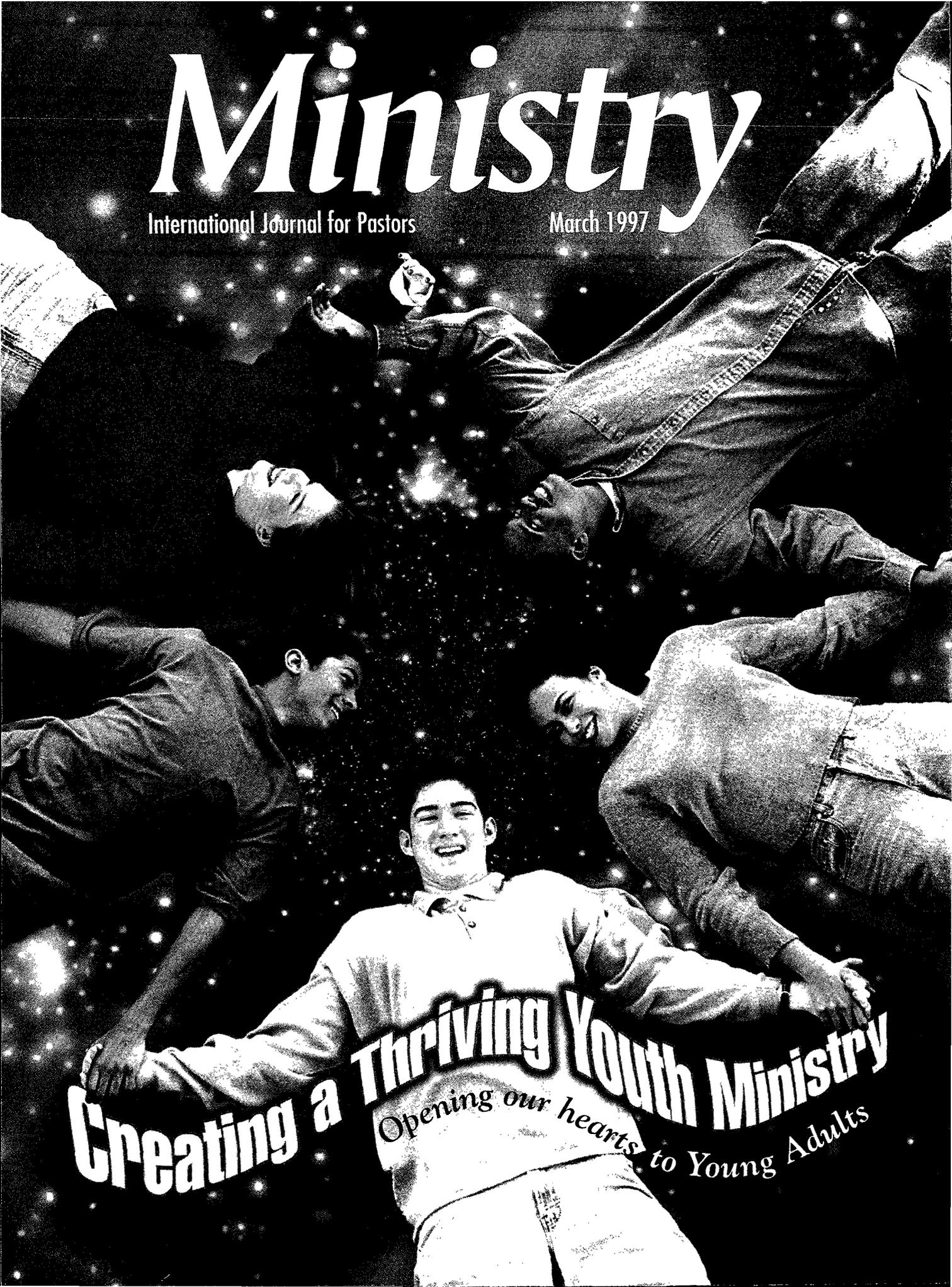


Ministry

International Journal for Pastors

March 1997



Creating a Thriving Youth Ministry
Opening our hearts to Young Adults

This issue introduces a new design for Ministry. In working with Harry Knox, our designer, we decided to leave our cover more or less intact, changing only the logo. We wanted to continue a little of what we have had in an old friend. But we felt for a number of reasons that some alteration in the layout of the articles and regular columns could be helpful.

A number of us, including some readers, have felt that some change, in and of itself, would simply be refreshing. Aside from this we had other concerns. There was significant feeling that the magazine could be a little more "reader friendly." We believe that many a busy, well-intentioned pastor could pick up the journal, ready to read it, but being confronted by a long, even formidable-looking article with columns of type and little "white space," might be tempted to put the whole magazine aside. We wanted to do what we could from a design point of view to encourage our readers to spend significant time with the journal.

As we studied how to design a more enticing magazine, however, we were concerned about leaving the journal with a certain professional dignity. Somehow its look needed to reflect its strong tradition and contemporary role among a worldwide ministerial readership.

As one picks up the vast array of publications available today, the range of design possibilities is staggering. In short, we have tried to choose a design that is both reader-friendly and dignified. Whether or not we have succeeded in this will be up to our fellow ministers to decide!

Quite aside from the secondary matter of design, the primary concern of the magazine is very much in tact: to provide a resource for pastors that is filled with a content relevant and genuinely enriching to the whole life of the pastor, and to the glory of God.

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Ministry

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Vol. 70 Number 3

If you're receiving Ministry bimonthly and haven't paid for a subscription, it's not a mistake. Since 1928 Ministry has been published for Seventh-day Adventist ministers. We believe, however, that the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. We want to share our aspirations and faith in a way that will provide inspiration and help to you as clergy. We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulder, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you can't use. Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. Requests should be on church letterhead and addressed to the editorial office.

Why ministers leave

In his letter, Harry Ballis (May 1996) states that in the eighties and nineties approximately 40 percent of ministers left the church workforce. While I don't doubt these figures, I take issue with the reasons given for their leaving.

Ballis says: "Ex-pastors describe an organizational culture of secrecy, deception, and oppression as factors that eroded commitment to ministry and brought about their exit."

This statement lays the blame at the feet of leadership. While I agree that politics have stealthily found their way into the church, I don't think that should be the reason for pastors called of God to leave the ministry.

If ministers looked to frail human beings for an example, one must question their call to ministry. We all have a simple commission to stop playing politics and get on with the job entrusted to us. Let's be kind to one another, for if we can't get along here, how are we going to get along in heaven?—L. A. O'Neill, pastor, South Queensland Conference, Australia.

Baptism and 27 fundamental beliefs

I enjoyed James Cress's column (July 1996) and heartily agree with the concept. But I wonder, How does this principle relate to the SDA practice of requiring new members to accept all the 27 fundamental beliefs before we will baptize them?

I recently studied with a sincere young man who accepted all our doctrines and wanted to be baptized—but he couldn't quit smoking. I followed what I thought to be a long-held principle and practice of the SDA Church and did not baptize the young man, as he had not demonstrated a true conversion by separating himself from the sins of the world. And yet he went to a nearby SDA church and found the pastor there willing to baptize him.

Pastor Cress's article seems to indicate that I've been wrong in refusing baptism to those seriously seeking membership in the

church regardless of their adherence to this and other "standards" that we have held.

I have no bone to pick with Pastor Cress, as I know him to be a deeply spiritual man. I would, however, like a clarification from him.—Thurman C. Petty, Jr., retired pastor, Burlleson, Texas.

Jim Cress replies: The apostle Paul could not have succeeded as an Adventist evangelist! Just look at the condition of the converts he brought into the church at Corinth. While I wholeheartedly concur with Thurman Petty's assessment that no one should be baptized who is smoking, using alcohol, or failing to separate himself from the sins of the world, neither he nor I can foresee the potential for recidivism in any of our baptismal candidates. Jesus' parable of the net is wonderfully liberating—not as an impetus for lowering the standards, but as an impetus to risk the power of grace on even the most unlikely candidates. If we cannot know in advance which ones will "turn out bad," we also cannot know in advance which ones will "turn out good"! Praise God, Jesus took that risk with me!

Annie

Loren Seibold's article about Annie (September 1996) was intriguing. As a pastor for nearly 10 years, I could relate with sadness as the socially inept woman came to God's house in search of belonging. My sadness lifted as the article gave hope. Obviously, it seemed the church had the machinery to care for its members and support its wounded.

I was, however, disappointed with the conclusion of the article. Annie left because she couldn't find a place among God's believers. To be honest, I hoped for a "to be continued" at the end of the article. I hoped we would hear how the congregation, years ago, discovered the art of discipleship. After all, social skills are learned, and those with "psychological health" are sometimes required to exhibit more than just "stability" among their own peers.

I am not being critical of Pastor Seibold's leadership or of his congregation's inability to feed Annie. Any experienced pastor could give a nod of concession to this all too typical scenario. I merely fear that the lack of any positive conclusion to this dismal scenario is an affront to the power of the gospel and leaves us with little more than a poor excuse to those who just don't fit in.—Bill Pruett, Elmhurst, Illinois.

Carrying out the mission

A few years ago *Ministry* challenged its readers to make a statement of the mission of Seventh-day Adventists and printed a number of thoughtful replies, but I wonder if that may have been only half of the question. The other half is: How do we carry out that mission?

We have a well-organized worldwide mission program plus Global Mission, Adventist Frontier Missions, ASI, Student Mission programs, many independent supportive enterprises, extensive publishing, educational and medical systems, radio and television, and NET '96. They are doing a great work. The work is progressing rapidly in some areas. Is that enough, or do we need a change of focus such as was hinted at in some of the responses to your former question? Do we need more individual reconversion ourselves? Is there something more we need?

The work appears so great and the facilities so small! Most of the world as yet has never heard the name of Jesus!—Robert A. Dexter, Reno, Nevada.

Appreciation

Let me express my gratitude for the complimentary copies of *Ministry* that I receive regularly. I always find an article or two particularly helpful in my pastoral, preaching, and teaching ministry. It is remarkable that a denominational paper can appeal to so many members within the body of Christ.—Rev. Everson T. Sieunarine, Trinidad, West Indies.



Emmaus is not only the name of a town in the Gospel of Luke; it is also a state of mind.¹ In the Gospel story, two anguished disciples

walk first by themselves and then with a Stranger who joins them, puzzling over the calamity of Calvary. On their journey they battle to unravel the meaning of what seems at the time to be the end of all they believe in. It seems to them that a perverse breath from the powers that be has snuffed out the bright burning candle of hope and meaning in their hearts. Disillusioned, they feel that God, or at least their faith, has failed them, exposed as inadequate in the face of this watershed event of their time. Their agony becomes a striking reflection of thoughtful people throughout history who have struggled to make sense of the bewildering and sometimes cataclysmic twists and turns that can so suddenly assault the underpinnings of what is simply true and gives essential meaning to our lives.

When the story seems to fail

Human beings can live without many things and at the same time remain relatively content, but they cannot really live without a substantial core of trustworthy meaning. Closely associated with meaning and the role it plays deep in the human heart is the significance of what has been called "story." At the center of the Emmaus road crisis are two disciples of Jesus who have come to contend with newly introduced questions about the "story" to which they have unreservedly committed their lives. How will they rearrange their thinking, believing, and living to accommodate the curve thrown them by the Crucifixion? Suddenly their story, and thus the essential meaning of their lives, is in question.

Many of us, especially the young adults who live in places like Western

Homesick for a story

W I L L E V A

Europe, Australia, and North America, are living through the advent of massively significant developments. During the past two or three decades, events and ways of thinking have gathered to challenge our story and our soul. Many of our world cultures have assigned to reason and technology authoritative roles that nature and reality in fact deny them. We are and by all means should be rational beings who therefore understandably crave rational explanations for things. But in our culture we have come to fashion a world overly dominated by the authority of reason, science, and their offspring: mechanistic technology and all its progeny. All of this has invaded our ways of thinking and feeling and looking at reality.

There is little question but that we are becoming shallower. We are turning from the depth of Judeo-Christian meaning and story as we move to connect ourselves instead with the great horizontal networks that all but take the place of the divine mysteries inherent in the upward concentration. This is the new "wisdom," and it is powerful and pervasive. In a very real sense our Emmaus road is paved by this brand of wisdom. And of all of those who walk this road, the highly educated young adults who attend (or do not attend) many of our churches are often most affected.

