in all of its various activities, including Sabbath school classes. He gave special attention to those programs that we wanted to emphasize. Realizing our desire to focus on the community centeredness of our church, he even arranged to take several aerial shots of the building.

When the photographer was satisfied that he had all the pictures he needed at present, the committee met with him and selected the best for the brochure. We made sure that the pictures represented our statement of purpose and mission. In some areas, we found there just wasn't quite the emphasis we were looking for. So we asked our photographer to take more pictures in these areas, giving specific details of what we were looking for.

After the pictures were selected, a couple of artistically inclined members helped design a layout. This was a detailed sketch of where we wanted pictures and copy: we were careful to place what we felt were the most important items where they would be seen first upon opening the brochure.

As the next step, the pastoral staff took the pictures and layout, and developed the copy for the brochure based on the statement of purpose. We weighed our words carefully, trying to be as brief as possible. Our emphasis was on three main areas: We are a Bible-preaching church, we are a Christ-centered church, and we are a community-oriented church. When writing, we kept in mind certain details that cannot be omitted—schedule of meetings, map of the location of the church, and the

address and phone number of the church.

Let me insert a word of caution here. Unless your church's appeal to the community is built around you as a well-known or particularly dynamic pastor, take great pains to avoid dating the brochure by having yourself specifically featured either in picture or in copy. Likewise, do not print your address or phone number in the brochure. This could save your church a great amount of time and money when a pastoral change is made.

Now that you have a good idea of what you want your brochure to be, you are ready to shop around for bids. We found that our best bids came from printers who had their own color-separation equipment and who dealt with a large volume of work. We also found that a printer with a staff artist is very advantageous. A professional in art and design can do wonders for creating just the right mood for your brochure. It is also a good idea to see samples of the printer's and designer's work.

Of course, the four-color process (full color pictures) will be the most expensive, but well worth the cost in my estimation. After all, the brochure represents your church and your God. You will find that the major portion of the total cost is taken up in making color separations and in setting up the plates

for printing. Once the primary run is met (the minimum number you must order), the cost goes down sharply. In our case, it cost \$850 for 3,000 brochures, but only \$950 for 5,000. So project far enough into the future in planning how you will use the brochures and determine whether a larger quantity may be worth the price. Be careful, however, not to order far more than you can use just because the unit price is lower. You haven't saved money if you have to discard thousands of out-of-date brochures.

It is best not to get too attached to your projected layout. Be flexible. Don't dictate which type style must be used. Let the printer's staff artist experiment with your layout. Remember, he is a professional at what he does and wants to give you the best-quality brochure possible. Know what you want, but be willing to look at alternatives. The result may well be something much better than you had envisioned.

When the proof comes, read it carefully. We had one of our schoolteachers proofread the brochure, checking carefully for spelling and grammar. This proved helpful in the long run.

When the final copy came off the press, we were more than satisfied. Our church now had a brochure that represented our mission and purpose and gave glory to God.

New Sabbath school lessons

From page 13

indicates what diligent Bible study in the Sabbath school class, and through the week in the home, can accomplish: "If the people of God would appreciate His word, we should have a heaven in the church here below. Christians would be eager, hungry, to search the word. They would be anxious for time to compare scripture with scripture and to meditate upon the word. They would be more eager for the light of the word than for the morning paper, magazines, or novels. Their greatest desire would be to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the

Son of God. And as a result their lives would be conformed to the principles and promises of the word. His instruction would be to them as the leaves of the tree of life. It would be in them a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Refreshing showers of grace would refresh and revive the soul, causing them to forget all toil and weariness. They would be strengthened and encouraged by the words of inspiration."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 193.

Please do all you can to help make this promise a reality.

When you care enough!

C. E. Bradford, North American Division leader, talks about the Caring Church Action Strategy, a comprehensive new plan for reaching the entire division territory with the gospel of Jesus Christ and the news of His coming. This will happen, he says, when we care enough about people in our communities. □ by C. E. Bradford



The Hallmark people have distinguished themselves through the slogan "When you care enough to send the very best." In North America we believe that Christ's church on earth ought to be known as the community that cares enough to send the very best, the message about the Gift of Heaven's greatest and best to the

world. Christians are to project to the world a picture of this kind of God, His character and how He is revealed in Christ. They are to be known as the loving, caring community. As they look upon the world around them and assess its needs they are moved with compassion as was their Master when He saw the multitudes. They see the real needs of individuals and families in their cities, towns, and villages. Their deepest needs have been met by Jesus Christ, and they now have the burning desire to share Him and their experience with neighbors and friends. They care about people. They care about the communities around them. They care enough to send the very best.

There is a great deal of talk today about felt needs. Felt needs are not necessarily needs that people always recognize they have. A felt need may be some deep, gnawing, inarticulated desire. Felt needs are basic needs, but they are not always understood. People cannot always bring them to expression. But the church should understand humanity because people are what the church is all about—people who are moved with compassion, people who see and understand their neighbor's needs, even though he may not be able to express them. Christians minister to those needs. They care enough to send the very best.

C. E. Bradford is vice-president of the General Conference for North America.

All across North America this concept of the caring church is catching on and coming into focus. We are mapping strategies to equip, sensitize, and prepare individual members and churches to project this powerful, life-giving image of Jesus Christ. Caring leads to sharing. Like the apostle John (1 John 1:1-4), we share what we have, what we have seen, what we have known, what we have experienced. Caring leads to action. Caring leads to clear thinking about our mission and purpose in the world. Caring leads to planning and the execution of those plans.

So the church must look at itself, but not for too long. We already have our job description, our instructions, our marching orders. The profile is etched in Scripture and has been demonstrated in the life of our Lord. It is this that we are to share, to talk about, to reveal to the world. As a television set projects images, we are to project a picture to the world, one that will bring reality to the confusion of modern life. We are to dispel the misapprehensions about the character of God and reveal Him clearly. As the TV set has various controls to sharpen its picture projection, so the church must fine tune its representation so that it will be accurate, clear, and precise—in living color. This is our mission, and we should be in dead earnest about it.

The word *koinōnia* in New Testament Greek is loosely translated "fellowship." But the word means more than simply a

human, family-type relationship between church members. John speaks of fellowship with Jesus Christ and with God the Father. Fellowship is in the Holy Spirit. Individual Christians through the ministry of the Holy Spirit are folded into one body by Christian fellowship. Their interaction with one another moves them toward the supreme goal of the stature of Christ Jesus. This kind of fellowship results in a dynamism in the community, a moving spirit, a compelling force to extend the fellowship. The church that cares comes out of the huddle of the ingroup and the select crowd and, like the yeast and the salt that our Lord used as prime examples, penetrates the community, the society, about it.

This kind of *agapē* love always leads to action—specific, loving, caring action. I am happy that the church in North America is girding itself for action. The *Caring Church Action Strategy* came out of the Church Ministries meeting held in January in Winter Haven, Florida, as a result of much prayer, thought, and the experience of churches, pastors, and conference officers who want to see in North America a dynamic example of the people who care enough. It was adopted by the union presidents at that meeting and was then recommended to the North American Division committee on administration. That group accepted it as the model for the division. I'd like to share some excerpts from this exciting document:

In North America we believe that Christ's church on earth ought to be known as the community that cares enough to send the very best, the message about the Gift of Heaven's greatest and best.

"The mission of the North American Division is to proclaim the 'good news' of salvation to the unwarned masses living in North America. There are thousands of people who are reachable and ready to respond to the Spirit's pleading. By developing a specific strategy to equip our pastors to be 'enablers' and 'proclaimers,' and with the local church serving as an evangelistic center, the church can rise to the challenge of the eighties. This concept is built on the Faith Action Advance philosophy that recognizes the local church as the primary agency of church growth and the pastor as the key leader in the local church. It is our responsibility to provide a comprehensive Caring Church Action Strategy which will aid in reaching the 1000 Days of Reaping objective as well as fulfilling the mission of the North American Division. Therefore, we propose the following steps to meet these objectives:

"A series of area workshops to introduce and implement a Caring Church Action Strategy for the North American Division. This strategy is based on the Faith Action Advance (FAA) model of planning, equipping, implementing, and evaluating. The goal of these workshops is to provide the participating pastor and selected lay persons with the instruction and materials necessary to develop an action-centered, caring evangelistic church.

