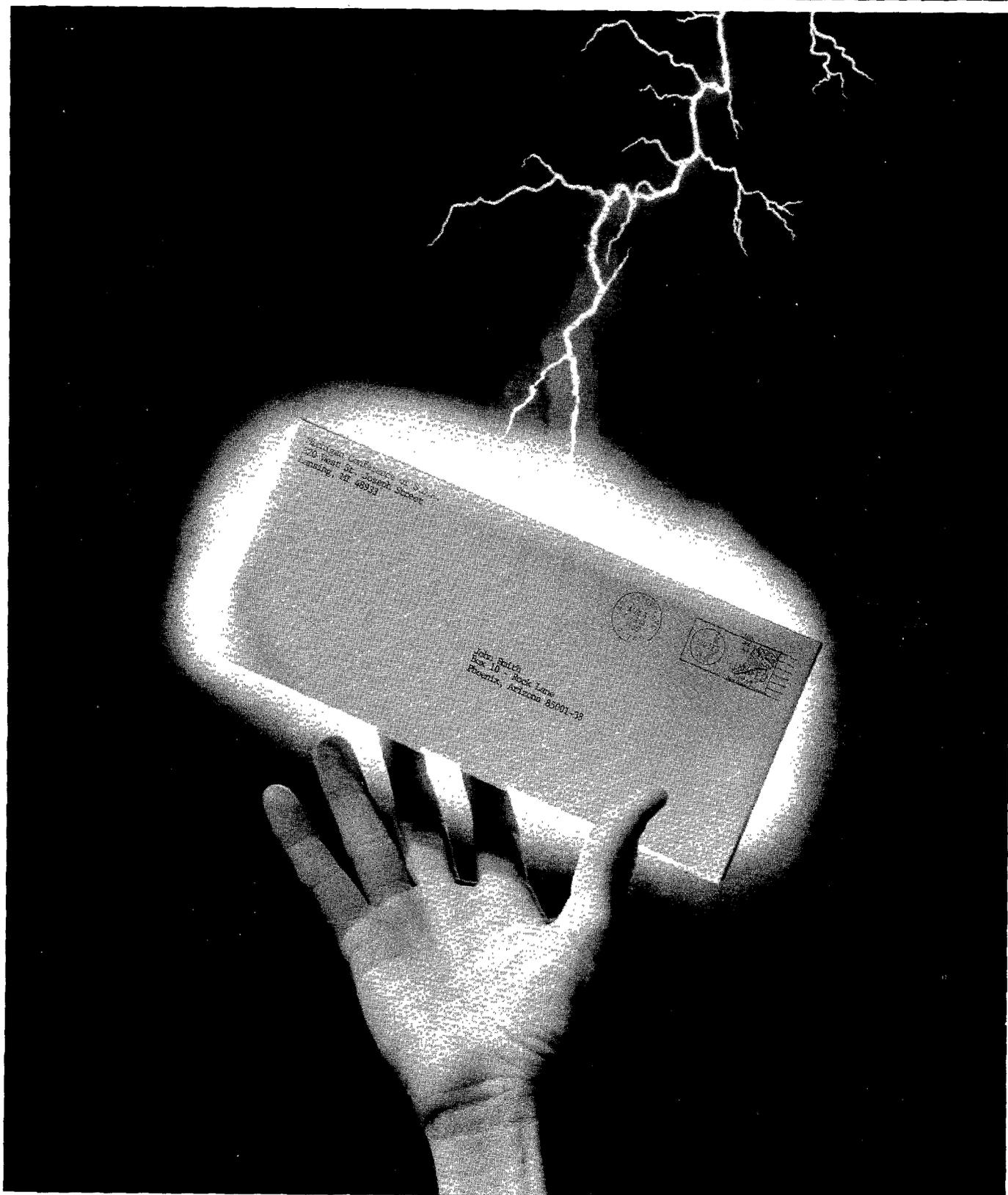


Ministry

International Journal for Clergy

September 1985



The Call

Ignoring important examples?

I read with interest and considerable amazement the articles concerning the ordination of women in the March issue of *MINISTRY*. Two lengthy articles, one pro and one con, neither of which uses the example of Ellen White!

Mrs. White, as one of the women who have founded religious movements, has long been of interest to me. Her strong leadership, her foresight, and her visions, which I believe Adventists continue to consider divine revelations, were crucial to the founding and growth of your denomination. If she could have a happy marriage, raise a family, and still travel throughout this country and much of the rest of the world, unflaggingly founding churches, schools, universities, and hospitals, why is it not possible for other women to be pastors, work that usually does not mean so much travel?

If your denomination is truly concerned about how women would cope with such problems as their husbands' work and the rearing of their children, why don't you ask women ministers in other denominations how they have managed? Ours has had women ordained in its ministry since the mid-1800s.—Maryell Cleary, Unitarian-Universalist Church of Greater Lansing, East Lansing, Michigan.

We're already ordaining women

When we ordain women as deaconesses and elders we are ordaining women to the gospel ministry. On what basis do we then deny ordination to women who are serving in full-time gospel ministry as pastors in our churches? Are not those in full-time ministry more worthy of being set apart for ministry by ordination than those who give only part of their time to ministry?

We cannot claim that we deny ordination to women because the Bible does not permit women to serve as ordained ministers. We apparently have no problem ordaining women as elders in the local church, even though the Bible requires that a bishop/elder be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2) and

that "women keep silence in the churches" (1 Cor. 14:34) and not "teach or . . . have authority over a man" (1 Tim. 2:12, N.I.V.). We declare that these are merely cultural limitations on the divine ideal of full equality, that in Christ "there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). The problem seems to arise only when we begin to discuss ordaining women as pastors, which would require that we give them the same pay and privileges as we provide to their male counterparts. So we create a new position for women who serve as pastors and call them associates in pastoral care. Because there is no direct male equivalent for this position and no possibility of ordination, we now have found a way to establish permanently a lower wage scale and lesser privileges for women who may be doing the same work as an ordained pastor.

The Role of Women Committee provides further evidence of this sexist prejudice in its recommendation of "an 'affirmative action' plan for the involvement of women in the work of the church . . . to open to women all aspects of ministry in the church that do not require ordination" and its recommendation "to give special emphasis to the work of Bible instructors, both women and men, and to . . . restore this ministerial category to importance and accord it proper recognition in the work of the church." Here we have what appears to be a plan to exclude women permanently from any position requiring ordination—clearly in contradiction of that same commission's strong support of the practice of ordaining women as local church elders "as each division may see its way clear to proceed."

The recommendation "to recognize the desirability of a pastor and his wife working together and the spiritual strength that will result through such team ministry and to urge that further study of this concept be made including the development of a financial plan and training program that would support this objective wherever possible" may give insight into another reason for denying women ordination to the pastoral min-

istry. Why should the church ordain women and pay them wages equal to those paid men when there is the assumption that for one salary the church can acquire the services of a man and his wife—two workers for the salary of one? No one would even dare suggest that the husband of a female pastor should refrain from other employment in order to assume the unsalaried position of a pastoral spouse, who would in effect be an assistant pastor! Yet I know of situations during the past few years where wives of pastors have been told that they must refrain from other employment in order to work without salary beside their husbands in ministry.

The model of pastor-wife ministry in the life of James and Ellen White provides a key to dealing with the role of men or women in ministry today. Their ministry was based upon their spiritual gifts—not upon gender, not upon marriage to one who had a particular gift. If the Spirit gives gifts to whom He will, on what basis do we deny the exercise of those gifts or the recognition of those gifts by ordination? Because we may not be ready to change traditions for which we can find no Biblical basis? Under such circumstances do we become guilty of making void the Word of God by our own traditions? Can we not believe that the mere presence of a spiritual gift indicates that the Spirit has prepared both the church and the world for the exercise of what He has given?

Our task regarding both men and women who may have potential for any ministry is fourfold: (1) to recognize that the Spirit gives gifts to whom He will and that He may choose to disregard gender; (2) to identify those who have been given such gifts by providing suitable opportunities for their manifestation; (3) to recognize the presence of those gifts by ordination—setting them apart for appropriate ministries; (4) to encourage the further use of each person's gifts "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of

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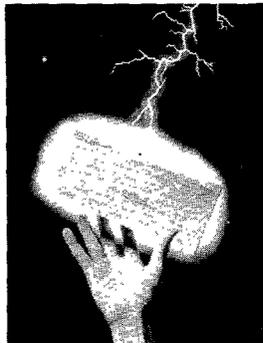
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The Call/4. How do you decide whether or not to accept a call to a different pastorate? Chuck Mitchell shares the story of two calls he turned down and one he accepted. He shares his criteria for evaluating a call.

Paul and the Law/7. This is the third in the series on the Sabbath in the New Testament. Dr. Bacchiocchi now examines Paul's teachings on law and the Sabbath.

The Biblical Case for Tithing/10. Should Christians practice tithing today? Mel Rees explores what both the Old and New Testaments have to say on this important topic.

What's Going on at 9:30!/13. Is your Sabbath school one big yawn? Or are the children and young people beating down the doors to get in? Charles H. Betz shares practical ideas for vitalizing your Sabbath school.

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The call

How do you decide whether or not to accept a call to a different pastorate? A young minister shares the story of two calls he turned down and one he accepted. This article will stimulate your thinking concerning the criteria that help identify a genuine call from the Lord. □ by Chuck Mitchell



The Ministerial secretary from the Michigan Conference was preaching that day in Indiana, just over the State line from Chicago. Could I meet him at his motel that evening? I hung up the phone and reminisced.

I was driving home from the north side of the city. Between

the toll booths, my mind usually wanders to matters other than the road in front of me. The pressures of conflict with the church school principal over galloping deficits were draining me of any enthusiasm for the pastorate. My baptismal rate hovered just above zero. In spite of my beginner's zeal, I could see no proof that all my effort made the slightest difference in anyone's quality of life.

"Lord," I prayed as the wind blew through my icy VW, "get me out of here. Anywhere will do. I can't take it anymore."

At home late that evening the phone rang. "Matt!" I cried. "You can't imagine how good it is to hear your voice. What are you up to these days? How is sunny California?"

After the usual pleasantries and inquiries about other friends from seminary, he came to the point. He had been asked to find out if I might be interested in a position on the pastoral staff where he was youth pastor.

He described the job: pastor for young adults at one of the larger Adventist churches in southern California. There

were several others on the staff. They got along pretty well.

I was drooling. I hate cold. When the temperature drops below 50° F. I put on long underwear. I hate even more passionately battles over school budgets and the color of carpet for the church basement. I feel incompetent to be the expert on every area of church life that small suburban churches expect their pastors to be. I dream of leaving administration to someone else, of leaving the visitation of invalids to others so I can concentrate on the "most important" group in the church—the 20- to 50-year-old men. I tire of being responsible for everything in the district and having no one to talk to, of being the only recent graduate from seminary in the entire conference who speaks American English as his native language, of feeling isolated.

Would I like to come to sunny, southern California and serve as pastor for the young adults in the same area where two of my closest friends work?

But how do I know whether or not I am supposed to go? Another friend is breaking his ministerial back in a three-church district spread through the mountains of Kentucky. If the invitation had come from him, would I have even asked the question? (The Lord always calls forward and upward, doesn't He?) If the parish I was currently serving were not so embroiled in controversy about staggering bills, if I liked the neighborhood I lived in, if I could baptize a lot of

people, if there were friends from college or seminary close by, if I liked the cold—if things were different—the question would not be pressing.

Matt was on the other end of the line. Should they consider my name with the other potential candidates?

I knew the standard answer. I'd heard it described many times by preachers; I'd read it in mission stories: "I don't know. I'll pray about it."

But I did know. I wanted the job Matt described. I wanted to live in sunny California, where "all the churches are big, all the congregations are rich, and all the pastors are avant-garde." And I knew that I belonged in cold, dreary Oak Lawn. I belonged in this parish. With these people of God. To pray about it would only be to try to get God to change His mind. Memories of Balaam stopped me.

"No, Matt. Even though I have dreamed of just the job you've offered, I know it's not for me. I don't know how I know, but I do. I came here under the conviction of God's call. I cannot leave with less."

For weeks afterward, as the wind blew through my icy VW, I dreamed of sunny skies. I imagined an exciting, fast-paced ministry with a large group of dedicated, attractive, young Adventist adults—and stood up to preach on Sabbath to a small suburban congregation where the average age was 50. And on the second Tuesday of the month sat with the church board where the minimum age

Chuck Mitchell is a pseudonym. The events in this article all took place. We have changed the names of the persons and places involved to avoid embarrassing anyone.—Editors.

How could I know that the conviction did not grow out of my ambitions? I know too many people whose obedience to every "call" has filled their lives with projects half completed, obligations unfulfilled.

was 50, not counting the pastor. And on the second Monday of the month did battle on the school board. And nearly every night fell exhausted and defeated into bed.

.....

All this came alive in those few minutes of phone conversation with the Ministerial secretary from Michigan.

"Do you know Pastor Robey?" he asked.

"I don't think I ever met him."

"He spoke well of you. And Pastor Grenn recommended you very highly. We are always looking for good ministers . . . I would like to meet you this evening if it is convenient."

The dreams again. This man's conference includes one of the two churches I dream of pastoring outside my present parish. And recommendations! One from a man I cannot remember meeting and another from a man who lived in my home for three months, who is old enough to be my father, who knows my warts better than anyone else except my wife. Heavy stuff for a beginner.

"How long have you been in the conference where you are now?" he continued.

"Four and a half years."

"And in the church where you are now?"

"The same."

"Are you ordained?"

"Yes."

We talked a few more minutes. I told him of my special concern for urban evangelism. He mentioned a city church in his conference that was open right then.

But it was not convenient to meet him that evening. My wife needed the car. And besides, somewhere inside me was that same old conviction: You belong where you are.

"I am really flattered by your call," I said. "I have dreamed of pastoring one of your city churches. But even if you were offering me that church I don't know what it would take to convince me that God was calling me away from my present work. I would need some really

obvious signs, I guess. I'll stop and see you the next time I'm in Lansing. I'd be glad to talk with you, especially about urban ministry. But for now, I'm called to where I am."

When I submitted the first half of this article to *MINISTRY* it ended here. And I received a note: "We like your article, but it is incomplete. We recommend adding a few more pages, addressing the question 'How does one recognize a call from the Lord?'"

I tried several approaches to finishing the article, but they never got off the ground. I had never moved from one parish to another. How could I write about an experience I had never had? Leaving the student church where I served as volunteer pastor during seminary was hardly the same. School, by definition, is temporary.

But now I have done it.

Just a couple of months after my almost casual rejection of an invitation to "move up" to a larger church in another conference I was invited to "move down" to a smaller church in my own conference. And I said Yes.

Since my sophomore year in college I have carried an unshakable conviction that God has called me to work in Chicago. Through seminary and an internship in urban ministry, the sense of divine appointment to Chicago had persisted. But during the subsequent four years in the suburbs the sense of call to the city dimmed. In a wonderful way that I suppose is familiar to most pastors, the people of my district—church members and the public alike—became *my people*. Surely the Lord's call could be fulfilled in faithful service here.