What is happening to us is illustrated by the history of the people of my homeland (South Africa): "We Europeans in Africa, America, Australasia, and the

South Pacific have been great stealers of the stories of first peoples. We have killed off whole races by taking their story of creation from them. . . . The Bushman knew [his heart] was filled to the brim with things without which his life would have no meaning and his soul wither and die. He knew intuitively that without a story one had no clan or family; without a story of one's own, no individual life; without a story of stories, no life-giving continuity with the beginning, and therefore no future."²

An invasion with similar characteristics and effects continues to encounter all of us in the form of these overdominating rationalistic, scientific, technologicistic, and materialistic values. Although each of these areas of life is clearly crucial, valuable, and helpful to us, it is their disproportionate application to us that continues to break across our consciousness, negatively affecting our ways of thinking and perceiving realities such as the biblical story. All of this casts suspicion on the soul of our Christian story and its meaning, making it look in itself obsolete or somehow inadequate. We must ever know deep down what life itself constantly impresses into our being: that there are vast continents of reality before which, valuable as they are, reason, science, technology, and matter stand disarmed and profoundly inadequate to fully explore.

A story for now

The two disciples on that dark road had to have a reorienting from the Master Himself. There is a pivotal sense in which, though the truth itself was and is changeless, the understandings of the disciples were clearly no longer adequate to face the unexpected twist that life and divine destiny handed out at the cross. The event of the death of Jesus demanded of the disciples that their story and its meaning be unfolded to a more substantial level. Their story had to develop so that it would possess the capability of transcending and making

Continued on page 29



The layperson is but a sheep! In his 1906 encyclical *Vehementer Nos* Pope Pius X wrote: "This flock, those who hold rank in the

different degrees of hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful; and those categories are so distinct in themselves that in the pastoral body alone reside the necessary right and authority to guide and direct all the members toward the goal of society. As for the multitude, it has no other right than that of allowing itself to be led and, as a docile flock, to follow its shepherds." This stratification of the church into an upper and lower class with the clergy as upper and the laity as lower reflects the twelfth-century pronouncement of Gratian (the father of Roman Catholic canon law): "There are two kinds of Christians, clergy and laity."

Two views of the church

Obviously the theology of the laity raises the whole question of ecclesiology, involving two basic views of the church. *The first*, the narrow view, maintains that the ministry constitutes the church in which it is difficult to see how the laity can play any other than a minor role. In this view the clergy are in effect the church, with the laity considered an appendage. The apostolic succession of the ministry is the sole guarantee of the existence of the church. The clergy are the rulers, the laity are the subjects. We are reminded of a retort made by a certain monsignor to Henry Manning in 1857 when the laity of England were showing signs of being "uppish": "What is the province of the laity? To hunt, to shoot, to entertain. These matters they understand, but to meddle in ecclesiastical matters, they have no right at all."¹

The second, the wider view, affirms that the church is the whole company of those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and evidence the same in their life. The advantage of this definition is that it

emphasizes personal faith and obedience of the Christian, and plainly states that Christians are a company, a fellowship. One problem is that it concentrates on human beings and their faith, rather than on God and the salvation He offers. The concept of the church as the body of Christ, which is central to this second view, draws attention to three facts: Christ is the head of the church; He is the life of the church; and the church is always His church.

The church, then, is the community in and through which Christ is bringing His redemption to bear on the life of people. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21, RSV),² said Jesus to His disciples, and there is no ground for restricting this commission to the twelve or merely to those who are ordained.

A partnership in ministry

R E X D . E D W A R D S

The proclamation and imparting of faith is the task and privilege of the whole church without differentiation. The church is always a people in mission: regenerate men and women, establishing beachheads for the kingdom, day in and day out, right where they are occupationally and vocationally. When the mission of the church is being considered, anything like clericalism is wholly out of place. Hence the statement of Bonaventure is startling indeed: "So the cleric is distinguished from the layman as having the charge, not only of living by faith and upholding it, but of imparting it."²

Of course, there are many ministries, and among them is the ministry of oversight, which is sealed by ordination. But *all* ministries are within the compass of the church. The church encompasses the ministry, and not vice versa. The

ordained minister fulfills a representative function within the church. "The church is a universal priesthood," John Stott reminds us. "But the church is not a universal pastorate."³

The question of the right relationship between the ministry and the laity is the central question for all true ordering of the church. The ministry derives from the congregation and exists for the congregation; but this does not mean that the congregation controls the ministry. The pastors are recognized by the congregation as called of God to their office, and the primary and basic function of their ministry is the training of congregants "for the work of the ministry" (Eph. 4:12).

A partnership

Our greatest need is to develop the concept and practice of partnership in the service of Christ. This is no day for suspicion between ministry and laity. The task of the church is the task of the whole church. It is not a matter of rulers and ruled, teachers and taught, but of the people of God receiving all that God purposes to give, and passing it on to the world. In order that this shall be done, the great army of laypeople must be instructed in the faith and given all possible guidance in translating this faith into action in the differing circumstances in which they serve. But no witness can be ultimately fruitful unless it issues from a life that is consecrated to God through and through. This is the supreme vocation of the whole church. Ministers and laity are partners in an enterprise that is as wide as humanity. Their task is to bring the fullness of Christ through the fullness of the church to the whole human race. The time is short, and the business is urgent. ■

¹Cited in John R. W. Stott, *One People* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971), p. 31.

²Yves M. J. Congar, *Lay People in the Church* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1967), p. 13.

³Stott, p. 45.

PLANTING A CHURCH FOR YOUNG ADULTS

My heart was pounding like a drum roll. After seven years of school bills, cafeteria cuisine, and theology classes, the moment had finally arrived to enter ministry.



Karl Haffner is the senior pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Tacoma, Washington.

"Your assignment will be to pastor the North Creek church near Seattle," the conference president said.

"North Creek? I didn't know there was a church there."

"There's not. We want you to start one."

I would have preferred swallowing a bucket of nails. I sat like a statue in shock. "Um, ah, start one?"

"We want you to plant a church."

"With all due respect, sir, I'm about as qualified for that task as a platypus designing the space shuttle."

"We feel that God has called you to this challenge . . ."

"But I've never interned. I've never been to a board meeting. I've preached three times. And I have to start with nothing? Isn't there some 10-church district where you could place me?"

My protests fell on deaf ears. Soon I found myself standing behind the pulpit (a rusty music stand) in my new church building (a rented storage room with flaming-red and chocolate-brown carpet) scanning my congregation (my wife and two other couples). "Welcome to North Creek

church," I muttered. "Let's sing a cappella our morning hymn, Number 441—"I Saw One Weary."

My assignment never got easier, but it did get more enjoyable. It became apparent that God had called me to a special ministry. When I finally resigned myself to God's punishment calling and climbed into the saddle He gave me (on a horse I thought was headed to Nineveh), I experienced the most exhilarating ride of my life.

Getting started

The search began for helpers in the adventure. Since the only people we knew in Seattle were former college classmates who weren't attending church, we started there. To our surprise, most people were eager to be involved in a church "designed by young adults, for young adults."

From the outset the atmosphere was casual but electric. Jeans and T-shirts were acceptable church attire. Voicing an opinion in the middle of the sermon was OK. Testimonies about inviting homeless people "to sleep in my spare bedroom for a few weeks" were commonplace. Mistakes were

K A R L H A F F N E R

embraced with compassion. Thought-provoking drama, contemporary Christian music, and laughter were part of the unique packaging that North Creek church could offer with no resistance from disdainful voices saying, "We've never done church like this before."

Within three years we were offering three services. The classrooms were overflowing. The parking lot was full.

The experience, however, was not all hymns and happiness. In the trenches some were deeply wounded. Hateful words escaped. Egos jockeyed for position. Gossip poisoned. Mistakes carried serious consequences.

Along the way there were fumbles and there were accomplishments. What follows is a top 10 list of these along with the lessons learned through our church plant. The list was compiled by the leaders of North Creek church after seven years of growing together. As my dad would say: "Education is expensive." Nowhere is this more true than in the classroom of life. Here's what we learned.

Fumble 1: we established unhealthy boundaries

Because most of the core leaders at North Creek church were either single or married without kids, we had ample time and energy to devote ourselves fully to "God's calling." We attacked the challenge like pit bulls at a barbecue. Every week seemed consumed with church activity. From Sundays at 7:00 a.m. (when we jogged together at our marathon clinic) until midnight on Saturday (when we wrapped up our weekly party) our lives were oriented around the church.

While this sounds commendable, our obsession resulted in leadership burnout. After seven years of battle I felt exhausted and spiritually wasted. I lost the emotional reserves to answer one more phone call or confront one more "grouchy sheep." Spiritually depleted, I questioned everything from my own salvation to the value of church.

Lesson: While offering a three-inch-thick catalog of ministry alternatives is nice, it's a sure recipe for burnout if adequate resources are not available and members are not empowered. When involving young people in church life, it is critical to recog-

nize and respect human limitations. Place a high value on balance and boundaries.

In our case, it's clear now that I failed to allow the church to outgrow me. Feeling compelled to assure excellence, I failed to empower others. As a result, some quality leaders either crumpled under the stress of doing too much or gave up under the frustration of not measuring up to unrealistic standards.

Fumble 2: we embraced a distorted model of success

One of my earliest sermons was entitled "2,000 by 2000." In it I challenged the handful of members with a vision of our future. Pointing to the day of Pentecost, I preached

Forming

a Spirit-filled community

is more important than

building a mammoth church.

how God was calling us to win 2,000 souls by the year 2000. We mapped out a strategy to double the number of Home Bible Fellowships every year until we had 500 groups by the turn of the century.

Although my vision was fueled by an impassioned spirit for lost people, it was anchored in the huge ego of a talk show host. I embraced a distorted model of success. In my mind the only portrait of success was a megachurch. Thousands of people. Hundreds of ministries. Plenty of accolades.

I still believe God is calling His people to establish growing churches. I now understand, however, that forming a Spirit-filled community is more important than building a mammoth church.

Lesson: In Acts 2:42-47 Luke describes a community of believers. The early Christian church was not just big. It was a vibrant fellowship in which lives were changed, the sick were healed, the poor were cared for,

the lost were transformed. The Spirit was active.

The early Christian church sparkled with the raw vulnerability that we craved. After redefining what a church is called to be, we resolved to begin each worship service by reading Acts 2. It became our motto and sole desire—to be a Spirit-filled community.

Fumble 3: we created an environment in which cynicism and distrust of authority flourished

Some of our core leaders were former Adventists who had been "burned by the church." We teamed up with an unspoken mission to "do church the right way." Consequently there was a sardonic poison that flowed through the foundation of our fellowship.

In today's culture there is plenty of fertile ground in which to plant seeds of cynicism. According to the Barna Research Group, only 8 percent of people today deem leaders of nonprofit organizations to be "very trustworthy."¹ In this age of skepticism, petulance seems an easy shortcut to fellowship. Beware, however, for shared bitterness builds only the facade of community.

Lesson: After a board meeting an elder confronted me on a verbal quip I had carelessly made. "When you make digs against the church system," she said, "you are training leaders to respond to your spiritual authority and leadership in the same way."

"But you know I was just joking . . ." As my lips stammered to defend, my gut screamed, "She's right." Through her God whispered the golden rule of ridicule: "Show the same respect toward your authorities that you desire from the people you lead."

Fumble 4: we discontinued multiple services

Offering multiple services was not popular with everyone. Members complained: "Now we can't get to know everybody." "Let's stop focusing on getting new people and take care of the people we've got." "Let's just do one service, and if people can't get a seat, that's their problem."

Approximately a year after starting the church, we offered two services. A year later we offered a third. In doing this, we made an amazing discovery: every time we added a service we grew by 20 percent.

Eventually we moved from the assembly room into a 500-seat facility, thus eliminating the need for multiple services. Although I felt strongly that we should continue to offer at least two services, I was too weak to fight.

After returning to two services, attendance plunged by 20 percent. When we offered one service, attendance again took a nosedive.

Lesson: People today expect options. No longer do you choose between six colors for bathroom towels. Bon Marché displays more than 100 different colors for towels! Savvy business owners understand: the more selection, the more sales. The principle holds true for churches. More options mean greater response.

Fumble 5: we failed to confront problems

We valued peacekeeping above truth-telling. I can't describe the heartache that resulted from "dancing around the proverbial elephant" that sat in the middle of our sanctuary. I feared talking about it. I wanted everybody to be happy. I squirmed at the thought of tackling the delicate issues.

Rather than upholding relational integrity and confronting moral issues, we ignored the stinky animal in hopes that it would go away on its own. Instead, the elephant had babies, and before we realized it we were operating a zoo.

Lesson: We learned that violating relational authenticity always comes back to sting. Healthy churches are rooted in healthy relationships. Compromise relationships, and your ability to lead will be diminished. At North Creek our failure to attack compromise in leadership carried an exorbitant emotional and spiritual price tag.

And now the achievements!

Volumes could be written about our failures. We made more mistakes than Abraham had descendants. In the midst of failures, however, God's grace blossomed. The achievements proved educational as well. Here are the top five and the lessons we learned.