"A competent staff including the most experienced and successful church-growth personnel and public evangelists in North America will be developed. This staff will prepare resource materials and provide instruction for the workshop.

"Each workshop will introduce the principles of the Caring Church model, i.e., that all resources and services within the church are to be based on our Lord's commission, interdepartmentally coordinated, relational (people-centered), and oriented for a sequential flow that will involve members and make disciples of nonmembers."

All this sounds very good. It is good, but it must go further. It must lead to

action, and sometimes we will not act until we set dates, places, and become specific. Under the concept of the Caring Church, generalities will not do. So there is a timetable for implementing the Caring Church Action Strategy. Conferences or churches may choose to follow an alternate timetable, but we urge all to follow the same Caring Church Action Strategy.

"August-December, 1983. Area workshops conducted as arranged by each union.

"September, 1983-August, 1984. Six to nine months of training, planning, and conducting of evangelistic worship services and reaping crusades/seminars.

"August-September, 1984. Evaluation and assessment by workshop staff, North American Division officers, union presidents, and local conference administration."

Who, then, should be involved in this bold, comprehensive strategy? Obviously only those who are committed to the priority of church growth and evangelism, those who have caught the vision and are highly motivated, those who have experienced fellowship with Jesus Christ and with their brothers and sisters and who have a burning desire to bring others into this saving relationship and caring fellowship. The Caring Church Action Strategy includes the following basis for workshop attendance by both pastors and lay members:

"A commitment to the priority of church growth and evangelism.

"An agreement to follow an outlined strategy of preparation for the community and church, and the willingness to conduct or participate in an evangelistic series/seminar within six to nine months following the conclusion of the workshop."

Among church leaders there is a new consciousness that organization on every level is but a support system for what takes place in the local congregation. Conferences are institutions obligated under God to make every effort to facilitate the work of individual members and their churches. The document recognizes this principle and concludes

with these words:

"The essential ingredients of the Caring Church Action Strategy include spiritual renewal, an understanding of church-growth principles that makes use of the regular worship service as an evangelistic agency, strategies for community outreach, lay involvement, adequate field preparation, thorough church organization, as well as aggressive public and personal evangelism/seminars including follow-up and nurture.

"Each of these essential ingredients is incorporated into this strategy; therefore, this proposed model has the potential for moving the North American Division aggressively ahead for God. The times demand it! The lostness of men and women within the North American Division territory compels us to act now! Our church members and pastors have a deep heart yearning to commit themselves to an all-consuming effort directed toward finishing the work our Lord has given us.

"In oneness of the Spirit, we commit ourselves to this united endeavor, believing that we will see thousands won to Christ because we are fulfilling the mission of the North American Division. Then the Holy Spirit, working through a dedicated, united church, will translate the Caring Church Action Strategy into faith, action, and advance."

I am excited about the prospect. I envision thousands of churches across the North American Division coming to life, becoming "resurrection centers," as someone has called them, with pastors and members united in proclaiming the life-giving message. Worship services take on a new dimension! Every Sabbath becomes an opportunity to invite neighbors, friends, and the people of the community to join the fellowship.

I want, here and now, to commit myself and whatever I have and am to making this dream a reality. I ask you to join me. "Floods of spiritual power are to be poured forth upon those prepared to receive it."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 46. The Spirit of God invites us to respond now, for all things are made ready.

Church growth, the Ku Klux Klan, and you

At the close of the workshop I felt troubled and uneasy. I know that a single incident cannot be taken as characteristic of the entire church-growth movement, but that workshop and subsequent experiences have raised in my mind several serious questions about certain aspects of church growth.

Viewpoint

Samuel Geli



he workshop on church growth was almost over; the time for questions had come. I felt uneasy and troubled in spite of much good that had been said. I stood to my feet. "Following the principles that have been given here today, how should we present the gospel to a group such as the Ku Klux Klan?" I asked. I felt

that the question was in order because the premise of the workshop had been that pastors need to "target" and "win" special groups no matter what they espouse or advocate.

The speaker's answer: "Don't feel that they need to change their culture or their

practices; there is no need to interfere with their ideology. The important thing is to recognize this group as a highly motivated, effective unit that needs to be targeted for the church. The KKKs have needs like any other group—people in the church who can understand them and accept them. Market the gospel to appeal to that group."

My surprise and response were spontaneous: I turned and left the room.

I don't claim that this person's answer is necessarily representative of all church-growth thinking, although he is considered a leader in that movement and has authored several books on the subject. But that workshop and subsequent experiences have raised in my mind several serious cautions and questions about certain aspects of church growth.

All of us had spent a generous amount of money to attend this workshop and

had read several books on church growth prior to it. Various denominations were represented, and during the devotional I could sense a real bond of fellowship tying us together. But after the morning devotional Madison Avenue took over. We learned that we were salesmen who had failed our Leader, Jesus Christ. Jesus was our corporation executive whom we had frustrated by becoming entangled in social concerns, individual counseling, and wasted hours preparing sermons. We weren't aware of how much power we had as pastors; we needed to take the bull by the horns and recognize that we were religious managers and executives. Growing churches were those that were being aggressively led by their pastors. The speakers emphasized that churches that did not grow numerically would ultimately fail, and that most of the blame would be ours.

In order for church growth to take place, it was stressed, we must focus on the group. This is the unit to serve. Emphasis on the individual is gone; the group is the most important element.

Viewpoint is designed to allow readers an opportunity to express opinions regarding matters of interest to their colleagues. The ideas expressed in this feature are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or the opinions of the MINISTRY staff.

You are invited to submit your ideas to Viewpoint on any topic; however, the editors reserve the right to make a final decision regarding the appropriateness or suitability for publication.—Editors.

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The flawed theology behind certain church-growth concepts poses a real menace to the church. In my opinion there is much damage taking place, primarily in three areas.

Church-growth concepts, as explained at this workshop, seem based on the principles undergirding supply-side economics—invest energy and capital where it will insure the highest return. This is only wise stewardship. Thus to spend time and valuable resources rehabilitating the sick or ministering to the elderly is poor strategy. The inner city is abandoned for the suburbs, and concern for the poor is no longer a priority item on the church's agenda.

Any change that could facilitate growth should be made. Someone inquired whether this included doctrinal positions. The reply suggested that the church must keep in step with changing social climates and with the values of the groups it has "targeted." In order for the church to grow, it may have to change radically.

I realize that a single workshop cannot be taken as characteristic of the entire church-growth movement. I have read several books on the subject since the workshop, and I believe that much good can come to the body of Christ from church growth. I have never envisioned mediocrity or smallness as being synonymous with virtue and success. I too believe that the church needs to grow numerically if it is to accomplish its divine mission in these final days. But I also believe that an excessive zeal for numerical growth and the flawed theology behind certain church-growth concepts pose a real menace to the church. In my opinion there is much damage taking place, primarily in three areas.

1. *The self-concept of the ministry.* Who am I? A manager pushing buttons (people) or a facilitator for the development of the church through individual members who have unique needs and gifts that can minister to others in fellowship? I believe that much of the church-growth emphasis at present is answering this question incorrectly by presenting a self-concept of ministry based on a predetermined model patterned after secular standards of success rather than on the model provided by Jesus Christ. To me a pastor is a spiritual leader who represents Jesus in a ministry

of words and deeds. Pastors are sent into the world in His name, bearing His authority—not in our style and with the authority of our numerical "success." We are to present the gospel as a living potential waiting to be realized in the lives of men. We are to deal with the profound needs of individuals, as Jesus dealt with the needs of those who came to Him.

In much of church growth, pastoral care for the individual is not given priority because it isn't seen as being efficient. Unique ministries are not seen as effective unless they appeal to the masses. Individual development is encouraged in order to meet the needs and concerns of the larger group.