However, during my last eighteen months as pastor of the Oak Lawn Seventh-day Adventist church, I had been assisting a pastor in the city in low-key evangelism. Then we felt it was time to make a new, definitive thrust into the neighborhood.

A few young people from around the church responded to our advertising. As they began to show genuine interest in

the lessons we had prepared, the old conviction stirred; I began to struggle with a sense of mission, of vocation to the city.

The conference administration had long intended to move me to the city eventually. We had talked about it. But during the past few years in Oak Lawn I had become more and more attached to my people in suburbia. My wife and I had come to a church strapped with debt, divided by factions, with few children and almost no young adults. After some painful struggles we were now enjoying a church full of young adults, excited about their faith and eager to share it.

The church was financially sound. There were no factions that I knew of; the old-timers and newer, younger members ran a mutual admiration society. Babies I had dedicated were becoming smart little kids able to carry on a conversation. My wife had developed some precious, close friendships in the congregation. Why spoil a good thing? Why not stay around to lead the church in a continuing pattern of growth—both numerical and spiritual?

The city was an impossible mission anyway. I had heard others refer to it as the burial ground of evangelists. But the conviction would not leave—I felt called to the city. How could I leave Oak Lawn? How could I leave a church that was so close to my ideal of what a church ought to be? How could I leave the church that had confirmed my call to the ministry and led to my ordination?

I believe in the inner voice of God. I believe God sometimes leads us to do things that are not explainable. But how could I know that the conviction did not grow out of my ambitions? I know too many people whose obedience to every "call" has filled their lives with broken commitments, projects half completed, obligations unfulfilled.

The pull I felt toward the city became increasingly stronger. At the same time I was realizing the disruption and pain my leaving would cause. So I tried to evaluate this inner call using somewhat measurable criteria.

I felt that the new members and

Iwanted the job Matt described. I wanted to live in sunny California, where "all the churches are big, and all the pastors are avant-garde." And I knew that I belonged in cold, dreary Oak Lawn.

interests from our last evangelistic campaign in Raymond had either been integrated into church life or had drifted so far away that further labor for them on my part was a very low priority. Some of those with whom I had been studying the Bible had not yet made commitments to Christ. But I had been studying so long with them that I felt I had fulfilled my obligation to declare to them the whole gospel of God.

We had paid off all the major building projects that I had pushed for; the longstanding church school debt to the conference was being systematically paid. The turmoil and factionalism that had characterized the church for years had been resolved. Fellowship had been restored. Young leadership was being elected and respected by old-timers in the church. I could not leave my church with a light heart; I could, however, leave with a clear conscience.

I even suspected that despite my love for the church and its expressed desire that I stay, the church might, in fact, have reached the point where it needed a different kind of leadership from what I could give. If it was going to continue to progress, someone else would have to lead. I definitely was not leaving because I was bored or exasperated. I was leaving because I felt called to another urgent responsibility.

The church in the city was an old foreign-language congregation. The average age of the members was 65 or maybe 70. With one exception, everyone who held an office of any kind was retired. Though the church could seat 350, only thirty or forty attended, and even that attendance was threatened. With the pastor's retirement, which he had already announced, the church would lose its ethnic identity. Many of those who lived far from the church had begun discussing moving their membership to congregations nearer their homes. Thus if no action was taken until after the pastor's retirement, the church might literally be left with only five to ten members.

And finding someone who could and would take that pastorate would not be

easy. The location of the church, the condition of the congregation, and the need to work for months with a retiring pastor who had been in the church for more than fifteen years militated against it. In contrast, I imagined my parish in Oak Lawn to be rather desirable.

My own personal conviction concerning city ministry was not infrequently confirmed by colleagues in the ministry. But was I to hear in their words the voice of God or something else?

Early in the third week of May I yielded to what I believed to be the leading of God. When the conference called, I would be ready to go; I would say Yes.

At the conference office the next Tuesday I attended a meeting for everyone who would work with the junior and earlteen divisions during camp meeting. The president stuck his head in the door.

"Chuck, can I see you?"

I stirred in my chair. Did he want to see me now? No. After we finished our meeting would be fine.

In the president's office, after the usual greetings, we sat down to discuss the evangelistic seminar in the city. Or that's what I thought we were going to discuss. After about eighty-five seconds of conversation concerning the seminar he came to the point.

"Chuck, I talked with Pastor Schlier yesterday. You know we had planned to wait until his retirement before taking any action on your going in there. But he tells me that if we do not act now there may not be anyone left in the church when he actually retires. I would like you to go right away. Could you make this Sabbath your last in Oak Lawn and start full-time in the city next week?"

I declined his request that I end my pastorate in Oak Lawn that coming Sabbath. I agreed to go at the end of the next month.

The decision made, there was nothing to do but get on with it. So I spent a month bidding farewell to my church, to the congregation that had confirmed my call to the ministry, to the people who had taught me how to preach and how to visit, to the board members who had

shown me how to operate a church, and to the friends who had meant so much. Then I turned to discover the will of God on Chicago's North Side.

WHEN THINKING OF MOVING

When thinking of moving, consider the following:

1. Am I moving because I feel called to a new work, or merely for the invigoration of a new challenge? Am I leaving because I am bored, frustrated, tired, or discouraged, or because of a genuine conviction that God has called me elsewhere?

2. What unfinished business am I leaving? Building projects, community programs, people who have become interested in the church through evangelism? It is unfair to leave a church and a successor to pay off projects I have encouraged or pushed. It is difficult for anyone else to follow up interests developed in my evangelistic programs or those whose interest developed through my ministry.

3. Have I been in the church I am leaving long enough for my vision and ideas to accomplish something, or just long enough to disrupt the people's habituation to my predecessor's style and manners?

4. Is the new challenge I am accepting a job that many others could and would gladly fill? Will it be harder to fill the position I am leaving than the one I am moving to?

Paul and the law

Paul's apparently contradictory statements about the law can be explained by distinguishing between his moral and soteriological usages of the law in his writings. He rejected the law as a method of salvation but upheld it as a moral standard of Christian conduct. □ by Samuele Bacchiocchi



his article is the third in a four-article series dealing with the New Testament's position on the perpetuity of the seventh-day Sabbath. Dr. Bacchiocchi began the series by surveying the three prevailing views: the New Testament abrogated it, transferred the obligation to another day, or upheld its perpetuity. Then he

laid out the reasons he believes the New Testament supports the Sabbath's perpetuity: the New Testament portrays Christianity's basic continuity with Judaism; it alludes to the Creation origin of the Sabbath; it notes the redemptive meaning that Christ gave the Sabbath in His teaching and ministry; and it records the fact and manner of Sabbath observance.

Those who hold that the Old Testament law in general and the Sabbath in particular have been abrogated customarily appeal to Paul in defense of their view. In the last two articles in this series, Dr. Bacchiocchi examines Paul's teachings on these points.

Paul used the term *law* (*nomos*) at least 110 times in his Epistles, but not in a uniform way. He used it to refer to such things as the Mosaic law (Gal. 4:21; Rom. 7:22, 25; 1 Cor. 9:9), the whole Old Testament (1 Cor. 14:21; Rom. 3:19, 21), the will of God written in the heart of Gentiles (Rom. 2:14, 15), the governing principle of conduct (works or

faith—chap. 3:27), evil inclinations (chap. 7:21), and the guidance of the Spirit (chap. 8:2). Sometimes he used the word *law* in a personal way, as if it were God Himself: "Whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law" (chap. 3:19; * cf. chap. 4:15; 1 Cor. 9:8).

Our immediate concern is not to ascertain the various Pauline usages of the term. Rather we must establish the apostle's view of the Old Testament law in general. Did Paul teach that Christ abrogated the Mosaic law and/or the whole Old Testament law in general and consequently that Christians are no longer obligated to observe it? This view has predominated in much of Christian history and is still tenaciously defended by numerous antinomian churches.

A double concept

Several recent studies have challenged this traditional interpretation. Lloyd Gaston, for example, points out that Paul had a "double concept" of the law. Sometimes he says "that it is good and has been fulfilled in Christ and sometimes that it is bad and has been abolished in Christ."¹ For instance, in Ephesians 2:15 Paul said the law has

been "abolished" (K.J.V.) by Christ. In Romans 3:31, on the other hand, he explained that justification by faith in Jesus Christ does not overthrow the law but establishes it (K.J.V.). In chapter 3:28 he maintained that "a man is justified by faith apart from works of law." Yet in 1 Corinthians 7:19 he stated that "neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God" (cf. also Rom. 7:5 with 7:12, and 2 Cor. 3:7 with Rom. 3:2).

Resolving the tension

Is it possible to reconcile Paul's apparently contradictory statements about the law? How could he view the law both as "abolished" (Eph. 2:15) and established (Rom. 3:31, K.J.V.), unnecessary (see verse 28) and necessary (see 1 Cor. 7:19; Eph. 6:2, 3; 1 Tim. 1:8-10)? A popular explanation has been to say that Paul's negative statements referred to the Mosaic ceremonial law, while the positive ones referred to the moral law of the Ten Commandments. Such an explanation, however, is based on a distinction between moral and ceremonial laws that cannot be found in Paul's writings.

Samuel Bacchiocchi, Ph.D., is an associate professor of religion at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Is it possible to reconcile Paul's apparently contradictory statements about the law? How could he view the law both as "abolished" and established, unnecessary and necessary?

In my view, understanding the different contexts in which Paul spoke of the law resolves the tension. When he spoke of the law in the context of salvation (justification, right standing before God), he clearly affirmed that law-keeping is of no avail (Rom. 3:20). On the other hand, when Paul spoke of the law in the context of Christian conduct (sanctification, right living before God), then he maintained the value and validity of God's law (chaps. 7:7-12; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19). For example, when Paul listed the various forms of human wickedness in 1 Timothy 1:8-10, he explicitly asserted, "We know that the law is good" (verse 8).

Central to Paul's understanding of the law is the cross of Christ. From this perspective he both negated and affirmed the law. He repudiated the law as the basis of justification: "If justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (Gal. 2:21). But he taught that the law is "holy," "just," "good," and "spiritual" (Rom. 7:12, 14, 16; 1 Tim. 1:8) because it exposes sin and reveals God's ethical standards. Thus he stated that Christ came "in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us" through the dynamic power of His Spirit (Rom. 8:4).

Three times Paul said: "Neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision." Each time he concluded this statement with a different phrase: "but keeping the commandments of God," "but faith working through love," "but a new creation" (1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:6; 6:15). The parallelism suggests that Paul equated the keeping of God's commandments with a working faith and a new life in Christ. He rejected the law as a method of salvation but upheld it as a standard for Christian conduct.

The law and the Gentiles

To see Paul's criticism of the law in perspective, we must realize to whom he wrote. He addressed congregations made up predominantly of Gentile converts, most of whom were former "God-fearers" (see 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Cor. 12:2; Gal. 4:8;

Rom. 11:13; 1:13; Col. 1:21; Eph. 2:11). Gentile Christians faced a crucial problem: Could they enjoy full citizenship among the people of God without becoming members of the covenant community through circumcision?

This was not a unique Christian problem. W. D. Davies has recently pointed out that the relationship of Israel to the Gentile world was the foremost theological problem of Judaism in the first century.² Basically the problem consisted in determining what commandments the Gentiles should observe in order for them to have a share in the world to come.

No clear-cut answer to this question existed in Paul's time. Some Jews held that Gentiles had to observe only a limited number of commandments (the Noachian laws). Other Jews, however, like the house of Shammai, insisted that Gentiles had to observe the whole law, including circumcision. In other words, they had to become full-fledged members (proselytes) of the covenant community to share in the blessings of the world to come.³

Lloyd Gaston perceptively notes that "it was because of this unclarity that legalism—the doing of certain works to win God's favor and be counted righteous—arose a Gentile and not a Jewish problem at all."⁴ Salvation was for members of the covenant community; but since the God-fearers were not under the covenant, they had to establish their own righteousness to gain such an assurance of salvation. M. Barth has shown that the phrase "works of the law" does not appear in Jewish texts; it designates the adoption of selected Jewish practices by the Gentiles to ensure their salvation as part of the covenant people of God.⁵ To understand the background of Paul's critical remarks about the law, we must recognize this legalistic Gentile attitude.

The Jewish problem of whether Gentiles were saved within or without the covenant soon became also a Christian problem. At one time Paul apparently had believed that Gentiles had to conform to the whole Mosaic law,

including circumcision, in order to be saved. The phrase "but if I . . . still preach circumcision" (Gal. 5:11) suggests this.

Paul's conversion and divine commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles changed his view. He understood that Gentiles shared in salvation without having to become part of the covenant community through circumcision. To defend this conviction Paul appealed to the example of Abraham (see Romans 4; Galatians 3), who, before he was circumcised, became the father of all who believe.

In proclaiming his noncircumcision gospel, Paul faced a double challenge. On the one hand, Jews and Jewish Christians opposed him. They failed to understand that through Christ, God had fulfilled His promises to Abraham regarding the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 10:19: "Did Israel not understand?"). On the other hand, Paul had to deal with the misguided efforts of Gentiles. Who felt they must ensure their salvation by becoming members of the covenant community through circumcision and other cultic practices (Gal. 5:2-4).

Paul's criticism of the law

To counteract these tendencies, Paul had to speak critically of the law as a document of election. Recently several scholars have shown that the Jews increasingly expressed the concept of the covenant—so central in the Old Testament—by the term *law*.⁶ They believed that one's status before God was determined by his attitude toward the law as a document of election and not by his obedience to specific commandments.⁷ In other words, *torah-law* came to mean a revelation of God's electing will manifested in His covenant with Israel.

Obviously this view created a problem for the uncircumcised Gentiles because they felt excluded from the assurance of salvation provided by the covenant. This insecurity naturally led them to "desire to be under law" (chap. 4:21), that is, to become full-fledged covenant members by receiving circumcision (see chap. 5:2). Paul felt compelled to react

Uncircumcised Gentiles felt excluded from the assurance of salvation provided by the covenant. This led them to "desire to be under law," to become full-fledged covenant members by circumcision.

strongly against this trend because it undermined the universality of the gospel. To take away the Gentiles' "desire to be under law," Paul appealed to the law (Pentateuch). He argued that Abraham's two children, Ishmael and Isaac, stand for two covenants, the first based on works and the second on faith (see chap. 4:22-31), the first offering slavery and the second, freedom. He identified the first covenant, which he said bears "children for slavery," with the covenant of Mount Sinai (verse 24).

Why did Paul so harshly attack the Sinai covenant? After all, it was established by the same God who made a covenant with Abraham, and it contained provisions of grace and forgiveness (e.g., the tabernacle—Exodus 25-30) along with principles of conduct (chapter 20-23). The answer to this question may be found in Paul's concern to establish the legitimacy of the salvation of the Gentiles as Gentiles.