Achievement 1: offense, not defense

At the start we stormed our mission rather than defending our mansion. As we grew into a more established church, how-

ever, we did drift toward a more defensive mind-set.

At one of our first meetings someone suggested we invite a TV personality to speak at our church. Rather than discussing the budget for such a weekend, we asked God to reveal His will. After intense prayer, we agreed that God was in it.

I contacted the individual. "My expenses and honorarium are \$1,000," he said. "Can you afford that?"

"Um, ah, sure we can!" I wondered why we hadn't discussed finances. All we knew was that God was calling him to minister to our community. "We'll cover the cost," I assured him. At the time our church had a balance of \$34.53.

Next, he informed me that he was booked for three years. We wanted him in

F
*or all our
blunders, one accomplishment
stands out—North Creek
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that was sensitive to baby
Christians.*

five weeks. My mind swirled in confusion: *But God wants you at North Creek that weekend. I felt violated when he declined.*

Fifteen minutes later my phone rang. "I can't explain this," he said, "but my appointment for that weekend we discussed was just canceled. Would you still like me to come?"

As it turned out, the weekend was a success. And of course, the money to cover expenses flowed in.

Lesson: I am not advocating irresponsible money management, rather responsible risk-taking. I suspect too many churches expect money to come before the vision. Inspire people with a clear, bold vision, and money will not be an issue. Start by asking, "What miracle is God calling us to be a part of?" rather than "What's in the budget?"



"We don't dispense it, sir. We just minister to it."

Achievement 2: we created an environment in which mistakes were honored

The most refreshing part of being involved in a new church was the freedom to try anything. One Sabbath the worship team had arranged for a magician to punctuate the sermon with a routine involving candles. Since my message was on being the light of the world, it seemed a perfect fit.

Unfortunately the thrust of the message was never communicated to the magician. Instead of a routine on candles and light, he launched into a 20-minute discourse on being "true to your karma."

To say his show was inappropriate in church would be like saying kids shouldn't smoke dope. Very few people shared positive comments about his performance. There was overwhelming support, however, for the worship team's courage to try something innovative. Their willingness to risk was applauded—in spite of the failure.

Lesson: Why do churches so often denounce innovators? Applaud their efforts—even if they fail. As church growth expert Doug Murren says: "Remember, any attempt to be creative will always be appreciated. Past church experience tends to be so short on imaginative projects that any attempt to improve that experience will cause you to stand out."²

Achievement 3: we didn't beat up babies

For all our blunders, one accomplishment stands out—North Creek church created an environment that was sensitive to baby Christians. At one baptism the candidate was so surprised to see that her sister had flown across the country to attend the service that she raced ecstatically toward her,

through the congregation, shouting expletives that shouldn't be published.

While I'm not promoting questionable language at baptisms, I am contending that the church family should be accepting of people—wherever they are in their spiritual journey.

Lesson: We must challenge people to be more and more like Jesus. His holiness is our objective. In the process, however, we must not destroy baby believers. The church must challenge believers to grow but accept them at every stage of growth.

Achievement 4: we placed a high priority on people

Since we had no church building or school, we were able to invest a significant percentage of our budget in people. We invested more than 75 percent of our money in evangelism and discipleship training.

George Barna asks: "Why do we spend five dollars on buildings and maintenance of church-related properties for every one dollar we spend on evangelistic activity? Is

this the ultimate statement of our ministry priorities?"²³

Lesson: Most church leaders would readily agree that people are more important than programs and buildings. If this is true, then the budget should reflect the priorities. Unfortunately, some churches are strangled by a maintenance monster that gobbles up all of their finances.

Achievement 5: our focus was on infiltrating the community

With all of our baggage and hang-ups, our small church did possess a heart for the unbelievers in our community. We recklessly sacrificed ourselves to build bridges that would connect us to unsaved people. Divorce recovery groups, 12-step programs, the Eats-n-Acts Christian Dinner Theater, the Adventist Marathon Clinic, the annual Living Nativity Drive-thru—these programs were used to help us reach lost people.

Lesson: God implores us to reach lost people. My experience at North Creek challenged me to keep investing my life in an-

swering the Great Commission. As Christians, nothing is more worthwhile of our full devotion.

One final thought

God called us to infiltrate a growing suburb of Seattle with His gospel. In no way was the church wildly successful. Nor was it a colossal failure. Progress was incremental. The process was invaluable. For the unique spiritual journey I took with a team of extraordinary young adults, I will always be grateful.

Although I no longer pastor the North Creek church, it continues to grow through fumbles and achievements. Young adults still lead. God still blesses. And the conference president still believes he sent me to the right place. I happen to agree. ■

¹George Barna, *Absolute Confusion* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1993), p. 121.

²Doug Murren, *The Baby Boomerang* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1990), p. 118.

³Barna, p. 142.

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A N G E R

Internship and ultimatum. Internship I welcomed because I had dreamed of being a minister ever since I was 8. The ultimatum was a surprise.



Larry Yeagley is pastor of the Marshall and Shalotte Seventh-day Adventist churches in Michigan.

In my desire to succeed I set out door to door to raise the goal for mission funds assigned to my two churches. I tried my best, but the church members were not enthusiastic. The fund-raising dragged on for three months.

Two nights before Christmas I joined a handful of brave solicitors in a hopeless attempt to reach the goal before my holiday vacation. The wind was fierce and frigid. Most of the residents refused to open their doors to us. We went home, the goal unmet. The next day I headed to Washington, D.C., for Christmas.

My new year began with an ultimatum from church administration. *Next year there will be no vacation until the funds are raised.* There were no words of appreciation for the three months of business solicitation and the doorbell ringing night after night. Just the ultimatum.

At first I felt fear; then angry feelings stirred inside. For years I rehearsed that ultimatum.

Why, after realizing my dream of being a minister, was I angry?

Ministerial anger

Henri J. M. Nouwen observes: "Pastors are angry at their leaders for not leading and at their followers for not following. They are angry at those who do not come

to church for not coming and angry at those who do come for coming without enthusiasm. They are angry at their families, who make them feel guilty, and angry at themselves for not being who they want to be. This is not an open, blatant, roaring anger, but an anger hidden behind the smooth words, the smiling face, and the polite handshake. It is a frozen anger, an anger which settles into a biting resentment and slowly paralyzes a generous heart."¹

Two irritants

Agendas shaped by programs. Well-meaning church leaders intent on church growth appear to be franchising methods that threaten to homogenize ministry. Church "marketers" blessed with finances and high-tech tools imply that pastors who don't jump aboard the program are less than loyal. The end result can be the cramping of personal spirit and creativity.

When these programs alone shape our agenda we end up exhausted by the required attention to detail. We feel frustrated and angry inside because we have not exercised our creative potential.

Eugene Peterson sensed this frustration. He states that we are all born to be creative, but being creative is difficult. We can't do it if we are lazy. It requires living

faith because the created work has never been before.²

A lazy minister may welcome ready-to-use packages, but expecting all ministers to use them may bring frustration and anger to the creative minister. The benefits of such an approach are in question.

It has been written with wisdom, "God needs men and women who will work in the simplicity of Christ to bring the knowledge of truth before those who need its converting power. But when a precise line is laid down which the workers must follow in their efforts to proclaim the message, a limit is set to the usefulness of a great number of workers."³ "God's workmen must labor to be many-sided men; that is, to have a breadth of character, not to be one-idea men, stereotyped in one manner of working, getting into a groove, and unable to see and sense that their words and their advocacy of truth must vary with the class of people they are among, and the circumstances that they have to meet."⁴

The elusive job description. A 1976 Alban Institute study of new seminary graduates in their first pastorates showed that many of them had varying degrees of anger. These seminarians did not lack imagination or effort. Their anger was caused by the clash of two cultures, seminary culture and congregational culture. These cultures had divergent ways of thinking and working, different reward systems and values, and different languages.

After I had spent 38 years in ministry, an irate church member blamed me for what he perceived to be moral laxness in the church. He pointed his finger at me for 45 minutes while he angrily spelled out my job description. My study of ministry didn't allow me to accept his role for me.

I know of a young minister who enthusiastically accepted his first pastoral appointment. An elder of the church quickly introduced himself and then added, "In this church we get along much better without a pastor. It's nice to have a speaker every Sabbath, but that's all we

need a pastor for." The young pastor's enthusiasm evaporated. Anger was a frequent visitor during his short stay. Reasonably so.

Kenneth Alan Moe acknowledges the presence of anger when there is a clash of role expectations. "There are those in ministry who feel guilty if they do not work 60 hours a week. Some of these pastors have become angry, frustrated, defensive, or depressed because their congregations do not appreciate their long hours of labor."⁵

What is anger?

According to Neil Clark Warren, "anger is a physical state of readiness."⁶ In this state of alertness we are not only prepared to respond to hurt, frustration, and threat,

Every time

*I rehearsed it, the anger was
experienced as freshly as the
day I received it.*

but we also have power to carry out action to avert further discomfort. This arousal is physiological and a natural part of being human. Experiencing this arousal should not be cause for shame or guilt.

When I received the fund-raising ultimatum, my body and mind went into an arousal state. I felt hurt, and I perceived it as a threat to my job security. The young pastor who was told he wasn't needed was probably frustrated because he would not be able to use the exciting ideas he gleaned in the seminary. Arousal in both cases was healthy.

What we *do* about anger is called *anger expression*. Expression of anger is learned. It can be constructive or destructive. Learning to express anger in a healthy

manner deepens our character and adds joy to life. Learning destructive ways of expressing anger complicates life and adds misery to the lives of pastors and church members.

We cannot blame anger expression on our ancestors or on people who treat us thoughtlessly. We decide how we will react; therefore, we must assume full responsibility for anger expression.

The anger habit

Unhealthy anger expression may get us what we want for the short term, but it is a poor way to handle the hurt, frustrations, and threats in our lives. Acting aggressively alienates others. Ventilating simply sets us up to ventilate more vehemently the next time.

A sure way to develop the anger habit is to rehearse the injuries dozens of times. I rehearsed that ultimatum hundreds of times, coloring my experience with anger for years. Every time I rehearsed it, the anger was experienced as freshly as the day I received it.

Constant rehearsal keeps us in a constant state of arousal that can ultimately lead to physical, social, and spiritual problems. Stress-related diseases thrive in the body and the mind of the person who practices the anger habit.

Breaking the anger habit

Dr. Elden M. Chalmers taught me that a habit forms a literal, physical pathway in the nervous system, causing us to go from stimulus to action almost without thinking. A new habit develops by deliberate, careful, and prayerful decisions to go from the anger stimulus to a more productive action. The new action pathway can become as well developed as the first.

This doesn't come easily. It takes our finest and most balanced effort. It happens by admitting our own weakness and opening our minds to the power of the Holy Spirit. We will need all the power we can get. In prayer, we restate our decision to form a new pathway.

Keep a journal. Record your experience

with anger. Learn from your mistakes. Thank God for your victories. When you are calm, write out your new strategy for handling provocation. Read it several times a day for six months. This sets up your mind and body to go down the new pathway.

Make your own itinerary

I discovered that overwork and fatigue make it easier to slip into the old pathway. I must be in charge of my time and energy expenditures. I must work toward a balance.

Nouwen speaks about clergy who are too busy to wonder if any of the things we think, say, and do are worth thinking, saying, and doing. "We simply go along with the many *musts* and *oughts* that have been handed on to us, and live with them as if they were authentic translations of the Gospel of our Lord."⁷

Slow down your pace.

What's your theology of ministry?

Without a theology of ministry, you'll be blown about by the dozens of models circulating in church circles. You'll be controlled and frustrated by the expectations of others. This is apt to keep you in anger arousal.

Know your strengths, your interests, and your gifts. Design a model that uses these. Don't be swayed by pressure to row your pastoral boat with someone else's oars.

I learned this from a veteran pastor. He listened as a church leader outlined a model that would "finish the work." He slowly rose to his feet, summarized his strengths, shared his personal view of ministry, and tactfully but firmly apprised the leader that he could not work with another person's tools. There was no rancor in his voice. He knew who he was. He was content with his success. Though open to leadership, he was not threatened by the pressure to use another model.

Loren B. Mead refers to this as the "tyranny of the new."⁸ He rejects the idea that only the new has value. We need pastors who are trying new ideas but who hold to old ideas that work and give

stability. You have to live your theology of ministry lest the tyranny of the new creates anger.

Understand anger

For years we have been told that catharsis, venting, was a healthy way of handling anger, that anger expression was instinctual, something we had to do.