2. *Institutional concerns versus the message of the church.* Numerical growth is a poor substitute for the church that believes in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Much of the church-growth emphasis presents a self-concept of ministry patterned after secular standards of success.

Institutional concerns within the church must never take precedence over the message of the church. Marketing techniques and management strategies may be fine if one wants to sell cars, but the gospel message is not a consumer product to be advertised and packaged in the most effective way to a targeted audience. I have seen friends in the ministry experiencing a great deal of stress because of the many charts and forms they must contend with in order to document the growth and achievements of their ministry. In the name of efficiency, church growth has tended to make the successful institution of the church the number one goal of ministry. In the name of accountability and wise management it tends to make salesmen of pastors.

3. *Polarization among groups.* Church growth accents the differences that

separate people and emphasizes the importance of homogeneity as a main ingredient of successful growth. As a result it tends to segregate and polarize people along racial, ethnic, and economic lines. In the ideology of church growth there is little room for social concern and the needs of the inner city. To the extent that these polarizing concepts are taken seriously, people are encouraged in their prejudices and strengthened in their belief that change to the point of uncomfortableness is not necessary. Few real sacrifices, such as Jesus demands, are called for.

How would Jesus present the gospel to the Ku Klux Klan? If we take John 10 and 2 Corinthians 5 as a guide, He would probably emphasize the ministry of reconciliation to individuals in that organization on a one-to-one basis. The ministry of Jesus was highly personal. He

did not target special groups and then conform to their ideology in order to win them. He presented a fundamental alternative to the status quo. He went out looking for the one lost sheep even though it wasn't cost effective or part of an efficient strategy. Jesus listened to individuals with love and concern. He ministered in a way that held a mirror up before men so that those who would could see themselves as God sees them. Then he offered forgiveness and victory over sin.

I'm sure that Jesus would not be talking of targeting highly motivated and effective units without affecting their ideology. He would tell that Klan member to repent and leave all racial bigotry aside, to accept the love of God.

Jesus was sure of His role. Are we sure of ours?

Paul and the women at Philippi—1

Paul's first recorded convert in Europe was a woman—Lydia of Thyatira. The first church formed by Paul in Europe was left entirely in the hands of women. Paul seems to have operated by a principle almost totally unacknowledged in the culture of his day—the principle that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for in Him all are one. □ by Ronald Springett



Paul's first recorded trip to Europe is mentioned in Acts 16 in conjunction with his second missionary journey. Crossing the Aegean by boat from Troas in Asia Minor, Paul and Silas made their way to the Roman colony of Philippi, approximately ten miles inland from the port of Neapolis. A considerable number of

Roman veterans and active soldiers began settling there after 42 B.C. The town had grown until it had become a leading city of Macedonia. The great east-west Roman road Via Egnatia ran through the center of town, and the accent was definitely on the military. As a Roman colony it used Roman law, and its constitution was modeled on that of Rome. Philippi was a town whose citizens were protected by Roman might and Roman right.

This military, rather than commercial, aspect of the city might explain the paucity of Jews in the city. Jewish traders usually thrived in the great commercial centers of the Eastern and Western empire. Yet it appears that there were not enough men in Philippi to form a synagogue, although only ten adult

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males were normally required. Paul experienced no opposition from Jews in this town as he did in Asia Minor.

The record in Acts mentions only women who were attached to the Jewish religion, and they met "outside the gate," at the riverside (verse 13, R.S.V.),* and not in a synagogue. The gate most likely refers to the colonial arch one mile west of the city, near the river Gangites. Such an arch placed some distance outside the city often marked the boundary of a vacant area around a Roman town, known as the *pomerium*. Since this area, usually delineated by stones, was considered by the Romans to be holy ground, no burials were allowed within it, and no foreign religions were to be introduced there. Therefore, the Philippian Jews may have been required to travel some distance in order to establish a safe meeting place.

The existence of prejudice against Jews in Philippi may be inferred from the fact that the only charge needed against

Paul and Silas before the authorities was that they were Jews. "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice" (verses 20, 21, N.I.V.). † On the other hand, Paul's non-Jewish companions—Luke, a Greek; and Timothy, a half-Greek—are not mentioned in the court proceedings or the jail episode. Although generally the Romans were tolerant regarding Judaism, they did not like Jews to proselytize Romans. Even though Judaism was itself a "legal religion" in official Roman circles, active proselytizing was frowned upon as a menace to the national cult of the emperor, which the Philippians were bound to respect with a national pride found only in colonial towns. In fact, when the emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome (c. 49 A.D.) the Philippian magistrates followed his example and cast the Jews out of Philippi also. This too may explain the absence of

The woman outside the Christian community conforms to whatever mold the secular society in which she lives casts for her. But in the Christian confession, it is not to be so.

Jews there and amply illustrates the nationalist fervor of the city.

On Sabbath, Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy went outside the city, where they expected to find a place of prayer. On this particular Sabbath they found only a little group of women gathered together. The text suggests that there were not many women, since the apostle's group sat down on the riverbank and spoke to the women rather than giving a sermon or formal discourse. At first the evangelistic prospects did not seem too promising, but Paul well knew the value of one dedicated soul to the mission of the church, and he continued undaunted. One of the women listening to Paul and his companions was Lydia of Thyatira.

Thyatira, from which Lydia had come, was famous for its guilds—the most famous being that of the weavers and the dyers of wool and linen textiles. Lydia was a merchant of purple cloth—actually cloth dyed a bright red from the madder root—and probably was a member of one of the guilds of that city. Lydia, then, was a well-to-do businesswoman who apparently either owned or represented a firm that sold dyed goods. Purple and scarlet cloth of all kinds would be in high demand in Philippi, this Roman military colony, since Roman women liked to wear the color and the men trimmed their togas and tunics with it.

Lydia was no doubt a successful businesswoman, judging from the size of her family household and the ample accommodations for the four missionaries in her beautiful home. Considering the restrictions on women, who seldom launched out on their own to any great extent in those days, we see that the record of Lydia's business activities is extremely significant. If she was sent as a representative of a company it showed the confidence of her employers in her ability to hold down this lucrative market more than two hundred miles from Thyatira. If she was in business for herself it demonstrates that her acumen was sufficient to hold her own in a trade that required large capital investment

and wise management. At any rate she was a businesswoman who by any standard was capable, successful, and rich.

Not only was Lydia well-to-do but she was also a deeply religious woman, having been a convert to Judaism. Since there was no synagogue in Philippi, it is likely that she came in contact with Judaism in Thyatira. Many non-Jews of elevated mind found in Judaism a more superior spiritual or ethical tone than existed in most pagan religions. Paul could not have failed to notice that, although the Jewish community in Philippi was small and insignificant, perhaps even despised, Lydia nevertheless associated herself with it. There was no reluctance in her striving for a better spiritual life wherever it was to be found. The church of today should always have a place for such "women of the world." Lydia was marked in Paul's eyes as a remarkable woman indeed. She was, no doubt, the leading spirit among the women at the riverside, and her lucrative business did not keep her away from the obscure and seemingly unimportant prayer place to which she had to travel so far on Sabbath.

Paul deliberately aimed his efforts in evangelism toward those with a background in Judaism. The God-fearers and other Gentiles who attached themselves in various ways to Judaism usually welcomed the good news. This method, however, did arouse the jealousy of the Jews. Paul saw that pagans who had abandoned their own religions for the values they perceived in Judaism would be more easily attracted to the fuller message of salvation in Christ. Christianity gave them assurance of union with God through Christ and the security and free boldness to live a life that pleases a loving God. Since they had abandoned the leering tyrant deities of paganism, it was but a simple step farther for them to see that a much more powerful motivation to the good life was provided in the love of Christ than in the *lex Judaica*.