To accomplish this he attacked their understanding of the law (covenant) as an exclusive document of election. This does not mean that Paul denied the possibility of salvation to Jews who accepted Christ as the fulfillment of the Sinai covenant. On the contrary, he explicitly acknowledged that just as he had been "entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised," so "Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised" (Gal. 2:7).

Paul did not explain how the two gospels differed. Circumcision had practically become equated with the covenant. So we can presume that "the gospel of the circumcision" (literal translation) emphasized that Christ was the fulfillment of the Sinai covenant. Thus Jews could be saved as Jews, that is, while retaining their identity as a covenant people.

Paul did not deny the value of circumcision for the Jews. On the contrary, he affirmed: "Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision" (Rom. 2:25). Again, in Romans 9 to 11, Paul did not rebuke the Jews for being "Jewish" in

their lifestyle (see chap. 11:1). Rather he rebuked them for failing to understand that in Christ, the Gentiles as Gentiles have equal access to the kingdom (see chap. 10:19).

To defend his gospel to the uncircumcised, Paul emphasized that justification comes "by faith apart from works of law" (chap. 3:28; see also Gal. 3:8). In his Epistles, Paul used the term *justification* and words related to it more than eighty times, but the terms *forgiveness* and *repentance* are spectacularly absent.⁸ One wonders why. *Repentance* implies turning back to the God of the covenant. Perhaps Paul did not use the term because he was appealing to the Gentiles to turn to God for the first time.

In addition, forgiveness—a predominant concept in most of the Scriptures—has to do with the personal dimension of salvation. Paul's concern, however, was to stress not the personal, but the universal, dimension of salvation. This he did by teaching justification "by faith apart from the works of law" (Rom. 3:28). This doctrine enabled Paul to defend the universality of salvation, as the next verse indicates: "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also." (See also chap. 1:16, 17.)

This background helps us to understand that Paul did not attack the validity and value of the law as a moral guide to Christian conduct. On the contrary, he emphatically affirmed that Christ came specifically "that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us" (chap. 8:4). Paul criticized not the moral but the soteriological understanding of the law. He rejected the view of the law as a document of election that included the Jews and excluded the Gentiles.

The Judaizers, who were urging circumcision upon the Gentiles with ever-increasing insistency, made it necessary for Paul to attack the exclusive-covenant concept of the law. "But," as George Howard points out, "under other circumstances he might have insisted on the importance of Israel's retention of her distinctiveness."⁹

In summary, two misunderstandings have led many fallaciously to conclude that Paul was an antinomian, who rejected the value and validity of the law as a whole. One is the failure to distinguish between Paul's moral and soteriological usages of the law in his writings. And the other is the failure to recognize that his criticism of the law is directed not toward Jewish Christians but toward Gentile Judaizers. As we have shown, Paul rejected the law as a method of salvation but upheld it as a moral standard of Christian conduct.

In the final article in this series Dr. Bacchiocchi will examine the implications of Paul's teachings regarding the Sabbath. Does Paul suggest that the seventh-day Sabbath has been abrogated? Or do his teachings sustain its continuing significance?—Editors.

* All Scripture quotations not otherwise credited are from the Revised Standard Version.

¹ Lloyd Gaston, "Paul and the Torah," in Alan T. Davis, ed., *Anti-Semitism and the Foundations of Christianity* (1979), p. 62. Gaston provides a most perceptive analysis of Paul's attitude toward the law.

² W. D. Davies, "From Schweitzer to Scholem. Reflections on Sabbatai Svi," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 547.

³ For an informative discussion of the Jewish understanding of the salvation of Israel and of the Gentiles, see E. P. Sanders, "The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism," in *Jews, Greeks, and Christians* (1976), pp. 11-44; also Gaston, in Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-61.

⁴ Gaston, in Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁵ See Markus Barth, *The Anchor Bible: Ephesians* (1974), pp. 244-248.

⁶ See D. Rossler, *Gesetz und Geschichte* (1960). E. P. Sanders (*op. cit.*, p. 41) concludes: "Salvation comes by membership in the covenant, while obedience to the commandments preserves one's place in the covenant."

⁷ Gaston rightly asks: "Why did Christian interpreters not learn this long ago from such classic works as S. Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York, 1909), or A. Buchler, *Studies in Sin and Atonement* (Oxford, 1928), especially pages 1-118?"—In Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁸ Krister Stendahl points out this fact, saying, "If one looks into a Greek concordance of the New Testament one is struck by the fact that in the Pauline epistles 'justification' (*dikaiosisune*)—and the words related to it—... are pervasive in certain strata of Paul's thought. But the word 'forgiveness' (*aphesis*) and the verb 'to forgive' (*aphienai*) are spectacularly absent."—Paul *Among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia, 1976), p. 23.

⁹ George Howard, *Paul: Crisis in Galatia* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 81.

The Biblical case for tithing

Was tithing only for Old Testament times, or does it still apply today? In this ninth in our series on Christian finance, Mel Rees explores and substantiates the blessings received in the Old and New Testaments and today!

Keeping Church Finance Christian 9 Mel Rees



For centuries Biblical scholars have searched for evidence that would either validate or discount the tithing system. They have examined the dusty archives of church history, delved into the writings of the Church Fathers, and studied the impressions on ancient clay tablets. It is now possible to draw some conclusions.

Although theologians disagree about the origin, purpose, and principle of tithing, they all agree on one point: It is of great antiquity. The Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, and Sumerians paid a tenth of their incomes to their gods as a fixed rule centuries before God through the prophet Malachi accused the Hebrews of robbing God when they withheld their tithes. In fact, one of the largest buildings in Babylon was the storehouse for the tithes used in heathen worship. Aristotle, Xenophon, Herodotus, Pliny, and Cicero all mention the payment of the tithe as a very old custom amounting to a law in their day among their people.

This may have led critics to suggest that the Jews borrowed this custom from heathen nations. Wouldn't it be more logical to conclude that these people borrowed their practice from some ancient directive dating back to the Fall of Adam and Eve? The payment of the

tithe did not originate with the Hebrews, but seems to be a common expression of the recognition of God's sovereignty.

The Bible is strangely economical on the subject. Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance* lists only 39 references to tithing. It seems strange that such a basic principle of Christian belief would enjoy such limited reference unless, of course, it was so generally recognized and self-evident that it required only incidental mention. This could be one of its strongest evidences of validity.

This seems to be the case in the story of Abraham's return from the conquest of Chedorlaomer and the kings who kidnapped his nephew Lot. In the distribution of the spoils Abraham gave Melchizedek, "the priest of the most high God," "tithes of all" (Gen. 14:18, 20). This casual reference gives credence to the thought that the giving of tithes was an established custom. Abraham acknowledged God's sovereignty by the tithe and by telling the king of Sodom, "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth" (verse 22).

Evidently Jacob had been taught this requirement, for he vowed, "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall

be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (chap. 28:22).

The Mosaic law was simply a reaffirmation of the patriarchal religion. Here we find the first reference to the reason for tithing: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. . . . And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30-32).

In these references one can see that the tithe was not an offering but a return of that which belonged to God—a case of simple honesty. This is evident in the statement of Malachi where God accuses the entire nation of robbery. Thus the basic reason for the tithing system is to demonstrate recognition of God's ownership.

Some skeptics have pointed to scant evidence for the tithe in the New Testament. However, we should remember that Jesus spent the majority of His life in the private sector as a carpenter, and although He was accused of many things by His enemies, He was never accused of nontithing. Likewise, neither

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Some recognition of God's sovereignty would be essential for the orderly operation of His government. The chaos so prevalent in the world is evidence that many do not recognize the true Owner of the world.

Peter nor Paul was charged with this violation of the law. The religious leaders would have seized eagerly on this infraction if they had been given opportunity.

One pastor, conducting a weekly Bible class, proposed two observations: (1) The Sabbath was an old Jewish custom that is no longer valid, and (2) the tithe, also an old Jewish custom, is a good one and should be followed. When asked for an explanation, he pleaded lack of time as an excuse for not giving one. One wonders whether his concern for his income influenced his thinking or whether his wrong conclusions were the result of limited research. If he had begun his study at the beginning of the Bible instead of with the Jewish dispensation, he would have found evidence for the authorization of both the Sabbath and the tithe.

The Sabbath was given at the close of Creation week (Gen. 2:3). Its observance was to show recognition of God as the Creator (Ex. 20:10, 11).

The tithing principle, although not as clearly stated, was embodied in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—the symbol of God's authority (see Gen. 2:17). This tree, the only one whose use was restricted, was off-limits to our first parents. It was the one restriction in their stewardship relation to God. When they violated this restriction they became thieves, actually anarchists, for they denied God's ownership, His sovereignty, His authority.

After Adam and Eve were ejected from their Eden home God had to employ another symbol of authority, another restriction—hence the tithing principle. Some recognition of God's sovereignty would be essential for the orderly operation of His government. The chaos so prevalent in the world today is evidence that many do not recognize the true Owner of the world.

Why God specified a tenth is not known. He could have set a seventh, a twelfth, or some other percentage. Someone has suggested that the tenth is the essence of simplicity: One has only to move the decimal point one digit to the

left in its calculation. Even a small child, just as soon as he can count to ten on his fingers, can learn the tithing principle. Thus God's ownership, His lordship, can be firmly established during a child's early years.

Unfortunately the tithe is often regarded as either a source of income for the ministry or as a standard of giving. It is neither. Although God specified that the Levites (the priests) were to be supported from the tithe, this was not the reason for it. Neither can the tithe be considered as a standard of giving, for one can never give something that does not belong to him. In reality, the tithing principle was designed for the benefit of the individual. In this sense it has two functions besides being a recognition of God's sovereignty and the restriction in man's stewardship: It will prevent *pride of ownership* and guarantee the *freedom of dependence*.

Pride of ownership, so deeply ingrained in the human heart, tends toward self-dependence; depending on one's self will ultimately result in self-destruction. Without the agency of divine power no person is capable of perpetuating his existence. God just didn't want anyone to self-destruct. This true incident will illustrate the tendency.

Two boys, roommates for one year in a boarding school, became fast friends. One of them, however, tired of the restrictive rules of this Christian campus and left at the close of the term to seek his education in a more liberal atmosphere. He became a successful insurance executive; his roommate became a minister. They didn't meet again for forty years.

One summer on a driving vacation the minister found himself in the Western city where his former roommate lived. They met at a fashionable hotel for lunch and brought each other up to date. During a brief lull in the conversation the minister asked, "How about you and God?"

His friend looked at his empty plate for a moment, then with a trace of a smile replied, "I have a Cadillac in the parking

lot, a Mercedes and a Jaguar at home; my home is worth more than a half million dollars; I have a place at the beach worth about seventy-five; my lodge in the mountains is worth about fifty; I have more than a half million in government bonds—why do I need God?"

God knows that unless we keep the fact of His ownership constantly in mind, our tendency will be to put our dependence on possessions, and this can lead only to ultimate disaster. Man is limited in his control over his environment. Without the assurance of God's promise to protect and provide, life would be a constant worry.

One of the strongest proofs of the tithing principle is the result of tithing. Here is proof that cannot be controverted. It is called the miracle of the tithe: The balance of the income will have more buying power than the total when the tithe is not set apart. Thousands of practicing Christians will testify eagerly to this—giving time and place. This miracle also had its antecedent in Eden.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil served not only as a symbol of God's authority and a restriction on man's stewardship but also as a guarantee to the human race of the power of choice and a promise of the freedom of dependence. As long as they obeyed God's one restriction, all their basic needs would be provided: food, shelter, and clothing. The Bible records the problems they faced when they violated this divine directive.

Not only does God perform a miracle on our incomes after the tithe is removed, but He promises prosperity as well. Of course, the difference between prosperity and wealth must be understood. Prosperity is having what one needs when he needs it. Wealth, on the other hand, is having more than enough for basic needs. God promised prosperity, not wealth. Still, there appears to be an unusual blessing for every person who practices tithing regardless of his religious affiliation or lack of it. Some people who do not belong to any church have benefited from their recognition of

Prosperity is having what one needs when he needs it. Wealth, on the other hand, is having more than enough for basic needs. God promised prosperity, not wealth.

God's ownership. This must be significant, for it demonstrates the importance God places on this ordinance.

With the curse that was pronounced on the Hebrew nation for the crime of robbing God, a bounteous blessing was also promised if the people would reform. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?" (Mal. 3:7). Then God gave the specific area in which they were deficient. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (verse 10).

However, in spite of God's invitation, multitudes of people never put Him to the test—never prove Him. The proof is not in the ancient archives or in the sayings of the Fathers or in the etchings on tablets, but in the lives of men and women who recognize their stewardship relation to God—who recognize that He is the owner of everything they possess, even their very lives. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

From the scores of positive experiences related to tithing that I have seen and heard, I shall choose one that clearly illustrates God's faithfulness in the performance of His promises—His invitation to "prove me now herewith."

I waited for the man, a local church leader, to speak. I could barely see his face in the glow of the backlit scene of Gethsemane pictured in stained glass behind the choir loft. I was conducting a stewardship emphasis week and had come to the pastor's study to make preparations for the evening meeting; he also came early, because, as he said, he desperately needed to talk with someone. He suggested that we go into the main sanctuary, where we wouldn't be disturbed.

He made several starts, stopped, and then finally said, "I've been a church

leader for a long time. I shouldn't be, because, well, you see, I haven't paid any tithe for years. Don't you think I'm terrible?"

"No, I don't think you are terrible," I replied. "I'm sorry, for you must have missed many of the blessings the Lord has promised."

"But you don't understand," he explained. "I couldn't, because there was never anything left."

"Oh, I'm sure of that. No matter how large your income might be, there would never be anything left."

"I don't understand."

"Because God's part must always come first, never from what is left over."

By this time my eyes had become accustomed to the dim light; I could see the concern on his face as he explained his difficulty. Some ill-advised investments that wouldn't sell plus monthly commitments that his better-than-average salary couldn't cover all combined to make his life a recurring nightmare. "I feel like a whipped puppy crawling home after my weekly encounter with my creditors. I can't keep this up much longer and keep my sanity. Can you help me?"

While he was talking I was praying. But I wondered whether he would accept the only solution to his problem; I knew it wouldn't seem reasonable. "Possibly there is a solution," I said and excused myself to get my Bible from the study. Turning to the book of Malachi, I read God's offer to reward those who would return the tithe to Him.

I was sure it sounded too simplistic to him, for he had already outlined his version for relief. "If I could sell my house, I could use my equity to pay my bills, and everything would be all right again." I questioned this, for until he got his priorities straight, I felt he would always be in trouble.

He didn't say anything more for a little while as he thought about the promises God had given; then, as if thinking out loud, he said, "I suppose I had just as well try it—nothing else seems to work." He quickly added, "I suppose that is the wrong attitude, isn't it?"

"No, I don't think so. If God says to prove Him, or as some translations say, 'put me to the test,' it must be all right." We knelt and prayed for the faith and courage it would require to do it God's way. We didn't pray for financial assistance, for that really wasn't his problem. When we arose from our knees he asked, "Won't you please continue to pray for me? I'm going to need it."