If this is your view of anger, you owe it to yourself to digest Carol Tavris's book *Anger—The Misunderstood Emotion*. She reviews many research projects that pulverize Freud's hydraulic model of

Don't be
swayed by pressure to row
your pastoral boat with
someone else's oars.

anger. She puts to rest the idea that humans have no choice about anger expression: "Judgment and choice distinguish human beings from other species; judgment and choice are the hallmarks of human anger."⁹

She shares this bit of history. "Freud's and Darwin's theories represent a crucial pivot point in Western thought; for once the belief that we can control it—indeed, must control it—bowed to the belief that we cannot control it, it was then only a short jump to the current conviction that we should not control it."¹⁰

If I had understood anger during my internship as I do now, I would not have wasted my energy. I would not have felt so guilty about having the emotion in the first place. After I calmed down, I would have gone to my administrator and told him the details of my beginning efforts. I would have informed him that his letter sounded like an ultimatum to me. Who

knows, maybe he would have given me the affirmation I so much needed.

Free yourself to be yourself

There are many molds in ministry. The apostle Paul called the molds *gifts*. Be content with your gifts and use them joyfully. Don't allow anyone to push you into a mold that doesn't fit you. It will be uncomfortable and ultimately cause you to feel angry.

When I was 16 I admired my uncle Scotty, especially the shiny narrow dress shoes he wore. Just before I took the train to Philadelphia after my Christmas break from school, I bought a pair of shoes just like my uncle's. The salesperson suggested a wider shoe, but I insisted on the narrowest pair I could find. Proudly I boarded the train, hoping that passengers would notice my sleek appearance. Twenty miles out of the station I was in misery and angry at myself for buying those shoes. I untied the shoestrings, but the cramps in my feet remained. A day after arriving at the school, I gave the narrow shoes to a classmate with narrow feet.

Choose a style of ministry that fits your gifts and your personality. This will spare you a lot of frustration and anger.

Balance your life

As I was writing this article my wife shared with me that a doctor on TV reported his latest research on anger and heart attacks. He found that habitual anger and rage can initiate the onset of a heart attack in men aged 46 to 90. Similar information has been in print. On the flip side of that, good health practices reduce unhealthy anger expression that leads to such traumas.

Dr. Herbert Benson speaks of the positive effects of practicing relaxation response.¹¹ I can attest to the value of relaxation response that uses meditation. I believe it is one of the things that can facilitate a constructive expression of anger, but it is much broader. Diet, exercise, sleep, deep breathing, plenty of water, time for creative solitude, and time for personal spiritual nurturing are essentials.

By God's grace we can control anger expression. We can meet life situations confidently and hopefully. We can make advances toward personal, professional, and spiritual maturity. ■

¹Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1981), p. 11.

²Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989).

³Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), pp. 105, 106.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁵Kenneth Alan Moe, *The Pastor's Survival Manual* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute Publications, 1995), p. 23.

⁶Neil Clark Warren, *Make Anger Your Ally* (Brentwood, Tenn.: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1990), p. 77.

⁷Nouwen, p. 10.

⁸Loren B. Mead, *The Once and Future Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Alban Institute, 1991).

⁹Carol Tavris, *Anger—The Misunderstood Emotion* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), p. 38.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹¹Herbert Benson, M.D., *Timeless Healing* (New York: Scribner, 1996), p. 147.

Suggested reading

Benson, Herbert, M.D., *Timeless Healing*. New York: Scribner, 1996. A strong case on the awesome significance of attitudes and thoughts for inner peace and outer peace.

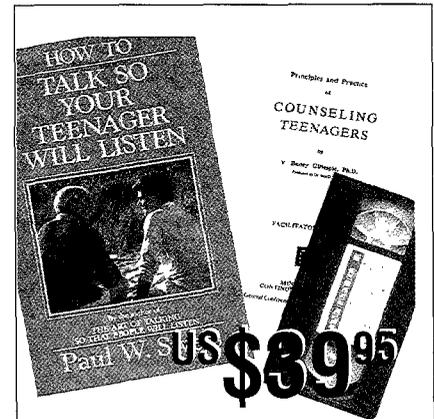
Smedes, Lewis B. *Forgive and Forget*. New York: Harper & Row, 1984. Can forgiveness and anger coexist? The author writes about forgiving for one's own sake, lest hurt and hate become one's own worst enemy.

Tavris, Carol. *Anger—The Misunderstood Emotion*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989. The author uses her latest research to present a new view of anger to challenge the reader to grow through responsible decision-making.

Warren, Neil Clark. *Make Anger Your Ally*. Brentwood, Tenn.: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1990. An anger management manual, outlining how to understand anger and how to utilize it for growth instead of destructive behaviors.

Continuing education exercises

1. List the expectations that your church administrators and your church members have of you. Which of these expectations can you fit within the framework of your theology of ministry? Communicate that theology to your administrator and your congregation.
2. Read Neil Clark Warren's *Make Anger Your Ally*. Treat it as a series of counseling sessions. Carry out all the exercises in the book. If you do not see noticeable improvement in six months, take classes or counseling in anger management.
3. Sit down with your spouse or close friend and assess your health practices. Make a contract with that person to bring balance to your life. Ask that person to hold you accountable.
4. Read Eugene H. Peterson's *The Contemplative Pastor*. Then write an outline of how you can serve your present congregation for the next 20 years. Remember to include possible provocations and how you would meet them.



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YOUTH IN TROUBLE: WHAT CAN PASTORS DO?

He is 14. Six years ago his parents' marriage broke up. The father left town and did not keep in touch. The mother remarried, and the relationship between the boy and his stepfather has not been the best.



Nikolaus Satelmajer, D.Min., is the director of professional growth for the General Ministerial Association.

"You are good for nothing" is the frequent, angry judgment of the stepfather. The mother can't do much. She tries to be less harsh on her teenage son but feels constrained to accept her husband's views. The son is puzzled. He feels he is not wanted at home. He recognizes that no one really loves him or cares about him. He feels he must leave home. But before he does that, he comes to see you, his pastor. What do you say to him?

She is 17. Her single mother tells you that the girl has a drinking problem. The girl has talked with her high school counselor and has attended self-help programs for alcoholics. But she has always gone back to drinking again. All her friends seem to do the same. She wants to quit, but is not sure how. What will you suggest to the girl and her mother as you sit in their home talking to them about the situation?

A 22-year-old tells you that for a num-

ber of years he has been obsessed with pornography. His relationship with a girl, whom he would like to marry, is affected by this obsession. "Pastor," he implores, "if I don't get help, I know my relationship with her will end. Where can I get help?" To which place will you refer him?

A woman asks you for help with her 18-year-old granddaughter. The teenager left her parents' home two years ago and has not kept in touch. But she does call the grandmother about once every two months. During the last call she told her grandmother that she needed help but that she did not know where to go for the help. The grandmother turns to you. What will you tell her?

Frequently pastors face difficult situations such as these. Often they involve youth and young adults such as those we just mentioned. There are times when pastors are able to provide the needed support. At other

N I K O L A U S S A T E L M A J E R

times pastors can enlist the assistance of church members who have the know-how, patience, and respect of young people. In still other cases pastors may also access community organizations that can provide meaningful help.

Assessing facilities

When you're assessing facilities that offer help for young people in need, here are some points to keep in mind:

- The program must have a strong spiritual basis. Spirituality should be not just a component of the program, but rather the foundation of the entire program.
- The staff should have training and experience that qualify them to meet the varied needs of young people, particularly their crisis situations. The training needed depends on the type of facility and the programs offered. Ask the contact person about staff qualifications.
- The facility must function as a haven for young people, providing safety both from others who have hurt them and possibly even from themselves.
- The facility should be licensed by an appropriate government agency or should have a satisfying explanation of why it is not licensed.

No facility is perfect, and the pastor should prayerfully and carefully assess a given service organization with the specific needs and characteristics of the particular young person in mind.

What facilities are available?

But what facilities are available? I have searched for facilities operated by Seventh-day Adventist individuals or organizations that are supporting ministries of the church. For the time being, the list is limited to only North America.

I have asked each facility to provide information about itself and its program. In most instances I talked with personnel from each facility. I also talked with some of the residents to get their perspective of the programs. These responses and interviews provide the basis for the summary given below. Here is an alphabetical listing:

Advent Home Youth Services

Serves 12- to 16-year-old boys with serious emotional and mental disabilities:

attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity, dyslexia, and other learning and behavioral differences or difficulties. These students experience school dismissal, academic failure, petty crimes, substance abuse, family dysfunctions, negative peer influence, and other psychological and health problems. Contact Dr. Blondel Senior, 900 County Road, Calhoun, Tennessee 37309. Telephone: 423-479-2892; fax: 423-339-5986.

The Bridge

A residential treatment center for dependency disorders for males and females 18 or older. Many of the clients have acted in an addictive manner with sex, work, food, shopping, stealing, alcohol and other drugs, gambling, religion, relationships, etc. The Bridge supports the consensus that each of these issues is a primary compulsion and must be treated as such--with abstinence. For more information, contact Jana Aiken, 1745 Logsdon Road, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101. Telephone: 502-777-1094; fax: 502-777-1062.

Drug Alternative Program

A drug recovery program for males 18 and older. The program centers on the belief that all things can be overcome with one's ultimate faith in the healing power of Jesus Christ. It is structured in a way that follows the principles of Christianity: love, peace, order, respect, strength, cleanliness, and praise. To learn more, contact Cliff and Freddie Harris, 11868 Arliss Drive, Grand Terrace, California 92313. Telephone: 909-783-1094; fax: 909-783-1098.

Christian Family Learning Centers, Inc. D.B.A. Hilltop Christian Center for Girls

For female teenagers with emotional, family, or school problems. Contact Ellen Crosby, P.O. Box 2153, 5340 Layton Lane, Collegedale, Tennessee 37315. Telephone: 423-236-5022; fax: 423-236-5023.

Miracle Meadows School

Accepts male and female elementary and secondary students who are runaways or with the following challenges: behavior disorders, dishonesty, defiance, disobedience, depression, anger, irresponsibility, spiritual hostility, poor social skills, and

school problems. Contact Gayle Clark, Route 1, Box 289-B, Salem, West Virginia 26426. Telephone: 304-782-3628; fax: 304-782-3660.

Life Changes, Inc. D.B.A. Positive Transitional Living

For males 18 years and older with substance abuse problems. For more information, contact David Swan, 245 Sunset, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Telephone: 313-913-6060.

Project PATCH

A residential treatment program with emphasis on behavior modification. Accepts girls and boys up to age 18. Provides resource and reference information as available for those not seeking residential treatment. Contact Tom Sanford, 13455 SE. 97th Avenue, Clackamas, Oregon 97015 (ranch location: Garden Valley, Idaho). Telephone: 503-653-8086; fax: 503-653-8265.

Fees at these facilities vary. Entrance fees, if charged, are from \$100 to \$1,500. Monthly fees range from \$650 to \$3,000. Each facility either provides assistance for parents on how to raise the funds needed or charges a sliding scale fee or provides scholarships. Asked about financial assistance, the director of one facility wrote, "We turn no one away."

These facilities cannot meet the needs of every young person who comes to the pastor for help. It is a list, however, that a minister can use as a resource. In some instances personnel from these facilities may be able to direct you to other programs that are able to deal with issues for which they are not equipped.

In conclusion, your help is needed. We are asking *Ministry* readers around the world to send specific information about facilities with which they are familiar. In a future issue, we would like to publish a list that is more international and interdenominational. To be considered for the future listing, the facility should have a reputable, spiritually based program. Please send this information to Nikolaus Satelmajer, *Ministry*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904. Fax: 301-680-6502. CompuServe: 102555,2473. ■

LESSONS FROM EVANGELISM IN PAKISTAN

The foundation of evangelistic success lies in home visitation. This was clearly demonstrated in our program in Pakistan. Daily house-to-house visitation was the essential means of soul-winning activity.



Borge Schantz, Ph.D., is the director for the Institute of Islamic Studies at Newbold College, England.



Pat Boyle is a pastor in England.

Home visitation, especially in newly opening areas, is a New Testament model. At Pentecost the believers met *daily* at the Temple and the Lord added to their number *daily* (Acts 2:42-47). Paul declared he taught “publicly, and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). Following this model brought good results. It has been said, “Teaching the Scriptures in families—this is the work of an evangelist, and this work is to be united with preaching. If it is omitted, the preaching will be, to a great extent, a failure.”*

Visitation in Muslim homes for religious purposes is forbidden. Therefore in Pakistan we targeted “neglected” and “lapsed” Christians. We had to become used to a large visitation group consisting of five to eight persons, sometimes even more. In addition to the evangelist, there would be the local pastor, the interpreter, a church elder, and sometimes members of their extended families. All of these played a significant role in opening up contacts and making it easier for the people we visited to receive us and the gospel message.