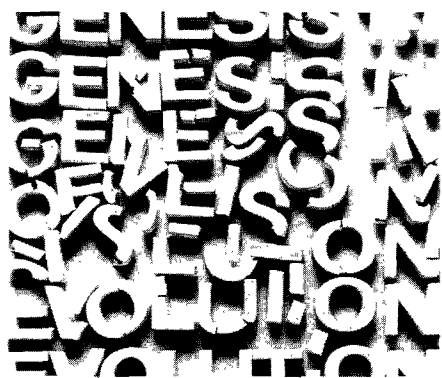
We cannot gainsay the fact that Paul's first recorded convert in Europe was a woman, and at that no ordinary woman in her day. We also cannot deny that the

first church formed by Paul in Europe was left entirely in the hands of women. Lydia was not baptized on the first Sabbath. The record suggests that before she was, she kept on hearing and continued to heed what the apostles taught. The result was that "the Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message" (Acts 16:14, N.I.V.). In a city hostile to Judaism, in an out-of-the-way place where Lydia came faithfully week by week to pray with a few women, and where spiritual stimulation and fellowship were so limited, there her faithfulness was rewarded with a fresh vision of the God she sought to serve. Even though the prospects for evangelism in Philippi were limited, Paul was farsighted enough to see that the constant testimony of a faithful Christian witness in the city would eventually bear fruit. In due time Lydia was baptized "with her household" (verse 15, R.S.V.). We cannot accept the idea that Lydia would have compelled her household (her family and servants) to be baptized or that Paul would have baptized such coerced "converts." This is not to say that she did not exert her influence to make certain that they heard all that the apostles had to say.

Luke tells us that after her baptism Lydia constrained or urged the apostles to stay with her. Her invitation was stated in such a way that they could hardly have refused it. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house" (verse 15, N.I.V.). Paul may have declined the invitation at first. We know that it was his regular principle and practice not to be a burden to anyone (1 Cor. 9:12, 15-18). The missionaries may have had very poor accommodations in Philippi up to this point, and Lydia's open invitation and continual beseeching finally prevailed upon them to accept her hospitality. Some less fearless woman might have hesitated to take in a Jewish "rabbi" and his company, especially when it was clear that his proselytizing might get them into embarrassing situations. Not Lydia. She stands out large in (Continued on page 27)

Can Adventists be evolutionists?

Our church stands among the few Christian world movements that hold as a fundamental belief the literal interpretation of the Genesis Creation record. But compromise is an ever-present possibility.



Recently I viewed a TV discussion on the propriety of teaching evolution and/or Creation in public schools. The audience was composed of grade-school pupils and their teachers. One of the participants was a young clergyman who favored teaching both theories. Frankly, I was embarrassed by his contradictory, illogical answers. He claimed to believe in a God who created all things, yet he offset this by affirming his belief in the evolutionary theory, as well!

Asked whether he really believed that we had evolved from a lower form of life, he explained how he taught the subject to the youth of his church: Holding up a picture of a monkey, he would make some joke about "here is one of your ancestors," and eventually, somehow, work God into this strange teaching! Understandably, several pupils in the audience were obviously confused by these conflicting concepts.

I repeat this story to illustrate the utter confusion in the Christian world on this subject. I don't deny that by mere weight of brain cells alone the side of evolution far exceeds that of the Creation. The majority of scientists and intellectual leaders accept the evolutionary theory in one form or another. But tragically, the same is true of theological scholars and Christian thinkers. Many have tried to accommodate science by such hybrid theories as *progressive creationism*, *the gap theory*, and *the day-age theory*.

As a Christian world movement,

Seventh-day Adventists stand virtually alone today in holding as a fundamental belief of the literal interpretation of the Genesis Creation record. The major factor for this posture, as I see it, is our observance of the seventh-day Sabbath—a literal 24-hour period that begins with the setting of the sun on Friday.

All this introduction is by way of underlining the importance of the interview with Dr. Ariel Roth, director of our church's Geoscience Research Institute (see p. 24). Some may wonder why our church spends significant amounts of money each year to support this program. Why don't we simply cling to the scriptural record and forget what the

to a Creator-God symbolized by the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath is foreign to earth's majority. For these, the wizardry of science and human technology underscores man as an advancing, progressive form of life that is accountable only to himself. Man is the master of his fate; God is obliterated, or at the least minimized.

Briefly stated, the great goal of the human race today is not spiritual regeneration, willing obedience to and worship of a loving Creator-God. The great goal is the elevation of self to the throne of materialistic desires and lust. Therefore, our church has a definite responsibility to search constantly for every shred of evidence giving credence to the

Any concessions we make in compromising our view of the Genesis record will be accompanied by a loss of fervor for the integrity of the Scriptures.

world of science may say or do about the origin of life? But think a moment. Think of the scores of Adventist students who are taking advanced scientific work in non-Adventist universities. Add the many science teachers in our own school system. Then consider the mass of educated laity who read and study, and who live in a culture that is predominantly built on the philosophy of evolution.

This latter point must not be regarded casually. The mores and practices of today's society cannot be divorced from concepts of origins. It is a bit difficult for a dyed-in-the-wool Seventh-day Adventist to trace from cause to effect on this point. God and a fiat creation are so much a part of our thinking, it is difficult to place ourselves in the shoes of those who do not believe this way. We must remember, however, that accountability

scriptural position on the origin of life. God does not demand blind faith in this area. He wants us to use reason and intelligence in considering the subject of creationism in order that church members and those studying our message can have confidence that seventh-day-Sabbath observance truly commemorates a Creation week that *did* exist, and that faith in the Scriptures will be increased! How we view origins and the record of Genesis 1-11 has tremendous implications for the credibility of the rest of Scripture.

Back to my opening story. The clergyman's confused and confusing attempt to reconcile Biblical creationism with modern evolutionary science should be a direct warning against any hint of compromise. (Let me urge you again to read carefully the interview with Dr. Roth to understand the implications of

attempting to reconcile traditional scientific concepts of origins with the Bible record.) The most important point made in this interview, in my opinion, is Roth's answer to the question Is there a relationship between the significance of the Creation account and the specific Biblical data? In other words, can the true meaning and beauty of observing the Sabbath be understood and experienced apart from its being a memorial of the literal six-day Creation week? Roth answers, "True meaningfulness cannot be logically based on an account that is doubted." I agree!

It is no secret that within Adventism there are attacks, both subtle and overt, on the seventh-day Sabbath, its observance, meaning, and validity. Theological discussions over the past several years, although not directly involving the seventh-day Sabbath, have resulted in the departure of some who have given up belief in the importance of the seventh-day Sabbath, as well as of other doctrines. Strangely, some who have taken this step have done so within the framework of a faith that purports to center every belief and practice in Christ alone. It is for this reason that we must clearly understand and believe that true Sabbathkeeping can never be experienced apart from a genuine love relationship with the One who has created us and commanded us to obey Him because we love Him. Obedience is still the supreme evidence of loyalty and love. We must not, and cannot, teach observance of the seventh-day Sabbath merely as a belief or a doctrine divorced from the One who gives it meaning. Never! The Sabbath is inextricably woven into the very fabric of the Trinity who united together in gracious love to bring this world into existence and to create man in their image! Here is love at its best.

Any concessions we make in compromising our view of the Genesis record will be accompanied by a loss of fervor for the integrity of the Scriptures and the God who gave them. And it will have a significant influence on our message. D. Elton Trueblood points out the course churches take when they lose sight of their message: "Just when the world is becoming more aware of its need, the church is becoming less sure of its mission, often moving into bizarre and marginal developments, the major reason for failure in mission being a diminished confidence in the mes-

sage."—*The Essence of Spiritual Religion*, Harper & Row, 1975, page x.

This pattern of doctrinal drifting has also been described by Ellen G. White. As time passes, the spiritual descendants of dedicated founders "depart widely from their example of humility, self-denial, and renunciation of the world. Thus 'the first simplicity disappears.' A worldly flood, flowing into the church, carries 'with it its customs, practices, and idols.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 385.