I'm sure I was remembering him in my prayers long after God solved the problem, but I had no way of knowing, for I didn't see him again for three months. Then, at a general meeting in his district, I saw him in the audience. I could hardly wait for the meeting to end so I could ask him the question that had been nagging me for a long time. Finally I was able to get him to one side and ask, "How's everything?"

"Wonderful." His smile was radiant.

"I mean financially."

"That's what I mean too." Then he told me how God had worked a miracle for him.

The first week after his decision he sat down with his paycheck and computed his tithe—then, because he really loved the Lord, he set aside a generous offering. He laughed as he related that he was afraid to trust himself to wait until church time to turn in the check—so he placed it in an envelope, addressed it to the church treasurer, and dropped it in the corner mailbox.

Now he faced his moment of truth. He was forced to go to his creditors with smaller payments than he usually made. He decided to call first on the one who was the most irascible, and he braced himself for the torrent he believed was coming. To his utter amazement the man wrote out a receipt for the smaller amount and thanked him for always being on time with his payments. "I couldn't believe my ears" is how he expressed it. "I walked out of his place of business six inches off the floor!"

To his continuing surprise every one of his creditors treated him cordially. Of course, there was no change in his financial situation (in fact, he was worse

(Continued on page 25)

What's going on at 9:30?

"What can you do to transform your Sabbath school into a place of vital learning and growing? Help the teachers in all divisions to be more person-centered, more caring and sensitive to the hurts and felt needs of learners."

□ by Charles H. Betz



he Sabbath school has done more to influence the beliefs, values, and unity of our worldwide church than any other organization. Someone has said, "Only a wise and omnipotent God could utilize untrained volunteers and such meager facilities and materials to change the course of so many lives." Ellen White

wrote, "Its importance in its influence upon our youth cannot be estimated."¹

On an average Sabbath morning about 350,000 people gather in Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath schools to study, sing, pray, and bring offerings. About 60 percent of our church membership attend Sabbath school, and one study revealed that 90 percent of the people present for church at 11:00 A.M. were present at 10:00 A.M. for Sabbath school.² While percentages may vary from church to church, there are seldom significantly more people in church than

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in Sabbath school. So Sabbath school attendance is an important vital sign of the health of a church. In evangelical churches Sunday school attendance is considered the most accurate barometer of spiritual vitality and church growth.

As a pastor I took an accurate count of Sabbath school attendance. My records told me much about my church. For instance, if the attendance in the youth division was significantly down for a period of time I saw this as a danger signal. My goal was to have as many people in Sabbath school as we had on the church membership list. This is not an unrealistic goal since the members of the cradle roll, kindergarten, primary, and about half the junior division are Sabbath school members but not church members. You probably have noticed that the fastest-growing divisions of our world field have more Sabbath school members than church members. When every class and division in the Sabbath

school is involved in reaching nonattending members and prospects, you will have a steadily growing Sabbath school and church.

What happens at Sabbath school in your church? Is it a vital, learning, growing experience that will attract new members? Or is it perhaps just a dull habit that the "faithful few" have not yet abandoned? And what can you, a busy pastor, do to make it more of the former than the latter?

Evaluation

Constant evaluation is an indispensable element in corporate leadership. Why not invest one hour of your time on four consecutive Sabbath mornings carefully observing your Sabbath school divisions? This will do several things for you. It will make you more aware of the strengths and weaknesses in your school and will identify problems before they reach major proportions. Moreover, it

The superintendent came to my office concerned about the youth class, which met in the balcony. "They provide entertainment by sailing airplanes over the heads of their elders," she complained.

will demonstrate your interest and concern for Sabbath school and allow your leaders and teachers to share their feelings. Finally, you will gain new insights into the teaching-learning process, which will enhance your own teaching ministry. Here are a few things to look for:

Emotional climate: Do the leaders wear smiles or frowns? Are the children happy, contented, and enjoying themselves? Do you see warmth and caring? Is there good eye contact, focused attention, and lots of appropriate touching? (This is especially important in your cradle roll and kindergarten divisions.) These are the things that create an atmosphere for learning.

Teaching-learning: Is there sustained attention and interest? Are the children involved in the learning process? Are their hands and minds busy with learning activities? Is there plenty of interaction and discussion? Do the teachers ask many questions? Do their questions challenge thought? Do the teachers actively listen to the children's responses?

Application techniques: Do the teachers tend to moralize, or do they use application techniques and simulation exercises such as "What would you do in this situation?" or "How would your life be different this week if you put this text into practice?" "What would Jesus do?"

Classroom control: Is control achieved by interest and involvement, or by police techniques?

Room decor and equipment: Are the room appointments interesting to children, or geared to adult tastes? Is the equipment adequate? Are the chairs and tables the right size? Are chalkboards or marking boards available, and if so, are they being used? Are there adequate visual aids for use as theme devices and teaching devices? Are the leaders and teachers prepared? How about music—are the children singing? Do the teachers sit among the children during large group time? Is there concern for missions, offerings, missing members, and outreach?

Youth: Before visiting the youth divi-

sion, count the number of young people in the parking lot and in the halls. Compare this with the number seated in the youth room to learn how things are going in the youth division. In the room, look for lively discussion and Bible study during classtime. Does the teacher teach to felt needs, or simply preach religious theory? Take careful note of the time the teacher spends talking compared to the time the youth spend responding. In the discussion method the teacher should not talk more than 50 percent of the time. Are the youth leaders using the new *Cornerstone Connections*? Are they planning regular outreach programs and social activities?

Adult division: Is the program (large group time) related to the central truth of the Sabbath school lesson, or are the superintendent's remarks a hodgepodge of unrelated poems, travelogues, and stories? Is missions a regular part of the program? Do your Sabbath school classes have a full forty minutes for small group study?

Do you have one or two large Sabbath school classes and several small ones, or is your class membership rather evenly divided? Do you have special classes for college-age members and young marrieds? Do your teachers use the discussion method or mostly lecture? Do teachers ask questions that challenge higher thought processes? Are classes grappling with the "big ideas" of the Bible? Do the teachers actively listen to the learners' responses? Is there participation and involvement, such as writing, reporting, classifying, et cetera? As you mingle among the Sabbath school personnel, affirm those who are doing well. "I like the way you . . . Keep up the good work!" Make tactful suggestions to those who need help. Meet with your Sabbath school council. This is especially important when the council is choosing teachers for the new year.

Grading

How closely is your Sabbath school graded? Grading is based on a Bible principle. Jesus recognized the importance of adapting instruction to the

developmental level of the learner. "In His teaching He [Jesus] came down to their level. He . . . [simplified] His important lessons to meet their childish understanding."³ It is this philosophy that undergirds the grading principle used in our Sabbath schools. Jesus adapted His instruction to meet human needs. He knew age-level characteristics.

The tendency in some churches is to consolidate divisions such as the cradle roll and the kindergarten, or the juniors and earliteens. This may eliminate the need for rooms and staff, but your children will be deprived. It is very difficult to teach a 1-year-old and a 6-year-old in the same division, or a 10-year-old and a 14-year-old. It is extremely difficult to hold children's attention when they are far apart in their development. It may be difficult to find division leaders and teachers, and floor space is expensive, but aren't our children worth it? When it comes to staffing Sabbath school divisions, I believe that God has already placed the people with gifts in the church and that it is up to me to find and develop them.

Facilities

Your youth division is especially critical. Even if you have only a few teens, form a division. I was a new pastor in a metropolitan church. The Sabbath school superintendent came to my office greatly concerned about the youth class, which met in the balcony. "They provide their own entertainment by sailing paper airplanes over the heads of their elders in the main sanctuary," she complained.

"Is there a place where they could have their own division?" I asked.

"No," she said, "unless you use the old shed at the back of the lot where the Dorcas used to meet." I poked around in the old building. Musty clothes covered with cobwebs were hanging here and there. It will do, I told myself, but it will take some hard work.

Next Sabbath I talked to the youth class. "Would you like to have your own division?" "Yes!" they chorused. "Meet

As pastors we are, like it or not, the overseers of the Sabbath school. Our role is to guide, enable, and train our lay teachers—to help them to be true educators.

me tomorrow morning ready for work," I said. They were all there. After eight hours of cleaning and painting we could see a big difference, and in a couple of weeks they moved in.

I told the division leader to let the youth choose their officers, and then to sit on the back row and give them plenty of guidance and encouragement. Within three months the attendance had greatly increased as nonattending youth started coming back and bringing their friends. In six months the room was crowded to the doors. Attendance had nearly doubled. The secret: provide the space, train the leaders, involve the youth, and go after the prospects.

Individual classrooms for adult Sabbath school classes are important too, and can enhance learning. Sabbath school members seated in pews in a sanctuary have a difficult time interacting with one another. Utilize every available room in your church plant for individual classes. The best seating arrangement for learning is single chairs placed in a semicircle. Eye contact between students is a very important element in learning. If you are planning a new church plant, provide individual classrooms at any cost.

Training

Trained, Spirit-filled leaders and teachers are the key to Sabbath school growth. I found that a two-hour training session held on Sabbath afternoon after a potluck dinner worked well. One week I would invite the leaders and teachers from the cradle roll through the junior division. The next Sabbath I would offer training for the earliteen, youth, and adult leaders and teachers. Do not try to cover too much theory at one time. If you do not feel comfortable training leaders and teachers in the preschool divisions, ask a kindergarten or elementary schoolteacher to help. Suggest subjects such as "How to Involve Children Using Bible-learning Activities" and "Age-level Characteristics of Primaries and Juniors." For the older learners select vital topics such as "The Discussion Method." Spend the first

hour on learning theory, then during the last hour involve your learners in lesson plans for the next Sabbath. Theory that is learned and applied the next Sabbath becomes more permanent. Ask your teachers to prepare six to eight discussion questions for next Sabbath's lesson. After they have written their discussion questions, form small groups to critique their work, using a criterion that you have placed on the chalkboard. Sabbath school teachers enjoy this approach.

There are many excellent training films available. (See the resource list at the end of this article.) Filmstrips are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased for your church training library. Keep books on religious education circulating among leaders and teachers. Talk about spiritual and professional growth as a standard for all to reach. Of course, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* and the *Sabbath School Manual* are indispensable. Your Adventist Book Center and gospel bookstores have a good supply of religious education materials. Provide the *Worker*, *Journal of Sabbath School Action* for all teachers and division leaders. Encourage attendance at your conference-sponsored workshops. Be sure that your teachers and leaders have adequate tools for the task. A chalkboard is indispensable for every teacher and division leader. Maps and Bible atlases are important too.

What can you do to transform your Sabbath school into a place of vital learning and growing? Help the teachers in all divisions to be more person-centered, more caring and sensitive to the hurts and felt needs of learners. "I am passing around a get-well card for Sue." "Does anyone know where the Browns are? They have been gone for two Sabbaths," et cetera. Teachers need more of a shepherd's heart. Show your teachers how to be discussion leaders. Help them plan things for the learners to do: agree-disagree quizzes, buzz groups, et cetera. Get the pages of the Bibles turning. Help students to discover, to see implications. Use educational strategies that help the learner apply the truth to his daily life. Finally, meet with your

Sabbath school leaders and teachers often. They are part of your staff. Most important, teach them how to lift up Jesus in every class and division. Let's make our Sabbath schools so stimulating that members will be caught up in the exciting quest for Bible truth.

What goes on at nine-thirty in your church has enormous implications for your church and its growth. Families tend to look for Sabbath schools where their children will be happy, interested in the Bible, and growing spiritually. As pastors we are, like it or not, the overseers of the Sabbath school. Our role is to guide, enable, and train our lay teachers—to help them to be true educators and to use the best educational methods. If we do, "the influence growing out of Sabbath school work [will] improve and enlarge the church."⁴ Then Sabbath school will be not a dull habit but a place of vital learning and growing.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938), p. 10.

² This study was done by the Pacific Union Conference Sabbath school department some years ago. I believe the results are still valid.

³ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 515.

⁴ ———, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 9.

Sabbath school training resources:

Filmstrips: International Center for Learning, "Joy of Discovery—Youth," "Making Learning a Joy," "Guided Conversation," et cetera. Ventura, California, 93006.

Books: *Creative Bible Learning for Children Grades 1-6*, Barbara J. Bolton and Charles T. Smith. Gospel Light Publications, 1977. (This book is one of a series by the same title dealing with four age levels.)

“His rest shall be glorious”

One day you are going to retire! How do you relate to the pastor and the church when you are no longer the pastor? English shows the pitfalls involved and tells the stories of a pastor who made it and one who failed.

□ by A. D. English



Keith McCord is an ordained minister of a conservative Protestant denomination. Five years ago he retired from active service and moved with his wife to a small city where they joined a 175-member congregation. The past five years have been pleasant ones for Keith. Relieved of the burdens of full-time

ministry, he now has time to enjoy the things that often got crowded out during his years of active service. He plays a lot of golf, does a lot of reading, and generally enjoys life. At the same time, he is active in his local church, teaching a Bible class, visiting, and occasionally conducting the midweek prayer service. An able and effective speaker, he also preaches from time to time.

Recently there has been a rumor that the McCords may move to another State to be closer to their children. The entire church is hoping that this rumor is false. The McCords are well-loved, highly regarded members of the church. They would be missed by everyone.

David Nixon has never met Keith McCord, although he has been an ordained minister of the same denomina-

tion for most of his adult life. Like Keith, David retired not long ago. He and his wife are now members of a congregation approximately the same size as the one the McCords belong to.

The Nixons, like the McCords, attend church services faithfully, and there are smiles on their faces, but the smiles hide heavy hearts. David takes little part in the activities of the church. He never preaches, though he would love to do so. His relationship with the pastor and with a large part of the congregation is very strained. After the service, there are the customary smiles and handshakes, but the smiles are cool, the handshakes perfunctory. Many in the congregation seem to avoid David. He knows that part of this is probably his imagination, but he also knows that part of it is all too real. There are a few who cluster around him, but he draws no comfort from this. He knows why they are there.

Every pastor, except for those who die

in active service and those who leave the ministry for some other type of work, will someday retire from full-time pastoral work. Probably all of them assume that their retirement will be like Keith's. Most of the retirements probably will. But some of those retirements, tragically, will be like David's. Why? What could cause a pastor's retirement to disintegrate into such an unhappy experience? Let's take a brief look at both of these retirement experiences.

When David and his wife first became members of their congregation, the other members welcomed them cordially. The Nixons were happy, outgoing people, and David's long experience in the ministry would certainly be an asset to the church—especially since their own pastor, whom they dearly loved, was rather young and inexperienced.

