

MINISTRY

International Journal for Pastors

January 2003



Celebrating 75 Years of
Ministry Magazine

God's Word:

ITS ORIGIN AND AUTHORITY

*The First of An Extended Series on The Faith
of Seventh-day Adventists*

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MINISTRY

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THE CURRENT DATA OF SCIENCE. IF OUR INTERPRETATIONS
ARE CORRECT, POINT TO THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF
GENERATING LIFE AND ITS DIVERSITY BY RANDOM MEANS,
EVEN WITH THE HELP OF A NATURAL SELECTION.

Organizational misconduct

Thank you for sending *Ministry* alternate months. James A. Cress did a magnificent task in writing on "Organizational Misconduct." The Scriptures are very clear on this subject. It is sad that the "church" has overlooked and continues to head in the direction of "abuse of power and position." Such failure to disclose misconduct and even unproven accusations is *unconscionable and unscriptural*.

—Wilmer R. Witte, Grandville, Michigan.

Ministry, September 2002

I really appreciate the stimulating articles in *Ministry* magazine, and also the fact that I receive the magazine free of charge. It is a great help and encouragement.

I'm not being negative, but I want to comment on something that has always intrigued me. An advertisement for the *Elder's Digest*, featured in your September edition, showed a fairly typical portrayal of Jesus, complete with long hair. Yet Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:14 that it is a disgrace for a man to have long hair. I realize that this is a cultural thing, but if that was the culture at the time, then surely Jesus must have had short hair. And yet so many biblically based publications insist on portraying Jesus with long hair. A case of tradition overruling the Bible?

—Ifor Williams, Haverfordwest,
Pembrokeshire, Wales, United Kingdom.

The plaintive cry of the editorial in the September *Ministry* calling for dialog between prophetic and theolog-

ical thinkers calls for immediate action. Longstanding walls of status and ego have stood between pastors, administrators, and theologians that silence any opportunity to share and rediscover together the valuable biblical truths unique to Adventists . . .

What we need are pastors, theologians, and leaders willing to admit when they are wrong. That means periodic sessions where they humbly sit together, focusing on specific critical passages, allowing their words to bring the group into joyous unity. Now is the time.

—Norman L. Meager, Lima, Ohio.

Editorial Note: *There is certainly a need for pastors, theologians, and church leaders to dialogue. However, the appeal of the September editorial was more along the lines of pastors, theologians, and church leaders integrating within themselves as individuals a simultaneous and holistic theological and prophetic approach to the Bible, uninhibitedly giving both the theological and prophetic their just part to play in the quest for truth. Doing this would go far in bringing us together as pastors, theologians, and church leaders.*

Mike Parson ("Letters," September 2002) is correct in saying that "shoddy and misleading scholarship" exists in both science and religion. He is also correct in saying that those who, like this writer, hold that life has existed on earth for a short time are making a faith statement that has only scant support scientifically.

However, Parsons is repeating a mis-

leading "defense" of materialism, often heard when Darwinists are confronted with the facts. The current data of science, if our interpretations are correct, point to the impossibility of generating life and its diversity by random means, even with the help of natural selection. When Parsons states that "a physical or biological system can move to a state of increased order as long as it receives energy from outside," he joins Darwinists in ignoring the fact that this statement is untrue unless there is a program in place; a program that directs the deployment of the energy so that the normal trend toward disorder is reversed.

To give only one example, a dead badger at the side of the road is "receiv(ing) energy from outside", that is, from the sun. However, we never see the badger's body "move to a state of increased order." This is because the program that directs the use of energy in the badger (its DNA) is no longer operable. It is the generation of this DNA program that Darwinists cannot explain, except by storytelling and hand-waving. They are unwilling to admit that, with today's data and today's knowledge of natural processes, the existence and operation of the DNA code and the cell are, quite simply, inexplicable.

How did life come to be on this earth? Empirical data alone does not give us a conclusive answer. But, given what we do know and what we are learning about life and its processes, the scientific evidence points away from the

continued on page 29

Free Subscription

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.

Seventy-five years!

Anyone glancing at this month's cover will know that 2003 is a milestone year of celebration for *Ministry* magazine. (Please notice the "75" logo on the cover, following the word *Ministry*.) Seventy-five years ago this month *Ministry's* first issue was dispatched to approximately 1,200 Seventh-day Adventist ministers in North America. Thus this issue is the magazine's nine hundred and first, or approximately so.