A new way

In some instances in which we were pioneering in unentered areas we “employed” a non-Seventh-day Adventist Christian on the team. He became the “significant person.” His task was to keep track of those attending the meetings. He would note who was present. He would listen to the village talk to find out who was interested and who was resistant or even hostile to the meetings. He would then guide us to the receptive homes.

This approach was new to us, but it proved to be a blessing. It is an important factor in church growth similar in some respects to Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman. Both our Saviour and the disciples had limited contact with the woman’s Samaritan community. The woman, on the other hand, was intimately acquainted with it. She became the door to the community through which Jesus was able to bring the gospel. Through the woman Jesus overcame the disciples’ prejudice and the Samaritans’ suspicion. In the same way our Christian brother led us to

BORGE SCHANTZ AND PAT BOYLE

the homes of receptive people. This in itself enabled us to use our limited time more effectively. And then at the end of the campaign he and his family were baptized into the fellowship of the Adventist Church. In some situations he also became the local leader of the new group of believers.

Those of us who work in the West should take this lesson to heart. Most of our church members have their friends *within the church family*. Consequently their significant contacts for faith sharing are restricted. Conversely newly baptized members have their network of significant people *outside the church*. We should consider how to use the newly baptized member as an entry point for witnessing to a network of new contacts.

A ministerial model

In our campaign we wanted to provide the local pastors a model they could emulate and use in their local situation. This was and is a necessary goal. Most of the local pastors engaged in the campaign were also responsible for teaching school five days a week. They did not have the luxury of a Western-style pastorate. In visitation it was important to follow a prescribed pattern. We adopted the following simple guidelines in order to make our visits positive, while we avoided mere socializing:

* Show respect to all persons in the home: parents, women, children, etc.

* Sit in a prominent position, where one can see and be seen by everyone.

* Try to make sure the head of the family is present.

* Listen to the head and others. Ask questions that can be easily answered. Avoid talking about oneself.

* Use the Bible. Read the text slowly and clearly. If someone who can read is present, ask them to do so. Don't embarrass anyone.

* Explain the text positively.

* Pray before leaving. Kneel if possible. Use short, direct prayers.

* Keep record of interested persons.

* Have the interpreter, if one is used, keep the evangelist informed of what happened during the visit.

Because the use of Scripture is vital, we wanted to make its use meaningful and significant. During the morning seminars we

decided on the text to be used that day in our visitation. It was usually a text that dealt with the previous night's presentation but from a fresh viewpoint. Its clear explanation was intended to reinforce the specific Bible truth presented in the evening meeting.

Targeting the responsive people

Being Europeans and working in an Asian context had an advantage. People living in small communities find a foreigner interesting. This was a factor in attracting some to the meetings. It also drew some into the visitation activity. Of course, our foreignness could work against us in home visitation. We responded to it in the following way.

During our consultation with the local pastors at the beginning of the outreach, we decided to make a list of all interested persons. As the meetings progressed, we had to limit the visitation in order for it to be effective. We identified people as one-, two-, or three-star interests.

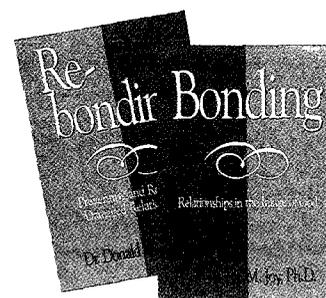
As the campaign proceeded, the evangelists would visit only three-star people who were deeply interested in Bible truth and willing to make life-changing decisions. This procedure proved to be productive. As the interest increased, the visitation demands increased. If we had not limited the visitation to three-star interests, we could have ended up with as many as 2,000 interests to visit, and little to show for it by way of baptism.

Using established structures

As we were working in a culture not friendly to Christians and in which the extended family ties are strong and essential to survival, we consciously decided not to disregard the family structure.

Our entry was to approach the family head and opinion maker and attempt to get them to take a stand for Christ and church membership. When this was successful the rest of the family became responsive. When the head was resistant we tried to ensure that we were allowed to study with those members of the family who showed interest and prepare them for baptism but without separating them from the family structure.

We attempted to make sure that the strong and vital family ties were not broken even when one or more of the family mem-



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bers were baptized and joined the church. Fortunately, in these campaigns we were not compelled to appeal to anyone to take a stand for Christ in a situation in which they would be ostracized from the family or the larger community. If this had developed, it would have become necessary to find alternative places for these persons to live and work.

Here again we in the West can learn. How often we stress the individual's responsibility to decide for Christ (and rightly so) but then neglect to deal with the implications of a person's decision when it comes to their family context. Awareness of the implications of a person in a family becoming a church member should move us to look at the larger family picture and negotiate and manage the transition positively and productively. In taking this route we can do a lot to avoid unnecessary conflict and tension in family relationships.

Hospitality demonstrated and accepted is of extreme importance in most non-Western societies. In Pakistan it is an integral part of the soul-winning process in home visitation. This beautiful culture can cause certain difficulties for the visitor. One of these is the quantity of "refreshments" offered in up to 20 visits per day. We solved the problem by explaining that a cold bottled drink or hot drink was all we needed, and fulfilled all the customary hospitalities of our hosts.

Baptismal preparations

At the completion of the 10 public meetings there was a pause of three days. During this period home visitation was intensified. After the three-day interlude we started the baptismal lectures. These were not conducted in tents, but in alternative locations except where we had a local church building.

In the baptismal lectures, we presented the following subjects in detail, as they were important for church membership: 1. The body as the temple of God. Christian health and temperance, hygiene, and unclean foods. 2. Sabbath observance. 3. Christian stewardship. Tithes, offerings, and witnessing. 4. What it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist.

The final screening of persons who requested baptism took place in the homes.

This was also the place where many decisions to receive Jesus as Saviour were made in the presence of the extended family. In this way we maintained the family as a natural support group. As a result integration into the local church was to some extent simplified.

Basic beliefs

As a requirement for baptism each candidate was expected to believe and agree to the following six biblical teachings:

1. *The Trinity*. Belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. *Jesus the Saviour*. Recognition of oneself as a sinner and acceptance of Jesus as the only Saviour.

N*ewly*

baptized members have a network of significant people outside the church. We should consider how to use the newly baptized member as an entry point for witnessing to a network of new contacts.

3. *The Holy Bible*, God's Word, the basis of faith and the guide for life and conduct. This includes the Law of God with the Sabbath.

4. *God's church*, which the baptized join to be supported by regular attendance, witness to family and neighbors, and financial support through tithes and offerings.

5. *The body as a temple of the Holy Spirit*. Lifestyle issues, eating and drinking habits, and Adventist church standards.

6. *State of the dead*. Clear understanding that immortality is a gift from God. Death is a sleep from which we wake at the resurrection when Christ returns.

Financial considerations

The campaigns were run on a low budget. At the meetings we did not use any slides, projectors, overhead transparencies, films, special music, or other audiovisual helps.

The rented tents were basically awnings. They were adequate for our purposes but in no way luxurious. The audience sat on mats on the floor. The exceptions, those who sat on chairs (as noted in the previous article), illustrated the homogenous unit principle.

The only "prizes" for attendance were Bibles given to those who attended the baptismal classes. Those who were baptized received a church hymnal. Those were the biggest single expense items on the budget.

Per diem, traveling expenses, and room and board for all workers were kept to a minimum. The average expenditure for each person baptized was less than \$20. In financial terms we practiced economic constraints not only because of the limited budget we had, but because we wanted to show our local ministers that good evangelistic results need not require a large financial outlay. The key factor was the preaching of the Word of God powerfully, spiritually, and faithfully, coupled with giving meaningful pastoral care to those attending the meetings.

The evangelist's use or misuse of funds becomes a model for the local workers and members. From the beginning economy and openness were practiced. The congregation had a public announcement of the amount of the offering received the previous night. Each evening the offering was counted by two persons in an open manner. If a person gave tithe they received a receipt.

Overall, our evangelistic experience in Pakistan was a positive one. We learned much that could be adapted to future evangelistic enterprises both in cultures similar to that of Pakistan, and also in Western cultures. We found ourselves as blessed as anyone who attended the meetings. ■

*Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 188.

MINISTRY AND YOUNG ADULTS

I am a young adult. I am a Seventh-day Adventist. And I am frustrated. I am not alone in this. There are others like me. I wish we could be understood, but instead we are often misjudged and placed in categories that we feel trapped in.



Paul Haffner is an associate pastor of the Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church in Portland, Oregon.

Let me explain.

I have grown up in the Seventh-day Adventist bubble, enjoying all its luxuries and dealing with its very few disadvantages. Because of my youth, I was labeled as part of the “new generation”—the rebels. I have never felt like a rebel, not until now. I am now “out of the system” and am experiencing life under new rules.

The funny thing is, the standards I have chosen are closer to “old-time church standards” than my elder church members suspect. So it appears that they think I and others like me are worse off than we really are. We do take care of our bodies. We do want to help the community and world around us be a better place. We are not trying to be corrupt. We are taking our relationships with Christ seriously. We want to know God.

Unfortunately we sometimes get bogged down in the muck of church politics with our elders. The truth: we would like to be free of all the busyness and actually get busy. We are tired of sitting and not doing. We are willing

to work, but often our hands are tied because of unnecessary church traditions such as “sitting and talking and voting before doing.” We want to work. We are ready. Please ask us to get busy, but don’t ask us to be busy being busy.

I believe Christ was busy doing God’s work. He didn’t “jump through the hoops” or “go through the red tape.” He just got busy touching people’s lives. Many considered Him some kind of rebel.

I want to be the kind of person He was.—
Lisa, age 24

I have known Lisa since she was 14 when I taught her Bible in academy. Now she is a businessperson and has just moved into the area I pastor.

One day I discussed with her her attitudes toward the church. She spoke passionately. It was clear she loved the church, but was frustrated. Suddenly she stopped, turned to her computer, and wrote out the above statement (somewhat edited). Evidently she had been poring over her thoughts for some

P A U L H A F F N E R

time. Her attitude showed no malice. Her concern was authentic.

How many would agree with her conclusions about the church?

Follow me in my journey through young adult ministry and consider my observations. Focus on the idealism that Lisa reflects, as well as the respect, integrity, and involvement she wants so much from her church.

Idealism

Lisa's little essay reflects her idealism. She simply states that if indeed we are more interested in knowing God and touching people's lives, then we would cut through the red tape that demands so much of our energy. In essence, she is calling the church to be honest about its intent. Her idealism reflects the need for a vision-driven organization. While she is not an anarchist, she holds our feet to the fire in asking us to follow through in producing an organization that is more interested in God and people and less in maintaining a corporate structure.

The young adults with whom I've worked cannot understand why most of our vitality is used up in maintaining process rather than creating product. Church work, in their view, has more to do with running committees and less to do with actually leading a friend to a saving relationship with Christ. Many young adults become discouraged because their idealistic proposals for the church get bogged down in committees.

Young adults reason that we put our time into the things that are important to us. When they see many, even in church leadership, putting the lion's share of their time into processes, with little significant energy being spent on real ministry, they conclude that we care more about the organizational maintenance of the church than bringing our neighbors to Jesus.

The implications of this for pastors and other leaders are clear. We must focus the purpose of our churches in a worthwhile mission statement or rallying cry and then stick with it until it actually comes to life. Because our young adults breathe idealism, we must give them reason to know that their church is doing all it can to meet the ultimate, underlying objectives that really matter. It may be difficult to accept, but we must

embrace the idealism of our young adults allowing it to inspire and motivate us to action.

In my church, we have welcomed and encouraged the idealism of our young adults, trying to give it power to influence our trajectory. Over the past three years I have been responsible for our seeker ministry.* This ministry is an evangelistic outreach to our friends. We hold a weekly church service in which everything we say or do is targeted toward a person who doesn't know anything about church or God. The whole success of the ministry is based on people inviting their friends to church. We anticipated that the baby

Young adults
*want to be a part of a vision-
filled ministry. Can we give
them an opportunity?*

boomers would be the main supporters, but we were wrong. Interestingly enough, it has been the baby busters who have caught the vision. They have the courage to invite their friends to church because it is a church meeting their ideals—reaching out rather than just doing the drill.

If we're interested in reaching our young adults, we'll buy into their idealism. Their vision will take our churches into ministries that otherwise we would never think of.

Respect

Respect is a core value for young adults. Lisa clearly articulates the feelings she gets from some of the "elder church members." She feels she has been tagged as being rebellious by virtue of her youth, when in fact she considers herself to be quite in agreement with the church's doctrines and standards. The condescending spirit that tends to go with this sometimes unconscious categorizing saps the interest of many young

adults and discourages them from being a part of things in the church.