A recent death in the congregation had left a vacancy on the church's executive committee. The deceased member's term on the committee had

Remember that in your own ministry there were some things you had to learn by experience. It will be the same with your pastor. You made your mistakes. He will make his mistakes.

several months to run, and David was asked to fill this vacancy for the remainder of the term. At the time, the church was considering the erection of a new wing on the church building. At one of the first meetings David attended, the pastor handed out a rough draft of his proposal for the layout of the new wing. As David glanced through the proposal, his years of experience told him that it had been hastily compiled and that parts of it needed considerable work before any decisions could be made. Eager to bear his responsibility as a member of the committee, and eager also to prevent the church from making unwise decisions based on incomplete information, David carefully pointed out these shortcomings. Not wanting to appear critical, he used his lively sense of humor to take the sting out of his remarks, and there was much good-natured laughter.

Though David did not realize it, he had made a bad mistake. The pastor, in spite of his appearance of confidence and enthusiasm, was keenly aware of his youth and inexperience. He was also very sensitive about them. The laughter at David's witty critique of his proposal hurt him deeply. He felt that he had been embarrassed and humiliated in the presence of those whose good opinion mattered most to him. He bitterly resented what he considered an attempt to undermine his position and to hold him up to ridicule.

David, who had no idea that he had already made one serious mistake, soon made another. There was a small group in the church who had welcomed the Nixons with special warmth. This group invited the Nixons to their homes, sought David's advice, said nice things about his maturity and experience, and even hinted that his presence in the congregation was providing a stability that had been lacking in the church. Later (too late), David realized that he had found all this attention rather flattering. He had discovered that while retirement meant relief from the cares of the active ministry, it also meant that he was no longer at the center of things, no longer the focus of attention in the

church. Though he was sheepish about the fact, he had found himself feeling a little resentful of this. The attitude of these new friends had relieved his vague feelings of boredom and disappointment.

When the members of this group asked him to present suggestions to the executive committee, David was happy to oblige. He did not learn until later that the other members of the committee had heard these proposals before, that they immediately recognized their true source and that the proposals themselves were carefully designed to decrease the influence of the pastor and to increase the influence of their originators in several areas of church administration and activity.

David also did not learn, until too late, that this group had been a disruptive element in the congregation for some time. They had actively opposed the present pastor from the day he arrived. Before the Nixons' arrival, in fact, they had even attempted to persuade denominational officials to remove him.

David's close association with this group had been noted. His advocacy of their proposals now established him firmly in the minds of the church members not only as a member of the group but as its spokesman, and possibly even its leader.

David is now labeled by most of the church as a malcontent—a retired pastor who wishes to reclaim his former position of prominence by dominating the congregation. Nothing could be further from the truth—but nothing is more firmly believed by the pastor and the congregation.

Keith has carefully avoided the pitfalls that have brought David so much sorrow. His congregation also has a young pastor, and Keith has given him solid support.

There is no really rebellious group in this congregation. But there are a few members whose feelings have been hurt, or who are dissatisfied with the way things are done in the church. Inevitably, some of these pour their troubles

into Keith's ear. He handles these cases with a tact born of long experience. Where he can, he smooths ruffled feathers. When he feels that the pastor is in the right, as he usually does, he defends him (gently, of course, to avoid offending the complainer). When he is inclined to agree with the plaintiff, as occasionally happens, he remains carefully noncommittal. Mostly, he just listens.

Keith has firmly resisted the temptation to give the pastor advice. When he feels that he knows a better course than the one the pastor has chosen, he bites his tongue. There have been times when he has had to bite pretty hard, but it has paid off handsomely. When the pastor has asked for counsel, as he has done once or twice, Keith has given it. The rest of the time he has held his peace.

Only once, when he felt strongly that the pastor was on the point of making a very serious mistake, did he violate this self-imposed rule. On that occasion he talked with the pastor privately (so privately, in fact, that to this day no member of the congregation even knows that the two men discussed the matter). At the end of their talk Keith was careful to assure the pastor of his continued friendship and support, whatever decision the pastor might make.

The result of this careful approach to pastoral retirement is that Keith's relationship with the entire membership of the church, including the pastor, is one of warmth and trust. At the pastor's invitation, Keith conducts the service in the pastor's absence. Other pastors in the area, on the recommendation of Keith's pastor, often ask him to speak in their churches when they must be away.

All in all, the five years of his retirement have been among the happiest of Keith's life.

If you are approaching retirement, or even if you are already into it, here are some guidelines that may be helpful to you:

1. Remember that once you have retired, you are a layman. Do not try to exercise pastoral influence or authority. It is true, of course, that your ordination to the

Keith has firmly resisted the temptation to give the pastor advice. When he feels that he knows a better course than the one the pastor has chosen, he bites his tongue.

gospel ministry is for life, and your denomination probably still permits you, after you retire, to perform ministerial functions such as baptisms and weddings. However, your position in your local church is that of a layman. Do nothing that might be construed as an attempt to usurp the pastor's authority or function.

2. Remember that even though you are a layman, you are not like other laymen. You are, in fact, a very special kind of layman. Your years as an authority figure in the church have given you a status and prestige that do not entirely disappear upon your retirement. Your words and opinions have greater influence than those of other laymen. Weigh them carefully.

3. In the matter of giving advice to the pastor, the following rule will apply approximately 99 percent of the time: If he wants it, he'll ask for it. If he doesn't ask for it, it is very unlikely that he would follow it if it were given to him. Remember that in your own ministry there were some things you had to learn by experience. It will be the same with your pastor. You made your mistakes, and you probably carry the scars of some of them even today. He will make his mistakes and carry his scars too.

If a situation should arise where you feel very strongly that you must give advice, even though it has not been asked for, pray. Pray long and earnestly. If after earnest prayer, you still feel that you must give him counsel, give it. But do it with great care. Talk with him in private. Tell him that you have come to him only after much prayer. Assure him of your support, whatever decision he makes. Then give him your counsel. And after you have given it, keep quiet about it. Do not tell others that you have talked to him. Resist the temptation to say, "I tried to tell him it was a mistake, but he wouldn't listen to me." Invariably, such a remark finds its way back to the pastor, and you can be sure it will not promote feelings of warmth and gratitude!

4. When you first arrive in the local church where, for the first time in many

years, you will be a layman, be cautious. Remember, it takes time to become familiar with local situations and conditions. As you know from your pastoral experience, there are tender spots and touchy areas in every congregation. These do not, for the most part, lie on the surface to be seen at a glance; instead, they are buried like land mines. You can find the land mines in a field quickly, of course, by simply walking through the field until you step on one. You can also find the "land mines" in a local congregation by blundering into them. But the blunder method is always painful. It is much better to wait and watch. In time, you will learn where the sore spots are. If David Nixon had remembered this, he could have saved himself much heartache.

5. Remember that your pastor will be watching you with a certain amount of apprehension, and the younger he is, the sharper this apprehension will be. Do not be offended by this. You would feel the same way if you were in his place. (In fact, it may be that you have felt the same way, and for the same reason, at some time in your pastoral career.) Your attitude now will be very important in determining your future relationship with him. Do not be either aggressively friendly or coldly withdrawn. Be friendly, but not forward. Make a point of speaking to him after the service and at social gatherings. Let the congregation see you in friendly conversation with him. Make it clear to everyone, not so much by word as by attitude, that you are on good terms with him.

6. Because of your maturity and experience, there will almost certainly be some in the congregation who will prefer to talk with you rather than with the pastor. Unless you are prepared to be rude to them, there is little you can do to prevent this.

If they talk with you about personal matters, you may be able to help simply by listening sympathetically. If they talk about matters that concern the church, you may need to refer them to the pastor, and remind them tactfully that he is the one who should deal with the matter. If they have complaints that involve the

pastor in any way, you are on dangerous ground. Be very careful not to give the impression that you feel that their complaint is justified (even if you do). Defend and support the pastor whenever you can, and remain tactfully neutral when you can't. Your years of experience at trying to keep the various members of your congregations happy will stand you in good stead here.

7. If there is a genuinely disaffected element in the congregation, be doubly careful. Remember that you are a natural focal point for such people, and they will probably zero in on you very quickly. Do not be flattered if they shower you with attention and hang on your every word. Be on guard at all times when you are in their company. Even in casual conversation, weigh your words carefully. Be pleasant to them, but do not become intimate with them. Be especially careful if they ask you to do some apparently innocent favor for them. They may make determined efforts to bring you into their circle. Don't let them do it. As David Nixon discovered, there is no faster, more effective way to alienate yourself from the pastor and the congregation than to allow yourself to be perceived as a member or active supporter of such a group.

The position of the retired pastor in the local church is, unavoidably, a somewhat uneasy one. In some ways it is like the position of the mother-in-law: Whatever you do, no matter how good your intentions, it's likely to turn out to have been the wrong thing. (This, at least, is the impression that mothers-in-law and retired pastors often have.)

Like the mother-in-law, however, the retired pastor is also in a position that has real possibilities. The mother-in-law can often, through tact, love, patience, and a certain amount of smiling when she feels like screaming, win a warm place for herself in the hearts of her family. The retired pastor can also, by the exercise of these same qualities, win a warm place for himself in the hearts of his pastor and his congregation.

May it be so with your retirement—and, someday, with mine.

Will He find faith?

Five years ago our church began a study of secularism: how to reach secularists and how to deal with its impact on the church. *MINISTRY's* editor reports on the work of the committee, drawing some conclusions from that study. □ by J. Robert Spangler



In his 1980 General Conference keynote address Neal C. Wilson requested the launching of "an ongoing study designed to achieve a desperately needed breakthrough in how to reach the secular-minded and non-Christian peoples of the world with the gospel." One year later a fourteen-member committee was

appointed and given a twofold assignment. First, it was "to research and understand the existing problem of widespread secularism and the dilemma of carrying the gospel to that large segment of society which has no concept of God or respect for Scripture." And second, it was "to coordinate and guide the church's witness to this largely overlooked class."

Lowell Bock, General Conference vice president, and Humberto Rasi, vice president for international editorial development, Pacific Press Publishing Association, served the committee as chairman and secretary, respectively. They called the committee together on nine occasions spread over four years. Members and invited guests presented twenty-five formal papers. These documents and the transcripts of the committee's proceedings total approximately five hundred pages. I strongly urge our ministers to purchase these materials and get the benefit of the untold hours of

research invested in them. I can personally testify to the insights I have gained by being a member of this think tank. (A complete set of the papers and supporting material can be obtained for \$30. Send your payment to Humberto Rasi, in care of the Pacific Press, Box 7000, Boise, Idaho 83703.)

In Rasi's recent report to the General Conference officers, he defined the scope of the committee's task by asking several questions: What is secularism? How does secularization occur? What are the characteristics of a secular person? How formidable is the challenge that secularism poses? In what way is our church being affected by the process of secularization? How can secular people be reached with the gospel?

I have selected and condensed a few salient concepts from the report that highlight what we as ministers are encountering in today's society. At the outset it is important to understand that *secularization* as a phenomenon is not necessarily opposed to Christianity. But as a philosophy, *secularism* is the antithesis of the Christian faith.

The process of secularization

"Secularization is a multifaceted cultural phenomenon through which reli-

gious thinking, institutions, and practices lose their relevance in society and in the daily life of individuals. This trend has been operating for centuries, as sectors of the world population have moved from tribe to town to city." In this sense, secularization is as old as sin. Cain, the murderer and city builder, was infected with secularism. "But in the last century the process of secularization has accelerated and reached almost global dimensions as a result of dramatic advances in education, science, technology, and communications."

To some it comes as a surprise to learn that the Christian faith has been an *agent* in the secularization of primitive societies. Wherever the true gospel goes, it unshackles minds from the chains of superstition and spiritualism. Christianity prepares the way for education, research, and modernization.

"On the other hand, beginning with the Protestant Reformation, Christianity has been an *object* of this process. By emphasizing the role of individual choice, faith has ceased to be a communal or national concern and has become a private matter. Large areas of human endeavor—such as commerce, government, education, and social welfare—have been gradually separated from the

J. Robert Spangler, editor of *MINISTRY* and associate secretary of the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is a member of the committee on secularism.

It is important to understand that secularization as a phenomenon is not necessarily opposed to Christianity. But as a philosophy, secularism is the antithesis of the Christian faith.

control of the church. Ethical values are no longer established by religious norms but by social and cultural practices. The development of a rational, empirical, and pragmatic attitude toward man and the natural world has led to a desacralization of life and to a drastic reduction of the role of religion in the arts and sciences."

According to *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford University Press, 1982) secularization appears to be an inevitable and perhaps irreversible process. More than one half of the world's nearly 5 billion people are either secular (36.1 percent) or atheistic (17.7 percent).

Secularized people are not necessarily actively opposed to the idea of God or to the existence of His church, but they consider them irrelevant to real life. Christ asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8, N.I.V.). That question has never been more appropriate than it is now.

Reflecting on the effects of this trend

awakening. . . . Faith and hope disappear; doubt and despair are the order of the day. . . . It seems impossible any longer to believe in the permanent greatness of man, or to give life a meaning that cannot be annulled by death. . . . The greatest question of our time . . . is whether man can bear to live without God."

Secularization and the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Undoubtedly secularization, as already suggested, has made its mark on Christianity, "not only by curtailing its influence in important areas of human endeavor, but also by inserting secular values and practices in Christian organizations." As Adventists we need to face squarely the question What impact has secularization had on us? Our movement has dramatically evolved from a sect to a church. Our church stems from rural areas. Now, 140 years later, we are carrying forth our mission in an increasingly urbanized and secularized society,

- Competition or cooperation.
- A dictatorial managerial style or the contribution of the whole body.
- A striving for affluence or Biblical stewardship.
- Ethnocentrism or oneness in Christ.
- "The end justifies the means" or a seeking for means consistent with Biblical goals.*

Consider these points

We are all born secularists. We begin as "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). We face a greater quantitative problem of secularism today, but the quality of the hardness of people's hearts is little or no different from that the early church faced in the Roman Empire.

We need to understand and emphasize the role of the medium who communicates the message to the secular minded. Men believe more readily what we are than what we say. Reaching the highly sophisticated, educated, intellectual secularist mind can be done most effectively by peers. Of course, those peers must have a vital connection with the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no shortcut in leading a secular-minded individual to Christ. There can be no repentance without conviction of sin. There can be no conversion without a total capitulation to Jesus as Lord.

And finally, we need to realize that in any outreach to any class of people, "conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world; it never converts the world to Christ."—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1950), p. 509.

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Wherever the true gospel goes, it unshackles minds from the chains of superstition and spiritualism.

on modern man, historian Will Durant wrote in his *Story of Philosophy* (quoted in *Christianity Today*, Jan. 2, 1981, p. 16): "God, who was once the consolation of our brief life, and our refuge in bereavement and suffering, has apparently vanished from the scene; no telescope, no microscope, discovers Him. Life has become, in that total perspective which is philosophy, a fitful pullulation of human insects on the earth; nothing is certain in it except defeat and death—a sleep from which, it seems, there is no

with a multiethnic and plurilingual membership that spans the globe.