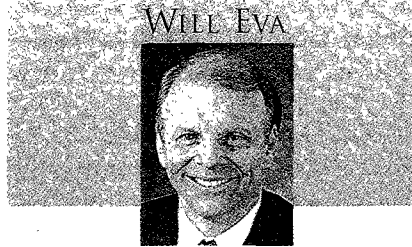
Today, *Ministry* reaches about 50,000 clergy from a large variety of denominations, and 20,000 Adventist ministers and others. Along with these statistics, for the first time in the magazine's history, in 1999, the number of Adventist ministers receiving *Ministry* outside North America surpassed the number receiving it on the parent continent. This is a trend that only promises to grow, given the increasing use of the English language in much of the world, and above all, the exponential growth of the Adventist Church outside of North America.

Added to this is the fact that this month marks the first time in *Ministry's* history when it will be translated into the French language, especially for the sake of our many ministers in French-speaking Africa and the Indian Ocean islands. This French-African edition will be circulated quarterly.

So, how will we be celebrating our 75th anniversary?

Starting with Jo Ann Davidson's fine article in this issue, "The Word of God: Its Origin and Authority," we are planning to publish, month by month throughout this year and through 2004, a unique expression of the Seventh-day Adventist faith. We will be presenting articles that affirm and develop Seventh-day Adventist expressions of faith or doctrinal belief.

We recognize that this kind of ven-



ture is not unprecedented. The Ministerial Association of the General Conference was itself involved some years ago in the publication of the book *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*.

Thus, when it comes to the pattern, and to a degree the purpose of this celebrative expression of faith, we will do it with some added elements in mind. We hope that this will offer a distinct contribution to the collective thinking of our community of faith, and especially to the personal faith of Seventh-day Adventists and other interested persons everywhere. With the cooperation of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute, *Ministry* plans to:

- ◆ Above all, express Seventh-day Adventist faith and doctrine in an unequivocally Christocentric way. We recognize the challenge of adding this element to our approach, but see it to be imperative to the development and maturation of Adventist faith.

- ◆ Make this celebrative venture an international one. Writers from all over the globe will be carefully chosen to write on a given aspect of Adventist faith. Thus the collective contribution of our venture will not be so much the work of one or two persons, or indeed merely of a committee, but to a degree, of the international community of Seventh-day Adventist ministers and theologians.

- ◆ Express or represent Seventh-day

Adventist faith authoritatively, accurately, and definitively. At the same time we will intentionally attempt to commission recognized, centrist writers from across the spectrum of Seventh-day Adventist thinking and outlook.

- ◆ Render an expression of Adventist belief that is contemporary and relevant. We fervently hope that these articles will be inspirational to the reader. Besides this, it is important that we let our readers know that we have responsibly contemplated some of the challenges facing the Adventist faith.

- ◆ Write these articles so that they can be understood by the lay person. This is important because, once complete, we would like to take the combined work done in *Ministry*, that is, all the articles published in the next two years, and publish them in a compiled book form, which we plan to release in mid-2005.

We firmly believe that no faith can live long while it remains set, static, and formulated. This was a view held very dear and unequivocal in the hearts of our ancestors in the faith. Faith, by its nature, is dynamic and developmental. At the same time, by its nature, the same faith rests on immovable certainties and verities that must be allowed to shine in the heart and eye of each successive generation.

Looking at all the aspects we are attempting to blend into this celebrative 75th anniversary project, we realize that we have set ourselves a stimulating challenge. In light of this, we genuinely plead for the presence and guidance of our Lord, and for the prayers, support, and candid comments of our *Ministry* family.

We would like nothing more than to make a genuine contribution to our collective mind, soul, and heart, as we move toward the ultimate moment of truth: the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. ■

God's Word: Its origin and authority

JO ANN DAVIDSON



Editorial Note: This article is the first in an extended series (throughout 2003 and 2004) that seeks to express the elements of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists in a Christocentric way. Throughout this series Ministry will use the statements of belief found on pages 5 to 8 of the 2002 Yearbook of the Church. The first belief of Seventh-day Adventists discusses the Bible. It says:

"The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to humanity the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history."

Why do Christians insist on the "absolute" nature of the Bible? The question involves a precise appraisal of the fundamental assumptions and parameters within which the many Bible writers wrote. These are often stated explicitly.

For example, none of the Bible writers ever attempts to prove the existence of God. Without exception, they all assume He exists. Biblical prophets openly claim to have real knowledge of an infinite God. They are absolutely certain God was speaking through them when they thundered, "Thus says the Lord!"

Fleming Rutledge is correct: "The witness of the Bible is that every other god under the sun is a product of human consciousness except only the God of the Old and New Testaments. Whether we believe this or not, we must admit that it is an awesome claim. I am more convinced than ever that the

Scriptures set before us something, or rather some One, who is far beyond anything the unassisted human imagination could dream up."