In our church the practical way to encourage our young adults has been to show respect through engendering their involvement. We have intentionally empowered the young adults to have real positions in the church, not just token ones. From our twenty-something treasurer who has more than \$2 million a year go through her hands to the drama ministry directors who are the key part of every Saturday night seeker service, many young adults are given respect by virtue of the positions they have been given.

When our young adults have proved themselves to be trustworthy in positions of responsibility and power, traditional condescending attitudes have changed significantly. The challenge is to encourage our church not to require the young adults to prove themselves before they can be respected. We must start by assuming they are trustworthy, and giving them a chance to show it.

In my situation I have noticed that young adults process truth relationally. The credibility of our doctrine is suspect if they are not given respect. As I observe the young adults on our church board, I've noticed that the actual viewpoints of other generations do not concern the young adults as much as their attitudes do. In other words, if they observe church members respecting them and others, they can deal with that. If the truth is spoken in disrespectful terms, they want to bail out.

Integrity

Part of Lisa's concern is that we are not actually doing what we say or profess to do. This is a question of integrity, and it creates a certain dissonance among us. If we really mean what we say and believe what we profess, then we will be people of integrity, *evaluating everything on the basis of the principles that underlie integrity.*

In my church we have experimented with some nontraditional ministries. Not surprisingly, they have raised a certain amount of controversy, with integrity being a key issue. I shall mention one case.

In the city I pastor, coffee is a major part of the social culture. One cannot drive a mile without passing several espresso stands and shops. People collect at these places to drink

and chat. So did some of the members of our church.

Several months ago some of our church members noticed this and decided to do something about it. They set up a refreshment bar in the unused basement of the church and leased a machine to serve "kosher" specialty drinks. Since then many friendships have been built around this ministry, with significant spiritual and personal interaction taking place at the refreshment bar.

But concern has arisen in the congregation surrounding the refreshment bar and among other things its relationship to the Adventist stand against caffeinated drinks. Although the drinks served in the basement are decaffeinated, some of the concern has remained. In the light of this a number of the young adults have felt that targeting the refreshment ministry, which hardly violates a health principle, while at the same time encouraging other church activities that definitively violate the same principle (such as serving larger portions of caffeine in hot chocolate at church fellowship dinners), comes across to them as being inconsistent and short on integrity.

Of course, the purpose of referring to this instance is not to discuss health reform issues, but to emphasize that young adults long for integrity, and it is crucial that we base decision-making in the church on principles of integrity rather than on traditionally acceptable church comfort zones.

Involvement

When I served as youth pastor here, a young man joined the youth group. He was a tremendous leader with a high aptitude for drama. When he graduated from college, he went to Russia for two years. Having learned the language, he came home to further his education with the intent of going back. But he came home with a deeper passion to become involved in the mission of the church. While in Russia he assumed leadership in a local congregation. Now that he is in the United States, he has a passion for his local mission field. He attends a local university and has made many friends—most of whom come from a secular, humanistic background. He shares with me the numerous conversations he has with his friends, and I am amazed at his courage as he shares his faith.

The one thing that motivates him is that he has a connection with a community to which he can feel free to invite his interested friends. He unabashedly shares with them what Christ means in his life and then invites some of them to church. Not coincidentally he has been a strong leader in developing the drama and other programming ministries for our outreach emphasis. The principle is clear: People support what they create.

So let young adults create new ministries. Take a risk. Encourage involvement even if the new ministry is unconventional. Invite the young adults to reach for the sky, because involvement combined with their unbridled idealism will light a fire for the entire church.

The need for involvement runs throughout Lisa's words. She craves to be a part of a meaningful mission. If it's not real and if the invitation to get involved is not serious,

chances are she will not become involved. If we're serious about letting young adults like Lisa become involved, and willing to deal with the concerns that we'll hear, they'll be right there! They want to be a part of the church.

The truth is that since Lisa wrote her thoughts, she has become involved in our seeker ministry. Her many talents and deep commitment have been a source of encouragement to everyone involved.

I've described one thing young adults have and three things they need. We need to give them the respect that tells them they are valuable. We need to provide a community tenacious about integrity. Then we must let them become involved and own the ministry to which God is calling them. ■

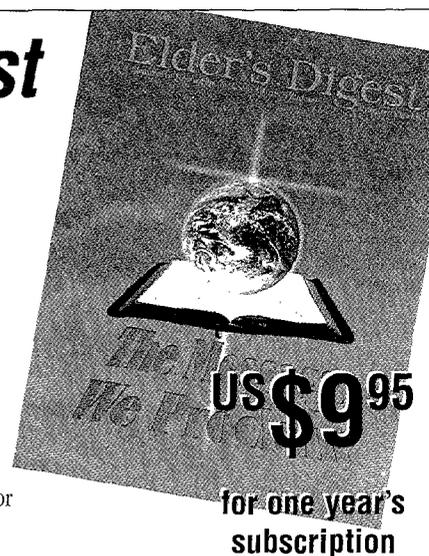
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YOUTH MINISTRY: LOOKING BEYOND THE PRESENT

No one can deny the importance of youth for the future of the church. For future leadership and every aspect of church growth, we are dependent on our youth.



D. C. Edmond is the director of youth ministries in the South Central Conference, Nashville, Tennessee.

Having said that, we need to ask ourselves the crucial question: Do we have a specific plan for the youth of our churches? Is the action in the local church inclusive enough to interest and challenge young people? *If we have something going, do we have a plan to evaluate and measure its success in terms of reaching young people and young adults?*

Youth ministries, to be successful, should take into consideration three different age groups: junior youth, senior youth, and young adults. Each is a different group and calls for a different approach.

Junior youth

Junior youth may be defined as children up to the age of 12 or 13. We used to list senior youth as starting at 16, but anyone who has had experience with a 16-year-old youth knows that that's when life gets rough and tough. The fact is the changes start well before 16.

Junior youth is the time before the onslaught; puberty, discovery of the opposite sex, the power of car keys and credit cards, the turbulences of the teenage years have

not yet arrived (although juniors carry their own set of problems).

At this point in their lives, juniors generally want to be involved and they enjoy spiritual things. Even more important, at this age they are still putting together habits that will become a part of their adult life.

Our challenge, then, is to imprint the things of Christ on the still-malleable clay of their young minds before time hardens the clay. Once the hardening sets in, it's more difficult to form good habits and easier to pick up bad ones.

A personal example will illustrate the point. I know many Bible verses by memory, entire passages in some cases. I learned most of these in my childhood and junior years. I can still hear my dad teaching me, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). Psalm 23, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and other gems became part of me from childhood learning, and they have stuck with me. But I can't tell you the last text I memorized as an adult. This is not because adulthood is antipathetic to learning. But as an adult, I can't seem to re-

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member things as I used to. I have a hard time remembering what I wore yesterday. But I've never forgotten the things I learned about God as a child.

We must, then, take advantage of childhood. That's why Sabbath school for our children is critical; Bible bowl is invaluable. It plants the Word in their hearts, when the ground is still fertile.

We reach juniors by allowing them to do things in the church—at their age, this is what they want. If you have the personnel, you need a junior choir, a junior usher board, a junior Adventist youth society.

Senior youth

Suddenly juniors are no longer juniors. They hit the senior line, and you have to beg, plead, threaten, and cajole them to get involved in the church. But even in this age group there's still a deep-down desire for spiritual things, even if it is hidden.

Young people in this age group (say, from 14 to the early 20s) often respond to Christ through a relationship with a committed, caring adult (a pastor, a youth leader, a Sabbath school teacher). They are more "relational." If I spend time with them when I'm out of the pulpit, they are more likely to respond to me when I'm in the pulpit.

A caring relationship is sometimes as simple as learning a person's name. Many pastors and church elders do not even know the names of many of the young people in their churches, even if a young person has been in the church for a long time. I was visiting a church one day, and a young woman came into the pastor's study. The pastor had been in that church a long time, and so had that young woman. But he did not know who she was. What kind of message did that young woman get from her pastor (who, by the way, is a good preacher)?

In this age group, young people have to have somebody in the church who cares about them and will take time for them. If church leaders are impersonal and too busy for them, they could get the impression that God too is impersonal and occupied with other things.

The young adults

The third group in youth ministries are young adults (from mid-20s to early 40s).

In some ways this group is even more difficult to reach than the teenagers. It is true that teenagers are the toughest audience. If you are preaching and not connecting with them, they are far less likely to feign interest. But at least they are there; they are still an audience.

Young adults, on the other hand, are far more likely not to be there at all, either because they are visiting somewhere, church-hopping, traveling, or just plain at home, because "the church isn't ministering to my needs."

The big disadvantage leaders have in dealing with young adults is their overall lack of institutional loyalty. In years gone by, people were more willing to support the church's various endeavors out of a sense of loyalty. I can't tell you how many times

Whatever

group we plan to reach, we must have a specific plan.

my father sat through evangelistic crusades and heard "Adam's Mother's Birthday" or "God wouldn't, the disciples couldn't, Jesus didn't—who did?" But he went anyway and brought others with him.

Now you try getting an average young adult to go into a hot, unair-conditioned tent and fight mosquitoes to hear a sermon that he's heard 10 times before.

Look around the church prayer meeting or the Sabbath school and see who's there. Generally it is not young adults. We don't get them unless there is a "buy-in" on their part. But that's not all bad. The old days might have been easier on church leaders in some ways because members tended to be more institutionally loyal and more uncritically supportive. But do we really need uncritical support? Is that healthy, anyway? That kind of uncritical faith and

belief is often more refreshing than the none-of-you-are-up-to-any-good cynicism that we frequently see today.

Loyalty has its place, but blind loyalty to concepts that don't work anymore isn't healthy in any organization. The young adults may not be, as a rule, as institutionally loyal, but they constantly force us to examine what we do and why we do what we do because they refuse to accept the status quo unquestioningly. Every organization needs people like that.

Young adults can be reached. We've tried a few things in our conference: singles' retreats and young adult retreats, parent support groups, exercise classes, stress management, weight control, and relevant Bible studies on Friday nights. The young adults are not going to support the church automatically en masse like their parents, but they will support it. Their support, both in finance and in service, is crucial to the church. We must aggressively seek them out.

Planning for youth ministries

Whatever youth group we plan to reach, we must have a specific plan. We must be willing to submit that plan to proper scrutiny and feedback. We cannot plan for the generations we have been speaking of without getting significant input from them. I personally recommend the "town meeting" approach, in which the leadership provides an opportunity for questions and feedback from those it seeks to lead.

We must be willing to change approaches (but not principles) over time. Evangelism is a classic example. The days of tents being the exclusive means of public evangelism are over, even if there are leaders who don't know that yet. We are now into NET 96—high-tech evangelism. Although there is a place for tents as we make room for electronic evangelism, the guiding principle—the gospel to all the world—remains the same.

Youth ministries, the task of preparing our young people for the kingdom, is too important to be left to people who are neither dedicated nor committed. We can't leave people in office, whether they be on the conference level or the local level, who aren't taking care of God's business with His young people. ■

TOWARD A CHRIST-CENTERED EXPRESSION OF OUR FAITH

For many years Seventh-day Adventists have been handicapped by the lack of a comprehensive volume which adequately defines their doctrinal position.” So wrote Walter Martin, an evangelical scholar and a specialist in cults, in his book *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*.¹



Norman R. Gulley, Ph.D., is professor of systematic theology at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee.

The book came out after Adventist scholars published *Questions on Doctrine*² in response to issues that were raised by Martin and Donald G. Barnhouse, then editor of *Eternity* magazine, on what Adventists actually believe. In his book Martin extended to Adventists the hand of full Christian fellowship.

That was 35 years ago. But there are still fellow Christians who question Seventh-day Adventist belief, and who persist in their suspicions that Adventists are somehow cultic. I would like to suggest one thing that could be done to ease this perception.

A few years ago Carl F. H. Henry, the evangelical theologian and founder of *Christianity Today*, visited the Southern Ad-

ventist University campus, where I teach. I asked him if the cult conception that some denominations have of Seventh-day Adventists could be overcome by placing our 27 fundamental beliefs in a logical, orderly, and, above all, Christ-centered arrangement. He indicated that it would.

In this article we will look at (1) some problems with the present expressions of our beliefs; (2) why a systematic rearrangement of those beliefs is necessary; and (3) how it could be done.

Problems to confront

The first problem we must confront involves the arrangement of our 27 fundamental beliefs. These beliefs are arranged as a

N O R M A N . G U L L E Y

chain of 27 links, each representing one tenet of our faith. The 27 links are joined in such a way as to give the appearance that each belief is of equal value. For example, the doctrine of the gift of salvation is placed tenth, and the doctrine of spiritual gifts is sixteenth.

This unintentionally seems to reduce Christ and His sacrifice to just one of many gifts God has given. It could also give the impression that to Adventists the gift of salvation is only important enough to be mentioned tenth in a list of 27 teachings.