To assess secularism's impact, we need to ask which of the following characterize our church:

- Success orientation or a servant attitude.
- Preoccupation with self or self-sacrifice.
- A passive spectator attitude or the involvement of each member.
- Elitism or a sense of Christian community.

* These contrasts are adapted from the *Christian Witness to Secularized People*, No. 8 of the Lausanne Occasional Papers (Wheaton, Ill.: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1980), pp. 19, 20.

Travel/Study/Dig 1986 with the Madaba Plains Archaeological Project

The Madaba Plains Archaeological Project's travel/study/dig programs for the summer of 1986 present some of the most rewarding opportunities to obtain a first-hand contextual setting for your appreciation of the history of the Bible lands.

These are more than just tours, they are educational and spiritual experiences designed to appeal to pastors, evangelists, and others with an interest in the history of the ancient Near East.

The following represents a brief sketch of the programs we are offering.

7-Day Field Conference on Archaeology and Evangelism in Amman plus travel in Jordan and Israel

(July 19-August 8. Departs Chicago. Cost: \$2530 round-trip.)

This conference will combine brief digging experience at the Tell with lectures on biblical archaeology and contemporary evangelism. **Key speaker:** George Vandeman. **Tour guide:** Abraham Terian.

Full Season Excavating at Tell el-Umeiri with Excursions in Jordan only.

(June 13-August 15. Departs Chicago. Cost: \$3250 round-trip.)

Dig directed by: Lawrence T. Geraty.

Tour of Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Greece, with an optional tour of Italy.

(August 9-August 29. Departs Chicago. Cost: \$3250 round-trip.)

Tour Guide: Siegfried S. Horn and Samuele Bacchiocchi in Rome.

Tour of Jordan, Israel, Egypt

(August 9-August 25. Departs Chicago. Cost: \$2630 round-trip.)

Tour Guide: Robert M. Johnston.

Academic credit is available for these programs, and certain combinations of the dig/tours are possible. A limited number of student scholarships are available where there is demonstrated financial need.

**Andrews University
Atlantic Union College
Southwestern Adventist College
Pacific Union College**

For a comprehensive brochure on our summer programs or for further information and bookings, write to: W. John Hackwell, Administrative Director, Madaba Plains Project (1986), Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, MA 01561 or call us at (617) 365-4561.

Letters

From page 2

God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12, 13, N.I.V.).—Wayne Willey, Amesbury Seventh-day Adventist Church, Amesbury, Massachusetts.

The real issue

The issue is not man and woman or male and female. The real issue is the concept of *sola Scriptura*. We must be honest in confessing that there is no Biblical defense or support for the idea of the ordination of women. Are we going to continue to be a people of the Bible, or are we going to desert that principle? If there is sound Biblical defense for the ordination of women, what is it?

Abraham Lincoln once remarked that while liquor had its defenders, there was no defense. This seems to be the problem we are now facing in the matter of the ordination of women; there seem to be defenders, but there is no Biblical defense or support.

Let us be courageous enough to continue supporting our position of the Bible and the Bible only.—Nick Germanis, Athens, Greece.

Building on Eva's article

I very much enjoyed the article by Willmore Eva ("Should Our Church Ordain Women? Yes," March, 1985), and I find myself generally in agreement with his arguments. However, as he comes to the close of his article he appears to conclude that despite the clear, distinct, and specific statements made by the apostle Paul relative to *not* ordaining women, the cultural climate of our society dictates that we *should* ordain them. A person might well ask, Is the policy of the church to be dictated by culture or by a plain "Thus saith the Lord"? My answer would be that both can be considered, especially when the "Thus saith the Lord" seems to be somewhat less than plain.

I think that Eva could have made his point more clearly and effectively if he had not stated his conclusion in a way that seems to weaken his entire thesis. Eva presented a lucid evaluation of the culture in which Paul lived and worked as it related to women. But after carefully and clearly evaluating Paul's supporting texts, Genesis 1-3, he failed to bring out

in his conclusion that Paul was using the culture of his day to color his interpretation of Scripture. So if we choose to act on the counsel of Galatians 3:28 relative to the equality of the sexes, even in terms of ordination to the gospel ministry, we are not twisting Scripture by ignoring some of what we are told but are simply following the example set by Paul. He used Scripture as a support for cultural customs that were, in fact, in contradiction to divine principles which, under inspiration, Paul himself presented.

Paul's statements are not an argument against the ordination of women. Instead, they were a temporary bowing to custom in an area that is not a clear-cut question of faithfulness to the gospel but one in which the highest concern is that of effective witness. The principle is equality. When the cultural climate changes enough to allow an acceptance of the ordination of women, then that principle requires such ordination. Paul's own use of Scripture calls for that interpretation, even of his own statements.—Don Johnson, Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Hold to scriptural position

May I make some comments on the article "Should Our Church Ordain Women? Yes"? Willmore Eva's source materials seem to indicate that he thinks that because the world around us changes socially, the church has some obligation to change with it. Some things never change. Bernard E. Seton points this out very well, and I do appreciate his using Spirit of Prophecy references and the Bible as his source. Willmore Eva used only one reference from the Spirit of Prophecy, a few Bible texts, and the rest from contemporaries.

Since I am a woman, I feel that I am somewhat of an authority on the subject. It is not my contention that women should not have freedom to follow their careers. I have been in the business world for some time now as a vice president of one corporation and presently as the president of my own business. Since 1950 I have been actively involved in church work of all types, from designing and decorating interiors of churches to cooking for junior camps, all gratis. While I was a member of the Boulevard church in Madison, the pastor wanted to ordain me as a local elder, but this I refused because I feel strongly that women do not have a place in that capacity. God knew what He was doing

when He made us different, and women are not designed for the ministry.

I cannot remember one instance in the Bible where a woman served as a priestess in the Temple. Women were judges or prophetesses, but never priests. The fact that the world is changing and the other churches are changing is the strongest argument that we have next to the Scriptures for not changing.—Mrs. George V. Yost (Marilyn Gale), Hendersonville, Tennessee.

Church undervalues women

It is true that Ellen White, the women pastors in Finland, and others have done a wonderful work of soul winning without being ordained. If the decision is not to move ahead with ordination for women at this time, I would earnestly hope that the women in the church will not pull back in any way from giving their best in service to God. Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling that such a decision would show that women's contributions are undervalued by the church.

I come to this conclusion by considering what ordination means. For me it is an act undertaken by the church, recognizing the gifts, talents, and contributions of one of its members. It is a public affirmation of that person's gift. It tells the one ordained, the church community, and the world at large that this person has a special work to do for God. It both confirms and affirms the person's commitment and calling. I also believe God is no respecter of persons when the gifts of the Spirit are given to the church.

But the church acknowledges in this public way only the gifts that are given to men. No such public acknowledgment is available for the women pastors. This public affirmation has a ripple effect on the attitudes toward women workers and members on all levels throughout the church. So while only a few women are even eligible for ordination, we all have something at stake here. Ordination is for us the one tangible symbol that declares we are equally important to the work of the church. We could perform our service more effectively if the handicap of discrimination were to be removed.

Many women have worked effectively without being ordained. But the examples we might cite are not so much an argument against the ordination of women as they are against ordination

itself. If women can work effectively without being ordained, so can men. My question is: Why, then, bother to ordain anybody? And if we do have good reasons to ordain, do these same reasons apply to women?—Iris Yob, Boston, Massachusetts.

Asking the wrong question

It seems to me that many denominations are asking the wrong question regarding the ordination of women. They ought not to be asking the man-centered question Should our church ordain women? Instead, they ought to be asking of each woman candidate a question that is more God-centered, such as Do you believe in your heart that

God has called you to be a congregational shepherd?

If, indeed, it is God's intention to call women to serve as congregational shepherds (shepherdesses?), then who in the church has the right or authority to deny them ordination?

It is my belief that God alone determines whom He wishes to call as His spiritual shepherds, and I further believe that it is, in reality, God—and not the church—who actually ordains His shepherds. Therefore, I contend that men and women who seek ordination into the pastoral ministry without the calling of God and in complete disregard of church policy and practice concerning ordination remain in God's eyes what Jesus

referred to as "hirelings." And this matter of putting "hirelings" into congregational pulpits concerns me.

Women who genuinely feel God's calling to be spiritual shepherds of congregations should not be denied their calling either because of traditional church polity or because of male insecurity. On the other hand, women who seek roles of spiritual leadership in the church on any basis other than God's calling, along with all men who seek the ordained ministry for any reason other than the genuine heartfelt calling of God, should be dissuaded from the ordained ministry.—Chris J. Christianson, Worldwide Ministries, Tacoma, Washington.

Computer corner  Kenneth R. Wade

On Getting Computerized

In response to the brief note that appeared in our January issue, *MINISTRY* received numerous responses to our request for information from computer users and those who would like information about computers.

Among the many pastors and church leaders who wrote requesting information, most were interested in word processing for sermon preparation, a filing system for keeping track of church membership, and financial programs for church finances.

It seems safe to say that these three types of applications are the major uses personal computers are in the church today, although several pastors also expressed interest in finding a good program for filing sermon illustrations.

We also received letters from thirty-one computer users, and one from a computer, who signed his name (very legibly) Macintosh.

There is no obvious consensus among the pastors who wrote as to which brand of computer is best, but among the most popular with current users were IBM-PC compatibles, Apples, and Kaypros. Radio Shack TRS-80s and Commodores also had more than one happy user.

Interestingly, none of the users complained about the effectiveness of any particular model. All find them satisfactory for the uses they consider important.

Which brings up one of the most important things any potential computer user must understand: Most of the computers on the market today are powerful enough tools to do whatever you want them to do, provided you supply them with adequate software, internal memory (RAM), and peripherals. In one sense shopping for a computer is similar to shopping for a new car. Most of the models on the market will get you "there and back." But some come with certain options and some with others. Some run on diesel and some on gasoline. Some will get you to your destination in air-conditioned, pampered luxury while others will just get you there. The only way really to know the difference is to take the ones you are most interested in for a test drive.

If you are just beginning to shop for a computer, here are some important things to consider: Most programmers (the people who create the software that will make your computer do what you want it to) seem to be giving first priority to producing programs that will run on IBM-PC compatible machines. And all but a few computer manufacturers are producing at least one model that is quite IBM-PC compatible. So, at least for now, getting an IBM-PC compatible machine seems to be a wise move. The standard way to test how compatible a

machine is with the IBM-PC is to try to run a program called Flight Simulator on it. Any glitches mean there is a compatibility problem.

Having said that, I must mention another important consideration: ease of use. One small-town pastor indicated he could not find anyone in his area who was willing to learn to use the church computer. If ease of use is important to you, give serious consideration to the Apple Macintosh and its software.

Another priority consideration is RAM—Random Access Memory. While 64K was long regarded as adequate, 128K is necessary for many of the newer programs, and 256K seems to be a figure that proves adequate for all but the most highly integrated programs. Many IBM-PC compatibles are now capable of having RAM expanded to 512 or 640K. Consider the software you plan to use when deciding how much RAM you need.

If you're confused by some of the terminology here, you'll need to get a good basic book on computers. I'll be mentioning some of them in future Computer Corners. I'll also be mentioning various systems and programs that come to my attention. If you have any suggestions for just what you would like to see in Computer Corner, please write and let me know.

AIDS, leprosy, and love

Leprosy no longer strikes fear into human hearts as it did in Jesus' day. A new disease has taken its place. Do we have the courage and kindness of our Master?

I have never visited a leprosarium, never seen a leper face to face, never felt fear that I might be leprosy's next victim. And so I don't think I have a real appreciation for what Jesus went through in the encounter described in Luke 5:12: "While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and besought him, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean' " (R.S.V.).

Leprosy takes various forms, some more serious than others, and this man apparently suffered from the worst kind—he was "full of leprosy." In other words, he had lost his eyebrows long ago, and his ears had likely fallen off. No doubt there were places under his ragged clothing where the white of bone shone through lesions that had eaten away his skin. Perhaps he had no nose, but only hideous holes in his face through which he drew rasping, gasping breaths.

To reach out and touch such a man would require not only a strong stomach but a moral courage born of love that always puts others first. To touch such a man could be a fatal mistake socially, politically, and physically. Jesus risked not only the long-term possibility of a horrible death but the immediate possibility that the crowds that followed Him, drinking in His truth, would abandon Him in fear of infection.

I find it a little difficult to identify with just how hard it must have been for a person in Jesus' day to touch a leper. I have no fear of leprosy and could visit a leprosarium without any thought of danger. Modern medicine has made leprosy a treatable disease, and research has shown that it is not so contagious as was once believed.

But there is a disease I do fear. Just the mention of AIDS—acquired immune deficiency syndrome—strikes fear into many hearts today. We hear of nurses refusing to treat patients, undertakers refusing to handle bodies, tenants demanding that a victim move out of their apartment building.

The similarities between AIDS today and leprosy in Jesus' day are plentiful. And they have the potential of revealing our inmost hearts, helping us to understand Jesus, and ourselves, better.

Neither leprosy nor AIDS is highly contagious to those not in intimate contact. But the fear incited by each makes facts irrelevant. People in Jesus' day ostracized lepers; today we ostracize AIDS victims.

Leprosy carried with it the stigma of sin—it was viewed as God's retribution for some terrible misdeed. I daresay that in any group of Christians you could find those who consider AIDS to be God's retribution upon homosexuals and drug abusers.

Leprosy almost inevitably led to a horrible death. So does AIDS.

Some time ago I held a casketless funeral. State law had mandated that the body of the deceased—an AIDS victim—be cremated. The flag that hon-

ored this veteran was draped over a small urn in front of the church.

I had never met the deceased nor his family. I held the funeral because their pastor was out of town. At the meal after the funeral I stopped to talk with the bereaved mother, who had cared for her son, daily washing the oozing sores on his legs until he finally had to be hospitalized a few days before he died. I took her hand in mine. And afterward I made sure my hand didn't go near my mouth.

I also met the young man the deceased had been living with when he contracted the disease. I thought of the doubts, fears, and questions that must be assaulting his mind. But I spoke only briefly with him. And I made sure I washed my hands.

More than a year later I finally realized that I had taken the pious, self-preserving, aloof attitude of the Pharisee instead of the caring, self-sacrificing, touching attitude of Jesus.—K.R.W.

Is Genesis myth?

If there is a clash in interpretation between science and the Bible, which takes precedence? What is our authority? Israel's experience under Joshua's leadership holds a valuable lesson for the church today.

Most conservative Christians agree that the Bible is infallible in matters of faith and morals. But when the discussion turns to the relationship of science to the Bible, no calm consensus seems to unite us. Is the Bible infallible when it speaks on scientific matters? More particularly, are the first eleven chapters of Genesis to be accepted as scientifically accurate?

The issue is clear: When the most recent findings of science suggest millions of years for the development of life upon the earth, does a person accept the

findings of science or the account found in Genesis?