Modern educational institutions also illustrate this tendency to drift. Many institutions of higher learning in the United States (Harvard, Princeton, the University of Southern California, Auburn University, Boston University, Wichita State University, Wesleyan University, etc.) began as religious, church-related institutions, but have since moved far down the path to secularization and have severed church ties. No educational institution has begun as secular and later become religious (at least to my knowledge). The trend always seems to be away from the God of the Bible. Our educational institutions face some of the same

Ellen G. White's beliefs in this area were similar to those of Moses and those expressed by God in the Ten Commandments. She addresses herself repeatedly to the question of time associated with Creation week. For instance, she declares in Letter 31, 1898: "The sophistry in regard to the world being created in an indefinite period of time is one of Satan's falsehoods. God speaks to the human family in language they can comprehend. He does not leave the matter so indefinite that human beings can handle it according to their theories." Again she states in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 111: "But the assumption that the events of the first week required thousands upon thousands of years, strikes directly at the foundation of the fourth commandment. It represents the Creator as commanding men to observe the week of literal days in commemoration of vast, indefinite periods. This is unlike His method of dealing with His creatures. It makes indefinite and obscure that which He has made very plain. It is infidelity in its most insidious and hence most dangerous form; its real character is so disguised that it is held and taught by many who

If we should ever lose our belief in the six-day Creation, as many other groups have, we would probably first adopt a model of long ages for life on earth.

pressures that other church-related institutions have faced in this regard.

You should understand that I know of no one among us who accepts the evolutionary theory *en toto*. But I am concerned with compromises that seem to be making headway. One survey, although very small in its samplings and therefore subject to a great deal of caution, indicates that some Adventist ministers and educators believe the events described in the Genesis Creation account occurred anywhere from 20,000 to many billions of years ago. I believe that if we should ever lose our belief in the six-day Creation, as many other groups have, we would probably first adopt a model of long ages for life on earth, and then only later realize that this now-accepted concept would not work for the Creation week of Genesis.

There is no question in my mind that

press to believe the Bible." (See also *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 92.) Finally she expresses concern about the trends that result once one departs from the Bible: "Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments too often go a step further and doubt the existence of God and attribute infinite power to nature. Having let go their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 522.

I thank God for our geoscience group and for our many faithful scientists who accept the Word of God as a literal record of origins and other events such as the Flood. We live in a faithless age, but God still has His remnant who will provide an affirmative answer to Christ's question: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8 N.I.V.).—J.R.S.

Why is Creation important?

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Geoscience Research Institute. It was in the summer of 1958 that its activities began with the hiring of two science teachers, Dr. Frank L. Marsh and P. E. Hare. Two years later the old headquarters building for the Lake Union Conference was purchased, and this became the home for Geoscience for the next two decades. Since then the church has provided considerable financial support for a program that is designed to investigate the relationship between the Written Word and the records found in nature. In 1980 the research institute was relocated on the Loma Linda University campus, where it now resides. In the following interview *MINISTRY* probes the thinking of the Geoscience director, Dr. Ariel A. Roth, for an analysis of the theological issues that geoscience is facing. □ Editors



Q. *The Seventh-day Adventist Church has funded and operated a Geoscience Research Institute for twenty-five years now. What do you personally consider to be its basic purpose?*

A. As a research institute our basic purpose is to find truth, in particular the truth regarding the origin of the world and the life contained therein. Unlike most research institutes—which usually concentrate on one specific discipline, such as history, physics, chemistry, biology, theology, or subdivisions thereof—the Geoscience Research Institute takes a multidisciplinary approach, giving recognition to all these areas and any others with data pertinent to the questions we are investigating. We feel that the broad question of origins must be treated on a broad basis of investigation. Besides that, it almost goes without saying that more information is better than less. While the personnel of the institute consists primarily of scientists, we keep in close contact with scholars in other disciplines. Unlike secular scientific institutes, we do not arbitrarily exclude the Bible or other valid nonscientific sources of information. We also want to know what these have to say about origins. We communicate the results of our studies to

the Seventh-day Adventist Church and others through publications, seminars, field trips, and classroom instruction.

Q. *Why is the question of origins important to the Seventh-day Adventist Church?*

A. One of our most distinctive doctrines—the seventh-day Sabbath—is directly related to the Genesis account of origins and to the Ten Commandments. The fourth commandment presents the six days of Creation as the basis for Sabbath observance. Because of this commandment, we believe that it is in God's order to refrain from secular employment on Saturday. We would find it unreasonable to ask a person to quit his employment in order to commemorate a creation week that never existed. Abandoning the six-day Creation week would require basic changes in the Sabbath doctrine held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The question of origins has an even broader importance to our church because a denial of the validity of the Genesis creation account can only depreciate our confidence in the Bible as a whole and adversely influence our understanding of the God of the Bible.

Q. *How do the recent advances in scientific research relate to this question of origins?*

A. Because so many new scientific discoveries need to be evaluated by creationists, I shall only try to generalize without sacrificing too much accuracy. Scores of years ago the Seventh-day Adventist Church successfully faced the challenge of evolution on a scientific basis. At present, evolution in its purest naturalistic form is no challenge to the church. The complexities revealed by modern molecular biology have only emphasized the difficulty of an origin without design, thus giving support to the concept of a Designer. Evolutionists are proposing some models to answer these new findings, but the degree of authentication for these models is poor. There are individuals who consider the new advances in genetic engineering as support for evolution. However, the ability to manipulate the genetic mechanisms does not solve the problems of spontaneous naturalistic evolution. It only illustrates what intelligence and foresight can do, which is what Creation is all about. Until evolutionists can come up with more plausible models, I do not see evolution per se as a serious threat to the church.

Some of the traditional arguments against evolution are receiving renewed attention from evolutionary scientists. Recently new models in biology and paleontology have been proposed to explain the gaps in the fossil record between major kinds of organisms. There is significant interest in this

question. These trends indicate that the gaps are no longer being ignored or denied by paleontologists. As is the case for most evolutionary models of the past the recent proposals lack significant factual support.

Some evolutionists are now attempting to explain the presence of love and concern for others on the basis of what is called biological altruism. This approach bypasses any recognition of love as an exercise of the free will.

Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church today the area of greatest concern in regard to origins is the scientific data that suggest long ages for the geologic column and associated fossils. These data involve radiometric dating, as well as other time-dependent factors. While we do not at present have good answers for a number of questions related to these, we can identify data that challenge the conventional interpretations.

In addition to this, in recent years there has been a definite trend toward catastrophism in scientific circles. Many geologic features that were originally interpreted as a consequence of slow development are now considered to have formed rapidly. Geologists in general are not giving up the concept of long ages, but they are finding much more evidence of rapid or even catastrophic action. They are still preserving the concept of vast geologic ages by postulating long periods of time between catastrophes. But the new trend toward catastrophism in geology is more in accord with the Biblical account of universal destruction by Flood than were the older, stringently uniformitarian interpretations.

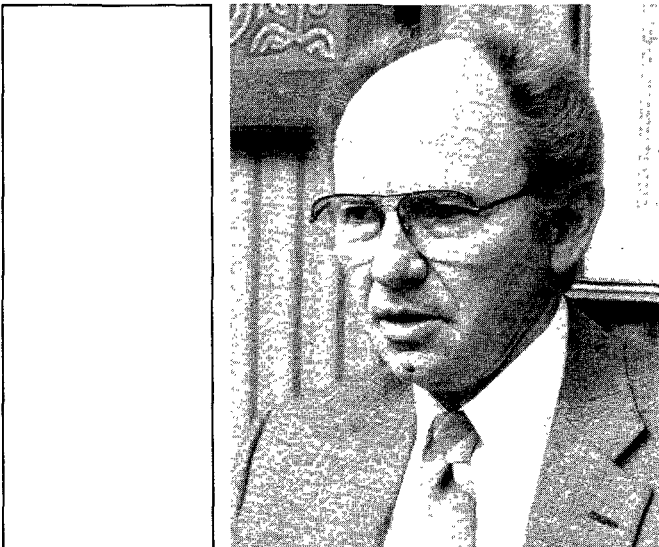
Q. *Do you think that the Seventh-day Adventist Church might revise its belief in the Creation week?*

A. Probably not as a whole. It certainly would not happen suddenly. The Seventh-day Adventist Church appears to be fairly resilient to theological controversies. On the other hand, this issue is a matter of serious concern to a significant number of our church members who are attempting to reconcile the Genesis creation account with contemporary scientific interpretations that suggest a long time for life on earth.