The second problem concerns the apparent lack of logical order among the 27 expressions of our faith. There are three on Christ (4, 9, 23), not including the one on His second advent (24). Note the great distance between these three. A system would place them together.

The third problem has to do with chronology. The Son, as Redeemer (4), is presented before Creation (6). The creation of humankind (6) is presented before the great controversy (8). Yet chronologically the great controversy preceded Creation, and Creation preceded the coming of Christ as

Redeemer. One finds no stated reason for this arrangement.

A systematic solution

In recent years some have claimed to have discovered the true gospel outside our belief system. For example, a book published in 1990 entitled *Sabbath in Crisis* rejects the relevance of the seventh-day Sabbath for Christians. The author, Dale Ratzlaff, is a former Seventh-day Adventist minister who believes he has found the gospel in a way unexpressed in Adventist belief. This view of the gospel has led him to believe that the Sabbath is no longer needed.

Others on the opposite extreme have remained in the church but are incarcerated in legalism. They live by the letter of each one of the 27 beliefs, but without a living relationship with Christ. They are sincere, but as unhappy and divisive as the Pharisees of Christ's day. Every pastor is aware of this problem.

Those leaving the church for the gospel and those remaining in it without the gospel are equally faulty. The parable of the

prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) gives some insight into these two groups. Two prodigals emerge in the story: one who left for a fling and one who stayed and slaved. Upon returning home, the younger wanted to become a servant (verse 19); the older, who had stayed, was morose and dissatisfied with everything, including his father (verse 29). To serve as free sons was what both needed to discover.

Truth must be studied in the light of the One who is the truth (John 14:6), or it loses its power and becomes enslaving. When we know the truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 4:21), that truth will set us free (John 8:32) to be children of our Father.

Truth in its wholeness cannot be seen in a gospel that is divorced from the full expression of the beliefs that cluster around it. It is just as true, however, that truth is definitely not the beliefs of the Adventist Church minus the gospel. The messages of the three angels (Rev. 14:6-13) are joined to the everlasting gospel (verse 6). We must see our 27 beliefs in the setting of the gospel, or they are devoid of saving content.



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It is enlightening to review briefly the thinking of Ellen White on this element of the centrality of the gospel. Throughout her writing we find the phrase "the truth as it is in Jesus." It is a recurring refrain. Mrs. White also speaks about a system of truth. For example: "In every school established the most simple theory of theology

should be taught. In this theory the atonement of Christ should be the great substance, the central truth."³ "The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary."⁴ This is unmistakable, all-inclusive language. Every truth of the entire Bible must be studied in the light of Calvary.

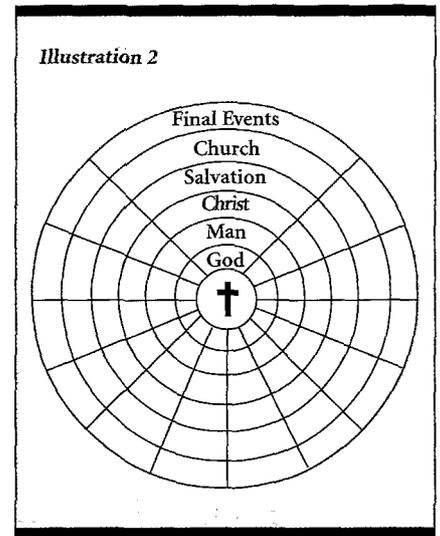
Furthermore, if all the 27 beliefs were clustered around Calvary and studied in the light of the cross, it would become evident that each of them can be understood only from that vantage point, and that each, in its deepest meaning, reflects the gospel. Pastors and members grasping the 27 beliefs in this context would not be tempted to jump the church to find the gospel elsewhere. There would be a great source and center of ultimate meaning for their faith.

Much more has been said of this need: "The knowledge of the Saviour's love subdues the soul, and lifts the mind above the things of time and sense. Let us learn to estimate all temporal things in the light that shines from the cross."⁵ "Let the cross of Christ be made the science of all education, the center of all teaching and all study. Let it be brought into the daily experience in practical life. So will the Saviour become to us a daily companion and friend."⁶ There is no balanced study of fundamental beliefs apart from viewing them in the light of Calvary.

The message given to us to proclaim to the world is the "eternal gospel" (Rev. 14:6; cf. Matt. 28:20), a message at the very heart of each aspect of our faith. There is no either-or here. It is not the 27 beliefs without the gospel; it is not the gospel without the 27 beliefs. We must hold the two together as a comprehensive whole. Presenting truth or doctrine without the cross may be likened to Cain's lambless sacrifice (Gen. 4:3-5). "Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world."⁷

A proposed rearrangement

Systematic theology has been divided into several major areas. The 27 beliefs can



be arranged in six major theological divisions (see Illustration 1). These are the doctrine of God (theology), the doctrine of humanity (anthropology), the doctrine of Christ (Christology), the doctrine of salvation (soteriology), the doctrine of the church (ecclesiology), and the doctrine of final events (eschatology). We propose that these six major divisions be arranged concentrically around the cross, with the nearest circle, the doctrine of God, beginning the six ever-widening circles, the last one being the doctrine of final events. In this way, each division and each fundamental belief within that division would be viewed from the core of Calvary.

The six concentric circles around the cross (see Illustration 2) give a chronological movement for the 27 beliefs that is not found in the present arrangement. The journey begins with the great controversy as the biblical worldview within which all truths unfold. It is necessary to begin with the great controversy theme, as this clearly spells out the sweep of sacred history from the beginning. The Trinity and Scripture are next. The doctrine of God follows, including the great controversy against Him, the Trinity who make up the Godhead, and their self-revelation in Scripture.

It is this God who created the human race and it is humanity who rebelled in Eden, necessitating the coming of Christ as a human being to save humanity. This saving process involves His life, death, resurrection, and present intercession. This work of salvation also involves the Holy Spirit, who brings Christ to human beings and

Illustration 1

Arrangement of the 27 Beliefs Within Six Major Theological Divisions

Doctrine of God (Theology) **Belief No.**
 1. Cosmic worldview 8
 2. Trinity 2, 3
 3. God's self-revelation to humanity 1

Doctrine of Humanity (Anthropology)
 4. Creation of the human 6
 4. Human nature 7

Doctrine of Christ (Christology)
 6. The Son 4
 7. Life, death, and resurrection 9
 8. Intercession 23

Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology)
 9. The Holy Spirit 5
 10. Experience of salvation 10
 11. Christian behavior 21

Doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology)
 The first six of these include basic beliefs Adventists hold in common with other churches; the last five are unique beliefs, with the exception of the law and spiritual gifts, which are included in the logical contexts of the Sabbath and Ellen G. White, respectively.
 12. The church 11
 13. Baptism 14
 14. The Lord's Supper 15
 15. Unity in the body of Christ 13
 16. Stewardship 20
 17. Marriage and family 22
 18. The remnant and its mission 12
 19. The law 18
 20. The Sabbath 19
 21. Spiritual gifts and ministries 16
 22. The gift of prophecy 17

Doctrine of Final Events (Eschatology)
 23. The Second Coming 24
 24. Death and resurrection 25
 25. The millennium 26
 26. The new earth 27

works within the minds of people, bringing about the reality of salvation, including mature Christian behavior. This is being done in the lives of numbers of people, who together form the church that practices baptism and the Lord's Supper, is united in the body of Christ, practices stewardship, and considers sacred both marriage and the family. God has an end-time remnant: His church who by faith keeps His law, including the Sabbath, and believes in spiritual gifts and ministries—including an eschatological prophetic gift.

We are moving through end-time history on to the second coming of Christ. In the meantime, each Christian's death is an event that brings them into unconsciousness as they await their coming Lord. All who die await the resurrection, either at the Second Advent for God's saints or final

the cross. All preceding events lead up to the cross, and all subsequent events flow from it. Calvary is the decisive and determining event that qualifies the whole story. It towers over all truth, and the highest place to study the 27 beliefs now and forever will be at the foot of the cross (see Illustration 3).

Advantages of this expression

The advantages of what we suggest here are twofold. First, the 27 beliefs are presented not as though they are separate doctrines, but as parts of an unfolding story. People may consider doctrine boring, but everyone identifies with a story. Doctrines by themselves can seem as lifeless as a skeleton. But clothe that skeleton with Christ, and it comes alive.

Second, the study of the 27 beliefs in the light of the cross⁸ changes lives. If the study of each one of the beliefs is seen as an opportunity to lift up the cross, Seventh-day Adventists will be known as genuine Christians because they are genuinely Christian.

Jesus said, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32, NIV). Only as the 27 beliefs are seen in the light of Calvary can they become exciting, have transforming power, and prepare a needy world for Christ's return. ■

¹Walter R. Martin, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1960), p. 47.

²*Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1957).

³Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 223.

⁴———, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 315.

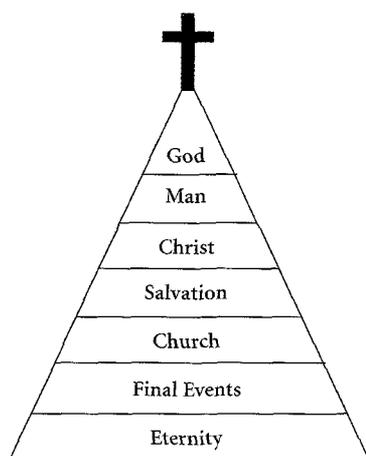
⁵———, *Lift Him Up* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1988) p. 248.

⁶———, in *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 17, 1906, p. 4.

⁷———, *Evangelism*, p. 188.

⁸To show how each fundamental belief is illumined by Calvary would take another article.

Illustration 3



Study of truth at the foot of Calvary forever

death at the end of the millennium for those outside of Christ. God's people will go to heaven at the beginning of the millennium to participate in the millennial judgment and return to a new earth to live with God forever.

In this way the 27 beliefs unfold chronologically as a story, from the beginning of the great controversy until its culmination in the new earth. This arrangement implies that the whole story was settled at

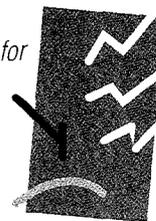
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All politics are local.” So said Tip O’Neill, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. The same is true for the church.

Effective, life-changing ministry occurs in local congregations, not bureaucratic structures or committee labyrinths.

Our world president, Robert S. Folkenberg, has a clear vision of this, as was evident during recent discussions he held with his staff. We identified issues upon which we ought to focus and the key results to expect. Out of this came a consensus that the local congregation is the site of real ministry.

I shared with the president my understanding of 13 key outcomes to expect from a proper focus on a local church-based ministry. As I now share them with you, see how they resonate with your own convictions and ministry priorities, then give me your feedback and I will pass it along to Pastor Folkenberg and to *Ministry* readers.

1. Members experience personal joy of salvation. I believe our people have no greater need than to experience a vibrant, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Indeed, stronger church life can be summed up in this reality: “He who has the Son has life” (1 John 5:12).*

2. Members experience hope in the reality and nearness of Christ’s coming. We are Adventists because of the Advent. The return of Jesus is not only our name. It is our reason for existence. Amid social, economic, and moral chaos, I long for my members to be confident in the blessed hope!

3. Members experience personal Sabbath rest. Far beyond the identification of the correct day of worship, it is essential to experience total rest in Jesus—mind, body, and soul. Resting securely in a saving relationship with the Lord of the Lord’s day is the essence of Sabbathkeeping.

4. Members experience joyful family relationships. Love in our marriages and with our families becomes a foretaste of fellowship throughout eternity in Christ’s kingdom. Bathed in this blessed hope, my members become willing to work through their difficult relationships instead of abandoning commitment. The resulting health of these home-based relationships will attract others to Jesus living in us.

5. Members experience fellowship of all believers together. I want my members to live a love that transcends barriers of nationality, race, tribe, age, gender, or social status. “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

Where the action is

JAMES A. CRESS

6. Members experience ownership of the church’s mission. What a victory if my members see their church as more than just the place to be on Sabbath. Going beyond mere belief in the church’s mission, I want them to experience personal investment in mission. This involves their time, their talents, their energy, and their funds.

7. Members receive motivation, empowerment, and equipment for ministry. The work of the pastor is to foster the work of members. I long for pastoral leaders (both clergy and laity elders who serve in ministerial functions) to view as their first task the training of believers into becoming disciples.

8. Members receive permission and encouragement to serve their surrounding community. We have too much isolationistic judgment of society and too little involvement in our neighborhoods.

Jesus saw the church as salt and light to the world. So let’s get out of the saltshaker and into the world.

9. Members experience success in evangelism. Harvesting souls for the kingdom is the business of every believer, not just professional evangelists. I long for my members to experience the joy of conversion in people for whom they personally labor. If we wait for the professionals to fulfill the gospel commission, we will wait in our graves. “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Luke 10:2).