God's self-disclosure

Moreover, all the Bible writers believe that God is truly who He declares Himself to be. For example, God insists that He can foretell the future, and that doing so is a mark of His divinity: "'Present your case,' says the Lord. 'Bring forth your strong reasons,' says the King of Jacob. 'Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; let them show the former things, what they were, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare to us things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods. . . . I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to graven images. Behold the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them. . . . Indeed before the day was, I am He; and there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who will reverse it?'" (Isa. 41:21-23; 42:8, 9; 43:13, NKJV).

Through the prophets God announced the great time prophecies

concerning the history of nations and also the coming of the Messiah. There are some who assume God could not be so precise, and so claim that the prophecies were written after the fact as if they were predictions. This attitude or view of God, this questioning of His ability to predict and control the future, is never found in any of the Bible writings.

Furthermore, the biblical writers were absolutely certain that the infinite God can and does communicate with finite human beings. They never argued that human language was any kind of a barrier to direct communication from or with God. In fact, with great frequency God is referred to as the actual Person speaking through the prophet.

For example, Elijah's words in 1 Kings 21:19 are referred to in 2 Kings 9:25-26 as the oracle that "the Lord uttered . . . against him" (RSV). Elijah is not even mentioned in the 2 Kings passage. The message of a prophet was always considered equivalent to direct speech from God. In fact, this identification of a prophet's words with God's words is so strong in the Old Testament that often we read of God's speaking "through" a prophet, and disobeying a prophet's word was tantamount to disobeying God.

In Deuteronomy 18:19, the Lord speaks of the coming prophet, through Moses: "Whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him" (RSV). And when Saul disobeyed Samuel's command at Gilgal, Samuel rebuked him: "You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which he commanded you . . . now your kingdom shall not continue . . . because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you" (1 Sam. 13:13, 14, RSV).

Direct speech

The Bible writers also record numerous incidents of God speaking directly to human beings in the Old Testament, including conversations with Adam and Eve after the Fall (Gen. 1:28-30; 3:9-19) and with Job (Job 38-41). There is also the divine call of Abram (Gen. 12:1-3), the first of several conversations with him; the burning bush dialogue between God and Moses. The civil code

al information (Deut. 29:29). Indeed, it is striking that one Person of the triune God is known as the Word.

The written Word

Closely connected with God's direct speech, one finds numerous accounts of a prophet writing down the words of God, which are then taken as fully authoritative. A few examples can sensitize us to this crucial reality: "The Lord

humans, divine revelation is never controlled by human beings. It is not a human achievement, but primarily a divine activity. What we find in Scripture is neither a collection of penetrating intuitions of divinity nor a discovery of profound human insights.

Both Testaments consistently testify that the truth of God is not the end product of a diligent human search for the divine, or somebody's best thoughts about lofty matters. It comes exclusively through God's initiative as He discloses Himself to humanity. We are not taught that a prophet speaks about God. Rather, God speaks for Himself through His prophets, and human language is assumed to be capable of conveying divine communication. All the biblical writers insist that God made Himself and His acts known.

The New Testament apostles write with the same absolute authority as the Old Testament prophets; insisting that they speak by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:10-12), to whom they credit the content of their teaching (1 Cor. 2:12, 13). Significantly, the same Paul who urges that believers seek to work together peaceably, often uses harsh language to defend the absolute truth of the gospel he has preached (Gal. 1:6-9). In fact, apostolic teaching is very "directive," issuing commands with the strongest authority (1 Thess. 4:1-2; 2 Thess. 3:6, 12—"we command you").

The prophets and apostles do not describe how they recognized the "word of God" when it came, but it is clear they were certain that God had spoken. Even when sometimes God spoke in ways they did not fully understand, and on occasion even objected to, they never questioned the divine origin of the message.

The Bible, however, was not verbally dictated by God. Human messengers were divinely guided in the selection of apt words to express divine revelation, and thus the prophetic words are called the Word of God. The individuality of each writer is evident, yet the human and divine elements are virtually inseparable.

Ellen White offers an intriguing

JESUS EXPECTED OTHERS TO ACCEPT THE OLD TESTAMENT AS AUTHORITATIVE.

in the Pentateuch is recorded as words spoken directly by God to Moses. The interchange with Elijah at Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:9-18) is but one of many direct exchanges with the prophets.