One aspect of this question that is seldom appreciated is that if significantly long time periods are assigned to the layers of fossils on earth, the possibility that God created all basic kinds of organisms in six days is virtually eliminated. Fossils are significantly unique in the different parts of the geologic column, so if one puts large time differences between these units, the basic kinds of organisms found therein cannot all have been created in six days. This is an important point that many overlook. The model that fits both the Biblical account and the uniqueness of the fossil record is to have a six-day Creation, with subsequent destruction by a worldwide flood producing almost all of the fossil record.

Q. *It is sometimes argued that the important issue concerning the Creation account is its significance and not the specific details of how Creation took place. Would you care to comment on that?*

If significantly long time periods are assigned to the layers of fossils on earth, the possibility that God created all basic kinds of organisms in six days is virtually eliminated.



A. There is little question in my mind that the meaning and implications of Creation are far more important than the specific details of how, when, where, or how long it took. However, this argumentation is sometimes used to justify a nonfactual approach to the Genesis account of origins. It is often stated that the important message in the Creation account is that God is Creator, and not how He may have created. It seems to me that this train of thought will leave one in a quandary as to why he should still have confidence in the meaning or purpose of the account while he is doubting its factuality. Incorrect "facts" do not provide a very solid basis for having confidence in the meaning of these facts. I suspect that a loss of confidence in the factuality of the Creation account will also reduce the significance of that account in one's mind. There appears to be some logical tension in the argumentation that only the *meaning* of the Creation account is important. True meaningfulness cannot be based logically on an account that is factually incorrect.

Q. *Do many Seventh-day Adventists not believe in the seven-day Creation week?*

A. No doubt most church members believe that God accomplished Creation in six literal days and that we keep the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of Creation week. But there are many definitions of the Creation week and varying degrees of doubt regarding the literalness of the Genesis account.

Probably somewhat related to your question is the question of *when* Creation took place. As indicated earlier, to put any significant amount of time into the fossil record would negate the concept that all was created in six days. Some Adventists believe in an all-inclusive literal Creation week millions of years ago, but they fail to realize that such belief cannot be reconciled with the nature of the fossil record.

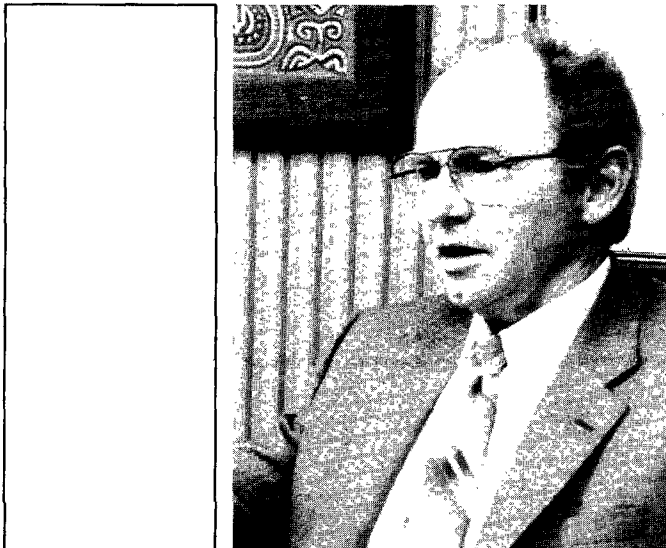
Of interest is a recent Gallup poll that reports that 44 percent of adults in the United States, a quarter of whom are college graduates, believe that God created man within the past ten thousand years. Only 9 percent of the U.S. population believe that God had no part in this, 38 percent feel that God was involved in the process of evolving man from lower forms, and 9 percent do not know. Many were surprised that after a century of emphasis on Darwinism in science teaching, only 9 percent of the public believe in a purely naturalistic origin for man. Consequently some evolutionists feel that they have done a very poor piece of salesmanship. I personally doubt this.

More likely, the basic problem is that of trying to sell an incredibly poor product, namely evolution. It takes an immense amount of blind faith to believe that all the complexities of life have developed here on earth spontaneously without some intelligent design and direction. Because of our belief in the Bible and our concern about the Sabbath, Seventh-day Adventists should be in the forefront of supporting a six-day Creation week.

Q. *It has been suggested by some scholars that the Genesis account of beginnings is allegorical. What is your reaction to this?*

A. I am not a Biblical scholar; nevertheless I do not think that the issue is so incomprehensible to the non-Biblical scholar that I cannot comment on it. While a number of Biblical scholars may disagree, to me it appears that the Bible usually makes quite clear what is allegorical and what is not. The author of Genesis intends to express fact and not symbolism in describing Creation and the Flood; the accounts are not presented as parables or legends. Probably more important is the fact that not only is the author of Genesis being challenged here but also a number of other Biblical authorities and even God Himself, who dictated the fourth commandment and stated that He accomplished Creation in six days (Ex. 20:11; 31:17). Christ also refers to the Genesis account of origins (Matt. 19:4), and so does the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 15:45). The apostle Peter's brief description of Creation and the Flood (2 Peter 3:5, 6) corresponds to Genesis. Hence suggestions that Genesis is allegorical tend to raise questions regarding the reliability of Scripture as a whole.

The question of God's integrity is also important. Would God state that he created all in six days if this were not the case? If so, He is not the God described in the Bible—the God who speaks the truth (Ps. 132:11), declares what is right (Isa. 45:19), and never tells falsehoods (Titus 1:2). Acceptance of a nonliteral interpretation does more than harm the



We must let all know precisely where we stand and the reasons for our position. At the same time we must exhibit understanding and concern toward those who have unanswered questions.

books of Genesis and Exodus: it can pose a threat to the integrity of the leading Biblical personalities, and even God.

Q. *Some have argued that the reason for Sabbath observance given in the Bible is not clear. In contrast to Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5 suggests that it should be kept because of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Do you feel that this negates the significance of Creation week?*

A. There are many reasons why one should worship God on the Sabbath day. One is to remember God and His goodness. In Deuteronomy 5 Moses is emphasizing the goodness of God in delivering Israel from bondage as a reason to keep the Sabbath. This reason, which would have been particularly meaningful to the Israelites, in no way eliminates the reasons given in Exodus 20:11 and 31:17. Also, both the Exodus and Deuteronomy statements add significance to the Sabbath, and one does not negate the other. However, if I had to make a choice I would give preference to the statements of God as recorded in Exodus, which emphasize a six-day Creation period as the basis for Sabbath observance.

Q. *What are your views of how to solve the problem of how we should relate to those having questions regarding the Genesis account?*

A. It is our duty to inform concerned individuals of the issues and the basis for our beliefs so that the importance and implications of these issues can be clearly understood. The less-known scientific data that support Creation and the Flood need emphasis. Ultimately everyone has to make his own decision as to how he evaluates truth and how he is going to relate to that truth. People are very sensitive about their beliefs, and a delicate and somewhat subtle issue such as this requires particular tact and concern. We should not in any way compromise on such a clear tenet of the Bible and of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We must let all know precisely where we stand and the reasons for our position. At the same time we must exhibit understanding and concern toward those who have unanswered questions regarding these issues. We must stand for principle, while we avoid as much as possible hurting personalities. Ellen White stated it well when writing

about the brewing trouble in Battle Creek in 1906:

"While we are to call error, error, and withstand the delusive sentiments that will continue to come into our ranks to palsy the faith and assurance of the people of God, we are to make no tirade against men and women."—Letter 30, 1906; cited in Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Later Elmshaven Years, 1905-1915* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1982), vol. 6, p. 76.

Paul and the women at Philippi—1

(From page 21)

the pages of the New Testament as a woman of dignity, honor, and enterprise.