10. Members learn discernment and discretion. Scripture admonishes: “Test everything. Hold on to the good” (1 Thess. 5:21). When my members are bombarded by spurious tales and sensational conjectures, I long for discretion that separates every wind of doctrine or devilish rumor from the truth as it is in Jesus.

11. Members teaching kingdom values to the coming generation. The purpose of our extensive parochial educational system—a partnership of teachers, parents, and pastors—must be to develop individuals who think God’s thoughts and live God’s way. Our students learn from our priorities those values in which they will invest their future.

12. Members express confidence in God’s leading. As we recall divine providence throughout our history and His continued presence moving us toward the victorious conclusion of the great controversy, we can fearlessly rejoice that “all His biddings are enablings.”

13. Members served by pastors who lead as visionaries of greatness for God, facilitators of deepness in spiritual maturity, and enablers of real-life service to others. This is the pastor I want to be, and it is my prayer that this is the pastoral ministry you will experience. ■

* Texts are from the New International Version.

Homesick for a story

Continued from page 4

sense of any bewildering event that arrived, while it still provided meaning and even wonder to the disciples.

It is exactly here that the most significant challenge surfaces for today's pastor. In Christ we are keepers of the soul, and as such we are called to be keepers of the story and the meaning. In Christ we are called to come upon our anxious scene, at first perhaps unrecognized and initially judged to be on the ignorant side (Luke 24:18, 19). We must walk along as companions to a rather bewildered generation, bringing meaning back to the biblical stories of the anguished hearts of people.

I think I sense the imposing dimensions of such an assignment. After all, we ministers, like the two disciples, have our share of the prevailing bewilderment. Yet I believe that taking up this assignment lies at the center of "present truth" for today's Christian minister.

For such a thing to happen, it is crucial that we first feel and honestly acknowledge our own dilemma as we move along the road to Emmaus. Above everything, it is ultimately crucial that we ourselves encounter the Stranger and come to hear with burning hearts His explanation of the moment to which our world has come. Recognizing Him in the midst of it all, we will run back down the road not to join the politically correct clerics who created the disillusionment in the first place, but instead to make the road of perplexity the way of enlightenment. We can run toward Jerusalem telling the fullness of a fresh story, filled with a meaning that has come warm from the lips of the Master Himself. ■

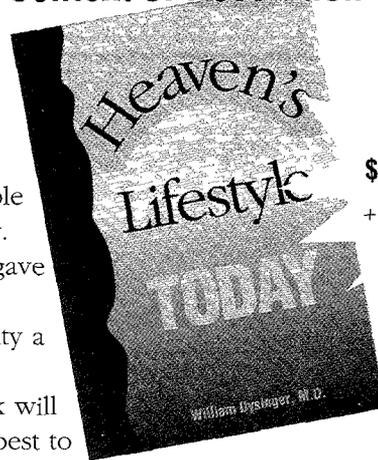
¹ Regis A. Duffy, *An American Emmaus* (New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 1995), p. 1.

² Laurens van der Post, *The Heart of the Hunter* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1980), p. 171.

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When You're Serious About Love. Kay Kuzma. Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993. \$10.99.

The author writes in a very open, up-front manner that is easy to read. She helps the reader sort through their own expectations as she discusses many topics, some of which are how to know if you're dating the right person for you, warning signs of a potential future abuser, taking a personal inventory of your expectations in a marriage, how to be the right mate for someone else, enjoying the single life, differences in temperaments, how to break up and still be friends, premarital sex, 16 steps to intimate bonding in a relationship, courtship, and communicating.

This book is a must for all teenagers, young adults, and adults whether married or single. It's an excellent resource for pastors, counselors, teachers, and youth workers.—Celia Mejia Cruz, General Conference Women's Ministries, Silver Spring, Maryland.

The Jesus I Never Knew. Philip Yancey (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Pub. House, 1995).

For years my heart was kept aloof from the Nazarene lest He get too close and discover the truth: that I did not measure up to His holy standard. But then came the moment when my eyes opened to His unconditional love. Now enters Yancey. He presents Jesus from a contemporary perspective, so fresh and alive that I can see Him walking the streets of my own community. I see Him as a revolutionary challenging the values and systems of my society. I see Him as a strong man with great love and compassion.

For me, the most important passage of the book came near the end. "The story of Jesus is the story of a celebration, a story of love. It involves pain and disappointment, yes, for God as well as for us. But Jesus embodies the promise of a God who will go to any length to win us back. Not the least of Jesus' accomplishments is that he made us somehow lovable to God" (p. 269). Yancey has confirmed what I already had

discovered for myself: that Jesus speaks to men and women of every age, and that His message is always the same: *I love you.*

Yancey has written of Jesus in a way that can speak to those hearts that may have grown weary of hearing the story. Pastors could use it to warm their own souls or to share with seekers.—Steve Willsey, associate pastor, Spencerville church, Silver Spring, Maryland.

The Return of the Prodigal Son: The Story of Homecoming. Henri J. M. Nouwen. New York: Continuum, 1995. 130 pages. Hardcover.

Henri Nouwen rethinks the familiar story of the prodigal son in Luke's Gospel in conversation with Rembrandt's great painting of the moment of return. The interaction of gospel and canvas brought another voice to the conversation: Nouwen's own spiritual journey. The result is revelatory! And this reviewer found himself drawn into the conversation with the script in his own spiritual narrative. I found in myself both profligate son and elder brother, rejoicing in the grace offered, and the love given. And more: There comes a new awareness of Christ's invitation to become as welcoming as the father. There is in this slim volume not only much to preach and teach, but much to experience of healing and calling. The living Lord reaches out through this fresh commentary on a familiar but magnificent old story.—Andy McRae, associate pastor, Sligo church, Takoma Park, Maryland.

She Calls Me Daddy: Seven Things Every Man Needs to Know About Building a Complete Daughter. Robert Wolgemuth. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing. \$15.29, hardcover.

Although the glossy dust jacket blurbs and tributes to Bill Hybels, Gary Smalley, Steve Green, and Orel Hershiser suggest otherwise, I think *She Calls Me Daddy* merits attention, but not the fuss suggested by the cover and dust jacket.

The author, a former marketing and publishing executive and now head of a

talent agency, is the father of two grown daughters who apparently turned out very well. *She Calls Me Daddy* is Wolgemuth's sincere and often amusing collection of wit, wisdom, anecdotes, and practical suggestions about a father's special relationship and obligations to a daughter.

Wolgemuth offers seven areas in which a father of a "complete" daughter must give special emphasis. These are protection, conversation, affection, discipline, laughter, faith, and conduct.

Among the many likable parts is Wolgemuth's clear tribute to the usefulness of spanking, in an age when some would like to demonize or even criminalize this time-tested resource for the public good. His point will resonate well with anyone who rightly objects to the ignorant—or worse, deliberate—confusion in terminology between "spanking" for discipline and "hitting" for revenge.

Particularly helpful aspects of the book include his inclusion of tested, practical family games and activities that contribute to healthy development. For example, in an effort to encourage self-discipline, Wolgemuth family members reported every evening at the supper table one tempting thing they each said no to during the day. Wolgemuth also provides a helpful checklist summary of his main points at the end of each chapter.

A little too often for most readers' patience, the author includes long illustrations or amusing anecdotes only tenuously connected to his point, as though his editor felt a need to bulk up an otherwise slim chapter.

She Calls Me Daddy is a cute read. For baby boomer fathers who weren't themselves victims of Benjamin Spock and other unnatural family disasters, much of what Wolgemuth says may seem commonplace. Unfortunately, evidence in the church foyer suggests that a huge part of a generation must relearn some of the common sense that guided thoughtful, godly parenting through the ages. Wolgemuth's book is a good way to start.—Ronald Alan Knott, Takoma Park, Maryland.

International Congress of Preaching

Many outstanding preachers of the English-speaking world will be featured at the first International Congress on Preaching, April 22-25, in London, England, at historic Westminster Chapel.

Speakers include George Carey, Archbishop of Canturbury; John R. W. Stott, famed British evangelical writer and preacher; O. S. Hawkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas; Frank Harrington, pastor, Peachtree Presbyterian Church, Atlanta; and William Hinson, pastor, First Methodist Church, Houston; and many others.

The Congress, sponsored by *Preaching* magazine and the American Academy of Ministry, will include addresses on the theme "Hold High the Word," plus sermons and practical workshops on preaching. According to Michael Duduit, Congress director, the focus will be on "encouraging the preacher and providing new skills and insights that will advance and strengthen biblical preaching as we enter a new millenium."

The cost is \$195 per person (\$100 for participating spouses). Discounted hotel and airline packages are available. For more information, contact *Preaching* at 1-800-288-9673 or 901-668-9633, or write to International Congress on Preaching, P.O. Box 369, Jackson, TN 38302-0369. Inquires may be faxed to 901-668-9633.

Online preaching tools for church leaders

You have just been asked to preach next month, and you're unable to come up with anything you're sure you want to speak about. There are several subjects you're interested in, but how do you find enough information to help flesh out your ideas? If you have ever found yourself in such a position, here is a new resource for pastors: If you have local access to the Internet, there is a wide variety of material that can greatly aid in sermon or Sabbath school class preparation—and it's all free! The Internet can provide you with a virtual electronic library of material that will make sermon preparation easier and quicker and more

in-depth. Here are several starting resource tools:

Ellen G. White writings. If the overwhelming amount of Spirit of Prophecy material has ever hindered you from exploring her thoughts on certain topics, you need no longer worry. It is now possible to search and examine the complete published writings of Ellen G. White via the Internet—without even having to purchase the Spirit of Prophecy CD-ROM. In minutes you can search for Mrs. White's thoughts on temperance, baptism, or whatever topic you're researching. All you have to do is type in the word, and in minutes you can examine or download her statements. You can access these writings through the World Wide Web or by Telnet. Via World Wide Web, contact <http://www.egwestate.andrews.edu>. The Telnet address is aubranh.egwestate.andrews.edu (log in as "guest").

Online Bible concordances. If you are having difficulty finding a certain verse even when you have a good concordance handy, the Bible Gateway has a search program that allows you to search up to six different versions of the Bible. Simply type in the key word, and it will give you every place in the Bible where that word is found. The Bible Gateway can be found at <http://www.gospelcom.net/bible>.

Vine's New Testament Word Search. W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* is another gold mine of material free on the Internet. If you have ever had difficulty finding the meaning of a particular word in Scripture, resources such as Vine's give you the biblical meaning of those words. This Bible study tool can now be found at <http://www.iclnet.org/clm/menus/verse.html>.

Nave's Topical Bible. Considered one of the best tools for topical Bible study, *Nave's Topical Bible* is also available on the Internet. Nave's is more than a concordance; it is an idea book that allows you to see what the Bible has to say on more than 20,000 topics. Simply type in the topic you are studying (women, worship, etc.), and you will find the most signifi-

cant references for each topic. This excellent resource can be found at <http://www.goshen.net/~brudis/ntb>.

Matthew Henry's Commentary. Another source of help on the Internet is *Matthew Henry's Commentary*. This commentary set has provided sound biblical interpretation for sermons and study for nearly 300 years. *Matthew Henry's Commentary* can be located at <http://wheaton.edu/henry/mhc/mhc.html>.

Sermon stories and illustrations. We are often in urgent need of finding a fresh illustration or story for a sermon. Now we can access hundreds of stories, illustrations, quotations, poems, and more through several sites on the Internet. The Baptist Bible Fellowship provides a combination of sermons, stories, and illustrations and can be found at <http://www.bbfi.org/sermons.html>.

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Christian Classics. The Christian Classics Ethereal Library contains many books that can be read online or downloaded. At this site you can find the works of Augustine, John Bunyan, John Calvin, C. H. Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards, and more. If you are interested in church history, you can find the complete 38 volumes of the early Church Fathers. These books are available at <http://ccl.wheaton.edu>.

Adventist Connections. Looking for late-breaking Adventist news, history, addresses of other SDA institutions or churches on the Internet? The SDA World Church home page is found at <http://www.cuc.edu/sdaorg/gc>. A list of various SDA organizations (not all are officially approved) and churches can be obtained from Adventist Connections at <http://www.andrews.edu/inst.html>.

It will take time to become acquainted with these tools, but when the essentials are mastered, a pastor may well begin to wonder how he or she ever got on without this comprehensive library literally in fingertip range.—Pastor Carl P. Cosaert, Albert Lea, Minnesota.

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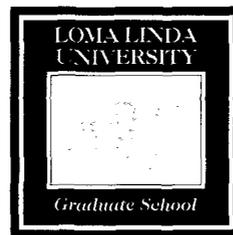
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