A story in the book of Joshua suggests a principle to help in this dilemma. The Gibeonites were in mortal fear of a new all-conquering tribe, the Israelites, who had crossed the Jordan River. Tribe after tribe was being annihilated. Rather than fight, they came up with a novel idea—at least novel for that time. They would seek an alliance with Joshua and the Israelites. However, their village lay directly in the path of the conquering hosts, and they feared that the Israelites

would not accept them. So they devised a stratagem: They would send ambassadors who would pretend that they had come from a far country, one the Israelites had no intention of capturing.

In order to deceive Joshua and his captains, the ambassadors wore old clothes and carried aged provisions. Their moldy bread, their patched and worn sandals, and their cracked and mended wineskins proved evidence enough that they had come from a great distance. The Israelites were taken in and made a treaty with them. A few days later they discovered their mistake.

How could the Israelites have fallen for such a trick? The answer is given in Joshua 9:14: "The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord" (N.I.V.). Using their reason and all the scientific facts at their disposal, they came to a conclusion that seemed logical. The problem was that their conclusion was false. If they had sought special revelation, they would have received the truth. Is special revelation an essential key to determining scientific truth?

The incident of the sun's shadow moving back ten degrees on the sundial is recorded in 2 Kings. Science would say that it was impossible. Only special revelation is capable of giving an explanation. Reason could not deduce it. The Bible records that Jesus was born of a virgin. Science would have to reply that it is impossible for a virgin to give birth. Jesus raised Lazarus after he had been in the grave for four days. Science, again, declares this impossible.

Other examples could be cited, but the evidence is clear. Some things are impossible to explain without special revelation. In fact, natural evidence often seems to contradict special revelation. Artisans in Italy can fake artifacts well enough to make even the experts declare them true antiquities. Sin entering into the world has blurred the evidence, making old what is really young. Often only some special revelation, an inside tip, alerts the experts that all is not what it seems to be.

If we agree that special revelation is needed to explain the virgin birth and other phenomena in Scripture, why not then apply the same reasoning to the first eleven chapters of Genesis? Either all of the Bible is inspired, or none. Any attempt at selecting certain portions as inspired and others as not gives the one doing the selecting higher authority than

the Bible itself. If a person accepts the virgin birth by special revelation, then he should also accept Creation in six literal days by special revelation. According to science, both are impossible. We need special revelation to rightly interpret science, not science to interpret Scripture.

Why should Christians spend large amounts of money to defend Genesis and not the virgin birth or the resurrection? No foundation is set up to investigate and support the virgin birth. The Bible does not differentiate among its various parts, so why should we? If we use human reasoning, human logic, to try to distinguish what the Bible does not distinguish, we will fall into the same trap Joshua and his colleagues fell into. We have tasted of our science and declare it valid, not knowing we have been deceived. If science has proved Genesis

wrong, then it has also proved the virgin birth and the resurrection wrong.

It might seem that we have an antiscience bias, but we do not. Science, when rightly studied, will glorify and magnify the Creator. But the greatest minds, if not guided by the Word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempts to trace the relations of science and revelation.

Three days after following human reason rather than special revelation the Israelites were embarrassed to discover their mistake. The history of science also has had its embarrassing moments. The Piltdown hoax is but one example. What is taught as fact today is often fiction tomorrow. The Christian need not place his faith on the shifting sands of scientific theories, but on the never-changing Word of God.

—J.D.N.

If a person accepts the virgin birth by special revelation, then he should also accept Creation in six literal days by special revelation. According to science both are impossible. We need special revelation to rightly interpret science.

Tithing

From page 12

off), but he had peace of mind for the first time—and a clear conscience.

Then one day a couple of weeks later, he had just returned from work when a caller asked if by any chance this house was for sale. He hadn't had a sign advertising it for two months because the prime house-selling time was past, so he asked the man why he had picked this particular house.

"Well," he replied, "my wife and I have been looking for a particular kind of house. I was just driving by, and this looked like what we're looking for."

After a brief inspection he asked whether he could return with his wife. She ohed and ahed over each room; then to her husband's question she said, "I'd just love it. It is just what I have always dreamed of owning."

The sale was completed the next day at the bank. With a catch in his voice,

he concluded, "I didn't even have to pay a seller's fee; that with my equity easily satisfied my bills, and we even had enough left to buy a smaller home that is entirely adequate for the two of us." Then he asked a question that everyone in trouble should ask: "Why was I so slow to believe God—to do it His way?"

How many problems and heartaches we could save ourselves if we would only recognize that we have a heavenly Father who loves us, One who will provide for our needs as He does for the birds and the grasses of the fields. But we must recognize that He is the owner of everything—the gold and silver, "the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:10). When we recognize His sovereignty by returning that which He has specified belongs to Him, then we can rest in the assurance that all our needs will be provided. We can be confident in a trust that will lead to perfect peace. This is the proof of the tithe—the marvelous results of obedience.

High-level wellness

What does it mean to be really well? If you ever feel that you could use a bit more energy to face your daily tasks, perhaps what you need is high-level wellness. Patricia S. Jones shares ideas for increasing your effective energy.

God intends for each of His children to experience a high level of wellness. Most of you are well, some more so than others. Some of you may have a chronic problem that keeps you from feeling on top. Or you may have noticed a lack of energy recently and find you just can't do as much as you used to. You wake up in the morning feeling tired, and by the end of the day you're exhausted. Compared with the individual in an impoverished area, you are healthy, but you know that being really healthy feels better than this.

Improving life quality

Our ever-increasing life span has led to a new emphasis on improving the quality of life. We are coming to view health as more than physical well-being. We are also beginning to recognize the influence of mental and emotional health on physical well-being. But mysteries still remain. In fact, the power of our complex minds and emotions over our bodies scares us. And when depression sets in, how powerless we feel to resist it!

We strive to maintain a positive attitude, to trust God more, and to accept ourselves more fully. But often, in spite of our best intentions, we fail in our expectations and later wonder why. Sometimes, in desperation, we look around and say to ourselves, "Other people seem so energetic and happy, smiling and singing all the time. What's wrong with me? Why am I not a more energetic and joyous person?"

So we ask ourselves, "What is health? And what does it mean to be healthy in the fullest sense of the word?"

Seventh-day Adventists have long understood *health* to mean "whole-

ness"—the integration of body, mind, and spirit. In fact, "making man whole" is the aim of both our health and educational programs.

One of my personal and professional objectives is to understand more fully how that wholeness can be promoted, and how the health potential of individuals can be maximized. In my search I have found definitions of *health* that agree with our Adventist view and that help in formulating, promoting, or facilitating wholeness in myself and others.

One such definition is that of Halburt Dunn, a physician, who speaks of health as "high-level wellness." "High-level wellness," he says, "is defined as an integrated method of functioning which is oriented toward maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable." ¹ Other terms used by authors to describe an individual in such a healthy state are "fully functioning" and "fully alive." This kind of wellness, or wholeness, is dynamic; it is ever-changing. And it calls for energy.

Before any woman can help others effectively, her own growth toward high-level wellness must be set in motion.

Let's think for a few minutes about Dunn's definition and the words he used. First of all, there's the word *maximizing*, which implies a dynamic process of becoming. *Potential* stands for what one is capable of doing. So, maximizing one's potential is a process of moving toward an even higher level of functioning within the limitations of one's physical and mental abilities.

Carl Rogers used the term "fully functioning" to describe a person who is psychologically free to experience all of his feelings, to trust himself, to be creative, and to live more completely each moment. ²

Abraham Maslow examined the prevalence of these qualities in individuals and estimated that only one person in a hundred could be described as "fully functioning." ³ He further estimated that most people realize about 10 percent of their life potential, see 10 percent of the world's beauty, and are alive to only 10 percent of the deep and rich feelings possible to human beings. In the words of John Powell, "the greater part of their energies is syphoned off by fears, angers, guilt feelings, hatreds, loneliness, and frustration." ⁴

John Powell's description of a "fully alive" Christian also speaks of what God designed as part of health and wholeness for His people. Powell says that "fully alive people"

1. "are using all of their human faculties, powers, and talents."

2. "are alive in their external and internal senses. They see a beautiful world. They hear its music and poetry. They smell the fragrance of each new day and taste the deliciousness of every moment. Their senses are also insulted

by ugliness and offended by odors. To be fully alive means to be open to the whole human experience. . . . They . . . are able to experience . . . wonder, awe, tenderness, compassion, both agony and ecstasy."

3. "are . . . alive in their minds." They are always "thoughtful and reflective." They are "glad to be alive and to be who they are." They "truly love and sincerely respect themselves." "Their general disposition towards all is one of concern and love."

4. "experience failure as well as success. They are open to both pain and pleasure. . . . They cry and they laugh." ⁵

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The fully functioning, fully alive Christian woman, then, is one who understands her emotions and deep feelings and is not afraid to face them. She knows her fears, frustrations, and insecurities as well as her strengths. Through the grace of God she is able to accept and love herself in spite of her inadequacies. Through self-acceptance she grows past insecurities to become more fully functioning, mobilizing energy for the development of God-given potential.

If what Rogers, Dunn, Powell, and Mrs. White say about health is true, the question that confronts us all is How can I become like that? How can I become healthier, more fully functioning and alive, and above all, whole?

A helpful starting point is Maslow's description of the spectrum of needs common to all human beings. He refers to the framework simply as basic needs.⁶ You may already be familiar with his work, but I'll review it briefly as we attempt to answer the questions I have posed.

First of all are the *physical needs*. This group is considered the most basic or most essential because it refers to such needs as air, water, food, rest, and exercise. Here I will mention just a few things particularly common to women.

There is, of course, that ever-present weight problem. Most of us would feel better physically and have more energy if we weighed less. We would also look a whole lot better and feel better about ourselves. Even our personalities would change with a new body image.

Exercise is also important, for improving heart and lung function and increasing the oxygenation of all organs. Walking is one of the best exercises. It not only will improve body functioning but will also help you lose weight right where women most easily accumulate it. Walk your way into a feeling of well-being, and even your relationship with God will benefit as you develop a new acceptance and liking for yourself. As your self-image and self-confidence increase, you can even have a more rewarding personal ministry with others.

The second need identified by Maslow is for *safety and security*. Ministers' and administrators' wives may especially feel this need. Frequent moves, the loneliness of having your husband away on trips, and perhaps his "type A" behavior when he's home can leave you feeling insecure.

Threats to our security, whether they be mental or physical, cause us to become anxious and defensive. Anxiety interferes with our ability to focus, to be creative or even productive. While anxiety speeds up the body's defenses for attack, it also tenses muscles and freezes the mind. We become nervous and almost immobilized, as if our energy were held hostage. In such a state, even socializing with our friends and neighbors becomes a problem. Since it is difficult to relate to others, we tend to keep to ourselves.

The third need identified by Maslow is for *love and belonging*. We all need to love and be loved, to be appreciated for what we are, and to belong. Erich Fromm says that the deepest need of man is to overcome his aloneness.⁷ He describes love as an active power, not a passive effect. It is primarily giving, not receiv-

ing. The most important sphere of giving, he says, is not in the world of material things, but in the human realm.⁸

Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an attitude, an orientation that determines the relationship of a person to the world as a whole. The Bible speaks of the kind of love that underlies all others when it says, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." That is brotherly love.

Motherly love comes very close to a woman's heart. In his book *The Art of Loving*, Fromm says motherly love does more than make the child feel it is good to have been born. "It instills in the child *the love for life*, and not only the wish to remain alive."⁹ A Bible symbol Fromm uses for motherly love is that of the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. He says that "honey symbol-

Prayers from the parsonage

A young girl's prayer

Mom says I'm "9 going on 19." I say I'm up and down, back and forth, sweet and sour.

I love gymnastics, a good book, stickers, and kittens. I hate two-faced people, dusting my room, and hot cereal. On the outside I seem very sure of myself. "Girls are better!" I tell my brother. "Girls are smarter!" I remind the boy next door. "Girls are stronger!" I tease my dad. But inside I have lots of worries and questions.

What's happening to me? One day everything goes fine; the next, it all comes apart. I play nicely with my little brother and then blow up at him the next minute. I give my mom an "I love you" squeeze and then stomp off when she reminds me of my chores. I laugh with my dad and then get angry when he can't pay attention to me.

I need You, Lord, to help me find out who I am.

At school I worry about keeping up with assignments and getting along with the teacher. Will I say something stupid? Will Mrs. Bell embarrass me?

Cherry B. Habenicht

I worry about having friends, too. Do the kids really like me? My "best" friends have already changed two or three times this year. Sometimes a girl I thought was my friend teams up with someone else to whisper and laugh, and I feel so left out.

I can't even depend on my body. I'd just started to like my smile when I learned I needed braces. I'd just started to feel great, and then I caught chicken pox. I'd just started to look graceful when I fell and broke my arm.

Sometimes my head isn't working either. I can memorize lines for a play, but I forget my lunch, even though I have to step over it to leave the house. I remind my dad of something he promised me three months ago, but forget where I've left my glasses. I keep track of things at school, but I'm always frantically hunting for something at home.

Growing up is exciting but confusing. I still like to play with Barbie dolls and collect stuffed animals, but I also want to try nylons, little heels, and a curling iron.

It's a good thing so many people love me—including You. Thanks for sticking by me, though some days I'm hard to live with. I guess that together You and I can handle anything.

izes the sweetness of life, the love for it, and the happiness in being alive." He observes that mothers provide the milk, all right, but the honey is often lacking.¹⁰ In order to provide honey, the mother must be genuinely happy, fully functioning, and fully alive.

The next need addressed by Maslow is *self-esteem*. "Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world."¹¹ On the other hand, "thwarting of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness."¹² Satisfaction of this need, then, leads to a healthy, productive life, whereas frustration of this need leads to anxiety, blocking of energies, and even neurosis.

What is commonly referred to as the highest level of need, identified by Maslow, is the one he calls *self-actualization*. This term refers to man's desire for fulfillment, the desire to become everything that he is capable of being. When a person lives up to his potential, his achievements and the use of his life bring satisfaction. Maslow indicates that to reach self-actualization, one must have a purpose for which to live. And he says that self-actualized people are, without exception, involved in a cause outside of themselves. They feel called to do something, which they love and work hard at.

Self-actualizing people are in good psychological health. Their other basic needs are met. In other words, what motivates them to work hard and to achieve is not a need for recognition or appreciation or any other unmet need. Rather, it is their commitment to a mission in life.¹³

Dunn agrees with Maslow on this point. He says, "Unless there is a reason for living, unless there is purpose in our life, we cannot possibly achieve high-level wellness."¹⁴ The greatest expression of this is found in the Christian life where one is not to live for herself, but to share the good news of the kingdom of God. A person's ultimate need can be met only by a trusting relationship with God.

Two other needs listed by Maslow but not often discussed are the need to *know and understand* and the need for *aesthetics*.

As human beings with minds capable of storing vast knowledge and solving complex problems, we have a deep need to grow continually in understanding the world around us. The need for beauty and creativity is also built-in and God-given. Taking time to experience beauty in nature or art softens our spirit, deepens our feelings, and leads us to the Creator.

In his original outline of basic needs, Maslow didn't list separately the spiritual need of man, but he didn't deny it either.