Paul's dealings with the authorities in Philippi during his arrest may have had a direct bearing on the courage of Lydia in inviting the apostles into her home and her readiness to defend the gospel she had espoused. Furthermore, by bringing them under the same roof Lydia assured herself and her household of all the counsel and instruction the apostles could give. Thus she would be able to observe them on a daily basis. Lydia must have known that there were many charlatans peddling religion. By inviting these men to stay with her she would quickly discover of what sort they were. She was not disappointed. Paul was keenly aware that evangelists are scrutinized not merely for what they say and how they say it, but for what they are themselves. This frequently determines their success—or lack of it. Judicious auditors who are not convinced that the evangelist himself believes in what he is saying or doing will not be deceived by half a million dollars worth of gadgetry.

Thus, from the very beginning of its existence Lydia gave a stamp of distinction to the Philippian church. This was the only congregation in the Aegean region that later sent the apostle Paul personal gifts in appreciation for his labors and privations. The apostle poured out his gratitude in his letter to the Philippian church (chap. 4: 14-20).

The one message that comes through loud and clear in this brief narrative by Luke is that Paul operated on Christian principles in the evangelization of women. The principle is spelled out in Galatians 3:27, 28: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on

The Seventh-day Adventist Church should clearly continue to stand for the Biblical account of origins, while at the same time having special concern for those with sincere questions regarding its authenticity. Obviously we need more than human wisdom in this matter. Fortunately help is available: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him" (James 1:5, R.S.V.).*

Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (R.S.V.).

It is the Christian woman, according to Paul, who is one with her peers, male and female, because she is one with Christ, as they are. She has "put on" Christ—that is, adopted His principles, accepted His guidance, and imitated His example—therefore, she shares an equality with all who do likewise. The woman outside the Christian community conforms to whatever mold the secular society in which she lives casts for her. But in the Christian confession it is not to be so. A woman starts and stands on the same basis as any other member of the community. An example of this is Lydia, who found her womanly freedom enhanced by embracing a deeper commitment to church, religion, and piety.

Currently evangelism and church leadership seems to be an almost exclusively male activity. Paul, however, did not discourage dedicated and talented women from engaging in such activities. If they also are disciples, then the command is theirs, as well: "Go ye into all the world." The church has an enormous pool of talent that has not begun to be tapped in this respect. Paul was prepared to leave the task of evangelizing Philippi in the hands of the Lord and this small group of women who by all later records proved themselves good stewards of the gospel.

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Vacations—a life insurance policy

If you are ever tempted to complain that you don't have enough money for a vacation, then you will want to discover how a vacation can be both enjoyable and economical—and a lifesaver, too!

Vacation time is right upon us, and I hope you are planning one! My husband and I have not always done so, feeling the pressures of work. Several years ago, shortly before school closed for the summer, one of my friends began telling me of her vacation plans. They sounded interesting and something we might like to do, if we had time. She really got my attention when she said, "I consider a vacation a life insurance policy." I had never thought of it that way! As the years have gone by, these words have rung in my ears. Today I take a different view of vacation. It is a must—not something we do if time and money permit.

When the disciples returned from their first missionary tour Jesus said to them, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while." He sensed their weariness from their labors and saw they needed rest. Says Ellen White: "They had been putting their whole souls into labor for the people, and this was exhausting their physical and mental strength. It was their duty to rest."—The Desire of Ages, p. 360.

Thelma Beem and her family have chosen camping for vacation time and have found it a great blessing. In this article she gives valuable how-to information for campers—where to go and how to make the most out of camping. After reading her article I was so inspired I felt it time to get our sleeping bags aired and once again enjoy the thrills of camping. I hope you will be inspired to try it. But if camping is not for you I hope you will be inspired to set vacation time among your priorities for this year.—Marie Spangler.

Let's hope you are not one of those persons who lean thoughtfully back in their chair and announced woefully to the family that they just don't see how it will be possible to take a vacation this year. More than this, I do hope you are not guilty of pride for the number of years you haven't had a vacation at all. Whom do you think you are fooling? Not your nervous system, that budding stomach ulcer, or the family.

"Well, vacations take so much money," you moan. Not always. They surely can, but they really don't have to. With all due respect to the comfortable motels, restaurants, and cafeterias dotted so conveniently around our country, let me suggest leaving them and packing for a camping trip to a State or national park.

You will find campers the most interesting clan in the world. My family have associated with doctors, lawyers, merchants, and an Indian chief while camping—not to mention ministers, professors, and other wonderful people. There may be some unsavory characters among them, but we haven't found them in our eight years of experimenting with the hobby.

Must you have children to enjoy camping? Not necessarily, but it helps. You will be surprised at the number of retired couples who camp regularly. They always seem younger than their years and they are interested and interesting people with whom to associate.

Young couples miss much by not having some older people as close friends. It is a mutually beneficial association.

Camping seems to be one of the few areas of living where status has not invaded. You may camp with only a sleeping bag and frying pan or with an elaborate air-conditioned, carpeted trailer, but campers remain completely unimpressed so far as we have noted. Either group or both will probably be invited over to a neighboring campfire for the evening. Campers, however, are very attentive to all camping gear and are free with advice and help about how you should solve any problem that arises, especially in setting up your camp. We enjoy carrying literature and small books to share with these new friends.

It is true that you must have sufficient supplies for your needs and comfort, but don't overload yourselves with trinkets and gadgets. To overload is the cardinal failure of new campers, but don't worry, you will do better next time and still better the next. Improvising and making

Prayers from the Parsonage

This house makes me feel good. It's the nicest, newest one we've ever lived in. To some it would seem plain, but we have all we need—and more.

Come inside, Jesus. See how brightly the sun shines through the living room's bay window? I can picture loaves of bread cooling on the kitchen counter and a puzzle spread out on the dining room table.

Lisa and Hans will each have a room, and there's even a corner for my desk and file cabinet in the bedroom Dick and I

share. Dick's study will be in the basement, but he can hold Bible studies in the family room, where there's space for our books, as well as the rocking horse and dollhouse.

Bless our home, I pray. May there be times of laughter and enthusiasm, as well as moments of peace and quiet. May we feel free to invite friends, yet not lose the sense of home as a retreat. Help us to achieve a balance between work and play, structure and freedom, routine and spontaneity. Let there be good meals and interesting conversation.

Lord, this house waits to be used. Fill it with warmth. Let love be at its core.

Cherry B. Habenicht

do is half the fun so long as you are comfortable and stay well, dry, and clean. A friend told me she could go across country with a sleeping bag and a roll of aluminum foil. I don't doubt it for a moment, but we aren't quite so hardy and we do enjoy chairs around the campfire, a lantern on the table, and a pot of boiling water on the fire to make a hot drink before turning in for the night.

We do not use suitcases on camping trips. Cardboard cartons containing supplies arranged in the car trunk are more convenient. The cartons can be discarded as your supplies decrease. Old pillowcases used as bags for clothing and the personal effects of each member of the family work very well. One bag may be used for all soiled clothing. It should be up to each one to keep his belongings together.

It will be a pleasant surprise to find that while camping a family can eat well at a fraction of the amount it would cost in restaurants. I hope the mother shares the food preparation with the family so that it does not become a burden to her. Simple food, well prepared, is the most satisfying and suitable for vacation time. Constant munching on cookies and crackers will wreck the children's health and dispositions. While living on the campsite, we find serving two meals a day a most convenient plan. When traveling for the day it is sometimes a good idea to pack a simple lunch at breakfast time and take a leisurely lunch stop at noon. This becomes a comfortable break in the day's trip for everyone. A hot meal can be planned for the evening, because traveling does stimulate the appetite.

Making use of plentiful foods in season wherever you are located will be interesting to the family. I hope you never have to pass up blackberry bushes loaded with fruit along the road. Stop the car, get the pans, and pick the berries. What could be better than bowls of blackberries and cream with bread and butter for lunch or supper? Wild strawberries, wild greens, blueberries, and nuts are other treats to watch for. Roadside stands contain vegetables and fruits, fresh from the local farms, that should be enjoyed. A large pot of fresh boiled corn, cooked on the campfire, with sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, and cottage cheese makes a delectable repast.