In fact, he describes psychological health as "movement toward spiritual peace."¹⁵ From a Christian perspective we recognize that no one can be truly well without having the highest level of need met through a personal relationship with the Saviour. As Paul Tournier says, "The spirit is what gives meaning to the body, the psyche, and the mind and at the same time assures their harmony, their articulation, their unity."¹⁶

It may seem that we've wandered from our discussion of health. However, Dunn acknowledges that the basic needs of man are the very ingredients of high-level wellness for the individual,¹⁷ and Maslow says that deprivation of *any* of the basic needs produces disease.¹⁸ Having attempted to define what constitutes high-level wellness, we've arrived now at the question of how to achieve it, to become more fully functioning and more alive.

Satisfaction of our common, basic needs is determined in part by our own actions and in part by other factors in the world around us. Some of these factors are within our realm of control, and some are not. Once we are aware of our needs, however, the issue of control and change arises.

Two important factors within our control influence our psychological state and thus our wellness. One is our adaptability, and the other is our response when the world around us

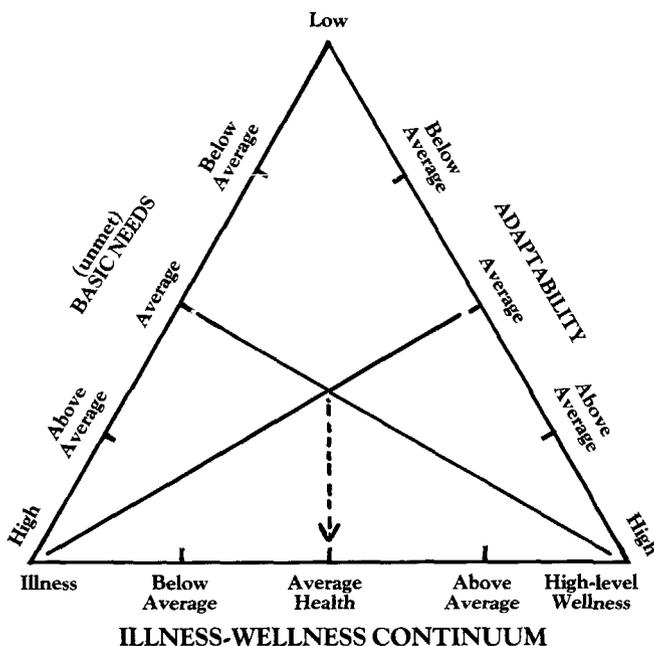


Figure 1: Interaction of average need-satisfaction and average adaptability resulting in average wellness.

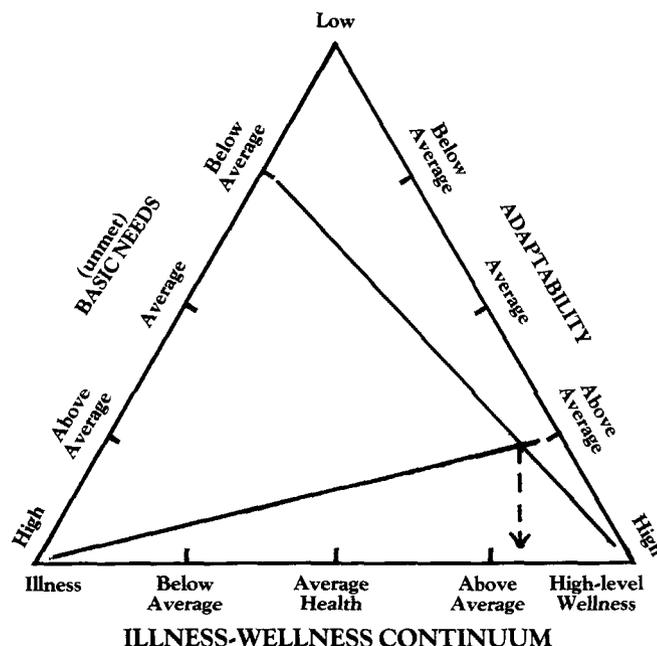


Figure 2: Interaction of few unmet needs and above-average adaptability resulting in above-average wellness.

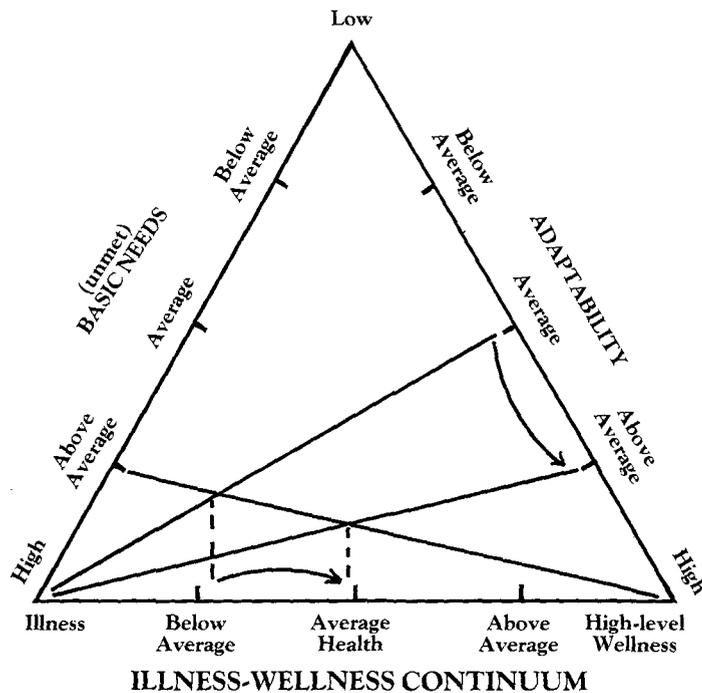


Figure 3: Change in level of wellness following an increase in adaptability.

threatens our satisfaction of basic needs.

We can overcome the tendency to wallow in depression and self-pity by redirecting energy toward appropriate assertiveness and self-improvement. Even slight progress toward greater need satisfaction can make dramatic changes in self-esteem, perspective on life, and energy available for working toward satisfaction of other needs.

A wellness model

As a means of understanding wellness I have developed a model that portrays the interaction of basic needs and adaptability in relation to wellness.

The model is an equilateral triangle, the sides of which are continua. The two sides representing unmet basic needs and adaptability impact on the base, which is the wellness continuum. Lines drawn from any point of the two upper sides to the opposing acute angle intersect at various points within the triangle. A broken line projected downward from the point of intersection, perpendicular to the base, is an indicator of the level of wellness one is experiencing.

For example, a person who is average in adaptability and in need satisfaction would also be average in level of wellness (see Figure 1). Similarly, a person who is above average in adaptability and below average in unmet needs would be above average in wellness (Figure 2). By the

same token, a person whose unmet needs are average but who is low in adaptability will be below average in level of wellness.

Improvement in either one of the two upper continua results in an improved level of wellness. And improvement in both continua results in even greater growth toward high-level wellness. Thus, if one's basic needs are high (that is, many unmet) and fixed, as in the case of a quadriplegic like Joni Eareckson, an increase in adaptability can improve the level of wellness possible for that individual (see Figure 3). Likewise, if adaptability is difficult to change, as in the case of an elderly person, greater satisfaction of basic needs can still lead to an improved level of wellness for the individual.

To fulfill their roles as wives, mothers, neighbors, friends, and even as professionals, women need the ability to help others grow toward wholeness and wellness. But before any woman can help others effectively, her own growth toward high-level wellness must be set in motion. She needs to be maturing into a fully alive, fully functioning Christian, developing her own God-given potential.

I have given you a framework for activating high-level wellness. It calls for

1. a broad understanding of the minds and bodies we have been given.
2. an increased awareness of our own

feelings and needs, as well as those of people around us.

3. a willingness to enter into sharing, caring relationships with others that will lead to the satisfaction of unmet needs.

God created us in His likeness. We don't know exactly what that means, but we do know that we experience only a fraction of the joys He intended for us. We lack the integration and the wholeness that would bring greater harmony and joy into our lives. I believe that through increased understanding of the complexities of our minds and bodies, we can achieve greater wholeness and become more fully functioning Christians.

Ellen White comments: "The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy—joy in the Holy Spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy."¹⁹

Understanding our own health needs and allowing the Holy Spirit to bless us individually is the first step toward facilitating wholeness in our families and the ever-widening circle of people we influence.

¹ Halbert Dunn, *High-level Wellness* (Arlington, Va.: R. W. Beatty, 1972), p. 4.

² Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), pp. 191, 192.

³ John Powell, *Fully Human, Fully Alive* (Niles, Ill.: Argus Communications, 1976), p. 30.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-22.

⁶ Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970), p. 35.

⁷ Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1956), p. 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-27.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Maslow, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), p. 192.

¹⁴ Dunn, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁵ Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 195.

¹⁶ Paul Tournier, *The Whole Person in a Broken World* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 54.

¹⁷ Dunn, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

¹⁸ Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, pp. 22, 23.

¹⁹ E. G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1942), p. 115.

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MINISTRY Reader's Service has two publications that could help you in preparing material supporting the creationist viewpoint on science. "Creation: The Evidence From Science," by noted author Harold G. Coffin, is a sixteen-page, colorful popular presentation of scientific evidence suitable for giving to friends. "Selected References on Topics Related to Creationism" is a fourteen-page annotated bibliography of sources to help you in research. Price for one copy of each is \$1. Each is available in quantity at lower prices. Write to MINISTRY Reader's Service, Box 217, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866.

Field conference on archeology and evangelism

The Madaba Plains Archeological Project will sponsor a seven-day field conference on archeology and evangelism in Amman, Jordan, in July, 1986, and a two-week tour of the archeological highlights of Jordan and Israel immediately after the conference. The conference will be held in conjunction with the excavation project at Tell el-Umeiri. Dates for the conference and tour are July 19 through August 8.

The key evangelistic speaker for the conference will be George Vandeman, of the It Is Written television series. Other speakers from the United States and Jordan will also participate. Delegates will enjoy a wide range of excavating experience under the direction of Lawrence T. Geraty during

the day, and lectures in the evenings.

A postconference tour of the archeological highlights of Jordan and Israel will be led by Abraham Terian, Professor of New Testament at Andrews University.

Uniquely designed for busy ministers of all faiths, the conference and tour will cost US\$2350. The fee includes round-trip air fare from Chicago, full board during the conference, and half board thereafter, all excursions, entrance fees, transportation, and excavation and conference supplies.

For further information and bookings contact John Hackwell, Conference Coordinator, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts 01561.

Budget conservation

If you're trying to conserve energy at your church, here are a few suggestions you might not have thought of: If you have electric heat, check to see if you are on "demand metering," which charges a higher rate if your peak demand during any fifteen-minute period is high. If this is the case, phase on heating units one at a time. Seven-day timers on thermostats can save turning up the heat too soon. "ER" spotlights spread seventy-five watts to cover an area previously requiring a 150-watt bulb. Watt-mizer fluorescent tubes and ballasts save power. An insulated cover for the baptistry can cut heating time in half. Check hot-tub companies for covers that can be cut to fit. Also insulate under and around the baptistry.

Courtesy of: Roger H. Ferris, Volunteer Park SDA church, Seattle, Washington.

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November 4, Takoma Park
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call Joseph Blahovich
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September 24, Battle Creek
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call Arthur Carlson
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November 7, Las Vegas
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W. Floyd Bresee heads World Ministerial Association

The 1985 General Conference elected W. Floyd Bresee as the secretary of the Ministerial Association. He becomes the seventh in a line of illustrious ministers who have served in the position: A. G. Daniells, 1922-1931; I. H. Evans, 1931-1941; L. E. Froom, 1941-1950; R. A. Anderson, 1950-1966; N. R. Dower, 1966-1980; and J. Robert Spangler, 1980-1985.

J. Robert Spangler remains as editor of *MINISTRY* but has chosen not to serve again as Ministerial Association secretary. He has served on an elected basis in the association for twenty-three years, during the past five of which he has worn two hats: Ministerial/Stewardship Association secretary and editor of *MINISTRY*. Either responsibility is a full-time job. In light of this, Spangler requested leadership to relieve him of his duties as association head in order to devote his entire time to his first love—*MINISTRY* and the *PREACH* project.

Bresee brings a broad background of pastoral, evangelistic, and teaching experience to the post. Ordained a Seventh-day Adventist minister in Gladstone, Oregon, in 1955, he has since served as academy boys' dean and Bible teacher; pastor in Oregon, Nebraska, and Texas; conference evangelist in Oregon; Bible teacher and chairman of the religion department at Union College; and associate secretary in the General Conference Ministerial Association (his main responsibility there being continuing education). He spent a total of fourteen years in the pastorate and five years in full-time evangelism. He is married to Ellen Louise Hendrickson. They have four children: three sons and a daughter.

A graduate of Walla Walla College with an M.A. from California State University in Sacramento, Bresee completed a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and Garrett Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, in 1971. His dissertation researched the preaching styles of the top homiletic teachers in the United States. Preaching is still his first delight, and he is not satisfied unless he puts at least thirty hours of preparation into a sermon.



Bresee's major contribution while at the General Conference has been developing, in conjunction with the Center of Continuing Education for Ministry at Andrews University, a continuing education program for Adventist ministers and their spouses. Seven courses, each offering continuing education credits, are currently available through the Ministerial Association: *Preaching Your Way to Better Preaching*; *Decisions*; *Coping With Grief*; *Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*; *Keeping Church Finance Christian*; *Transitions*; and *Care-Fronting*. The first course on preaching was offered through *MINISTRY* and enrolled more than 1,400 ministers.

When not on the job, Bresee likes to keep busy with a book or a hammer. Like the Master he serves, he delights in carpentry. His sense of humor needs to be experienced to be appreciated. He has taped several cartoons on his office wall. One shows an army in battle array, with one fellow saying to another: "We have been marching around Jericho for seven straight days. . . I am going to sit by the wall and take a break." Another cartoon shows two preachers discussing continuing education: "My congregation took up an offering for my continuing education. Know of any conferences for \$7.22?"

His wife, Ellen, is the associate coordinator of Shepherdess International, an organization dedicated to providing a support system for pastors' wives, strengthening the ministerial

family, and training pastoral couples in team ministry. The Bresees have also been active in conducting marriage growth seminars together.

Bresee's great strength is his love for preaching and his ability to teach that art. His many years in the college classroom will stand him in good stead in his new position as he seeks to strengthen the preaching skills of the Adventist ministry worldwide.

Bresee is very organized and believes in a clean desk top. He also believes in the blending of the task and relational sides of ministry.

Above all, he has an intense desire to see Jesus come and for the church to be a mighty evangelistic agency reaching out to lost men and women, boys and girls, winning them to His salvation and nurturing them in His love. We, the editors of *MINISTRY*, solicit your prayers that the Lord will baptize the Bresees' leadership with heavenly fire and that this fire will touch every one of us. May this Holy Spirit fire bring the coming of our Lord and that final fire that will cleanse the earth and prepare it to be our eternal home.

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