Camping is usually done in one of two ways: The family goes to a campsite in the mountains, to the seashore, or to a park to stay for a while and enjoy a period

of time; or the family travels on a long trip and camps each night en route. There is a great element of the unknown in this latter method, because one is never sure of a suitable location in the regular parks. But if the family doesn't mind roughing it and doesn't plan to cover too much territory in a day, it can be a most exciting experience.

Camping time is ideal for writing a few letters, reading a book or two, spending time with the children, and doing things as a family. One day it would be delightful to dress up and go sightseeing nearby. Father might even treat the family to dinner in town.

Perhaps one of the most satisfying aspects of the whole idea of camping is being in close touch with nature. After almost constant imprisonment within the four walls of house, office, school, and car, one feels a literal and figurative release out-of-doors. It is not necessary to be a naturalist to enjoy a sunset, a thunderstorm, a waterfall, or a bird symphony. Open eyes, ears, and hearts will appreciate what is seen and heard, but a knowledge of these things will certainly be desired by most campers.

Many people keenly feel their lack of ability to identify local birds, flowers, and trees. Vacation time provides a perfect opportunity to remedy this situation. With available handbooks, guides, and other helps, the family can go into the field or by the stream. This will assure something to do, which is usually a problem when children are along.

Identification alone will not be satisfaction enough. One will observe the

relationship of different species of wildlife. For instance, you will notice there is water close by when you see a redwing blackbird or a belted kingfisher. You find no mockingbirds in the woods; they like to be near houses and open fields near a wooded area. Watch the vulture as he glides gracefully along the air currents above you. He seldom flaps his wings. Ask the children what is holding him up. If you don't know, find out.

What child can forget the morning a bear came to Sabbath school, or tire of looking at the colored slide of the raccoon on the table, with both paws in the butter dish? Teach the little ones to be quiet in the woods when observing. We all need to spend more time in reflection. This busy, tense, noisy age has made it difficult to find opportunity or inclination for a quiet time.

When we are camping at Balsam Campground on top of Old Smoky, one mile up in the sky, each evening finds us walking the half mile to Heintooga Overlook. We are not usually alone, for many go there to see the sun slip down behind the seven ranges of mountains below us. No one seems to care to talk. We look, and try to fill our souls with the beauty. We sing, "Day is dying in the west." Each evening seems like Sabbath evening in the forest.

Aren't you glad you decided to go camping? I hope you feel refreshed and relaxed in each fiber of your body, soul, and spirit when you return.

Adapted from the *Review and Herald*, April 15, 1965. Used by permission.

The Sabbath

(From page 7)

tian conversion. We affirm that "only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes."¹ The Sabbath for a called church points to the need for obedience and discipleship, and away from cheap grace. It points to self-denial and taking up the cross and following Jesus (Matt. 16:24), to taking our share of suffering "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3).

The Sabbath for a called church is important because it points to the sovereignty of God, to the recognition of God as Creator, as Lord, and as Spirit, and to His immanence as our Father, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier. All of these aspects of God, seen in connection

with the Sabbath—His powerfulness, His greatness, His goodness, His tender fatherliness—are appropriately important in the age in which we live.

¹ Matitiahua Tsevat, "The Basic Meaning of the Biblical Sabbath," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84 (1972): 457, 458.

² *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Co., 1951), p. 10.

³ *The Sabbath* (New York: Burning Bush Press, 1970), p. 43.

⁴ *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959), p. 36.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

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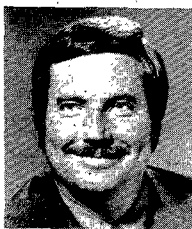
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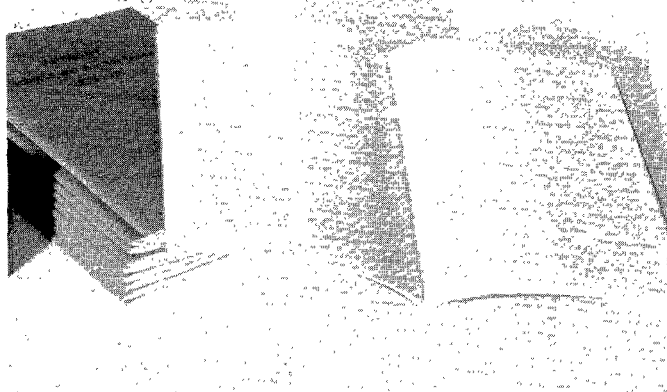
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Recommended reading

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Harold S. Kushner, Avon, New York, 1981, 160 pages, \$3.50, paper. Reviewed by Sandra Doran, Ballston Spa, New York.

In this best seller on human suffering, Kushner taps into an issue that at one time or another touches virtually every human being on this earth. The pain comes—the cancer, the fire, the accident, the theft—and we are left, mouth agape, uttering only the universal lament “Why me?”

For Kushner the answer is not the traditional one. To tell a person that he is suffering for some great God-given cause or that there is a reason for everything merely adds guilt, and outrage at God's leading, on top of the pain he already bears. Neither, says Kushner, is focusing on the life to come a wise way to deal with the issue.

What, then, is the believer's response to the misfortunes of life? The answer, says the rabbi, lies not in twisting our theology to come up with a rational explanation for tragedies. Rather, meaning comes from casting aside the enigmatic query of “Why me?” and replacing it with the personal challenge “What do I do now that I have found myself in this situation?”

Kushner's book is at its strongest when dealing with the practical aspects of handling suffering. He writes not as one removed from feeling sorrow, having experienced the recent loss of a son through progeria, a disease of rapid aging. However, his weakness comes in his liberalized theology, which begins by denying the power of God in creation (claiming a nonliteral Creation week and an evolutionary process) and goes on to reject the literal accounts of miraculous Old Testament occurrences. Kushner asserts that God has set this world into motion, yet is powerless to intervene in natural law. Thus He is a good God, who suffers with us at injustice, untimely death, and sense-

less pain, but cannot reverse the trend of a cancer cell, the law of gravity, or the randomness of nature.

Kushner's theory allows for no great controversy, no devil, no Saviour, and no miracles. Suddenly deprived of a God of might and miracle, we are left tremendously alone, with prayer only as a vehicle to encourage us when bad things happen. It is as if our Father has been suddenly confined to a wheelchair and we can no longer count on Him to hold the back of the “bicycle” as we take those dangerous and scary rides. He can cheer from the sidelines and He even cries with us when asphalt meets kneebone, yet He has no power to steady the bike and prevent the pain.

Although Kushner comes short in answering the dilemma posed in the book's title, his work does offer helpful suggestions in dealing with the grieving.

Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation

William H. Shea, Review and Herald, 1982, 137 pages. Reviewed by Douglas Bennett, teacher in the division of religion, Southern College of SDAs.

Published by the Biblical Research Institute (BRI) as volume one of the Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, this serves as a part of the church's continuing study of apocalyptic literature. This volume is both a reduction and a revision of a publication, *Interpretation of Daniel*, released by BRI in 1980 as part of the Glacier View documents. It covers five principal areas, each of which is related to Daniel 7-9 and 11, and concludes with a brief examination of ancient “calendations” in establishing the validity of the date October 22, 1844. It cites helpful evidence in support of the year-day principle, reinforcing the Biblical data with information drawn from Hellenistic Jewish literature, Qumran documents, and rabbinic literature. The author is to be commended for the creative research he has undertaken and for providing solid

Old Testament support for the church's position on the interpretation of Daniel. (See *MINISTRY*, February, 1983, p. 31, for information on ordering this book.)

The Faith Is Still There

David H. C. Read, Abingdon, 1981, 94 pages, \$4.95, paper. Reviewed by Jerry Gladson, teacher in the division of religion, Southern College of SDAs.

David H. C. Read, illustrious pastor of New York's Madison Avenue Presbyterian church, provides a refreshingly different approach: an apologetic for mainstream traditional Christianity. Read claims that our age needs a strong and reasoned Christian faith, and the only ones likely to give such a case are those in the mainstream Christian tradition—the true heirs of the Christian faith. Discounting the validity of both the “left” and the “right,” Read advocates an attractive, vital, moderate option.

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