The Old Testament prophets are consistently pictured as messengers sent by God to speak His words. The repeated use of the introductory formula, "Thus says the Lord"—or its equivalent, used thousands of times, clinches the full authority of the prophetic message. In fact, a distinguishing characteristic of true prophets is that they do not merely speak their own words.

Throughout the Old Testament, the point is repeatedly underscored that prophetic speech came from God. God said to Moses: "I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak" (Exod. 4:12, RSV; cf. 24:3); to Jeremiah and Ezekiel: "I have put my words in your mouth" (Jer. 1:9, RSV); "You shall speak my words to them" (Ezek. 2:7, RSV; cf. 3:27). And people who refused to listen to a prophet were held accountable for refusing to listen to "the words of the Lord which he spoke" through the prophet (Jer. 37:2, RSV).

Such extensive evidence strongly suggests that biblical prophets experienced something far more than a "divine encounter" that merely implanted a mystical conviction and/or admiration for God in their hearts. God does not just encounter human beings with glorious feelings but also with actu-

said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book." "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Exod. 17:14; 24:4, RSV); "When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book, to the very end" (Deut. 31:24, RSV); "Joshua wrote these words [statutes, ordinances, and the words of the covenant renewal, verse 25] in the book of the law of God" (Josh. 24:26, RSV). "Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship; and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord" (1 Sam. 10:25, RSV).

Thus even the recording process is divinely directed with the penman being "moved" or "impelled" by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). This written communication thereby has divine authority, as Moses testified: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it; that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deut. 4:2, RSV).

The nature of God's revelation is diverse. In addition to speaking directly with human beings, God also employed other supernatural methods: angels (Daniel); theophanies (Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Moses, Paul, John); dreams (Joseph, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar); supernatural writing (Exod. 31:18; Dan. 5:5); a voice from heaven (Exod. 19:9; Matt. 3:17; 2 Pet. 1:17).

Divine activity

Though closely involving chosen

insight: "The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us'" (John 1:14).²


Continuity and unity in the Scriptures

A careful reading of the biblical text also reveals a basic continuity and unity in both Testaments. The extensive citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament indicate that the Old Testament writings were considered by New Testament writers to be a divine revelation.

A few of the hundreds of examples include: Isaiah's words in Isaiah 7:14, which are cited as "what the Lord had spoken by the prophet" (Matt. 1:22; RSV); Jesus quotes Genesis 2:24 as words that God said (Matt. 19:5); He speaks of "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4, RSV). Words of Scripture are said to be spoken by the Holy Spirit. In quoting "what was spoken by the prophet Joel" in Joel 2:28-32, Peter inserts "says God," attributing to God the words of Joel (Acts 2:16, 17). Isaiah 9:6 is quoted by Paul and Barnabas as something that "the Lord commanded us," contending that an Old Testament prophecy placed moral obligation on them also. Paul writes that the Holy Spirit spoke through the prophet Isaiah (Acts 28:25). He also quotes God's speech in Exodus 9:16 as what "scripture says to Pharaoh," indicating an equivalence between what Old Testament Scripture says and what God says.

Just as we saw in the Old Testament, New Testament writers also knew it was possible for God to speak directly to people in human language. This is evidenced by the account of the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22); the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35; 2 Peter 1:17, 18); in the conversion of Saul (Acts 9:4); in instructions to Ananias (Acts 9:11-16); in

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 on its 75th Anniversary



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Peter's vision (Acts 10:13); to Paul on his journeys (Acts 18:9-10; 23:11); and in the revelation to John (Rev. 1:11-3:22).

Jesus' view of the Old Testament

Jesus Himself insists on numerous occasions that He speaks the word of God. For example: "The Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49, RSV). Paul claims to have received a revelation from God: "If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

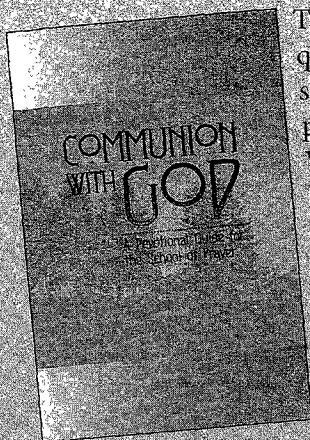
The minds of the New Testament writers are saturated with the Old Testament. They refer to it often, and quote it extensively to undergird their theological arguments. The four Gospels make it strikingly obvious that Jesus Christ submitted unreservedly to the Old Testament and confirmed its absolute authority for others. In His teaching and ethics it was foundational.

Old Testament prophecy was the pattern for His life, as He often declared: "It must be fulfilled," as it is written. He rebuked the Jewish theologians of His time not for studying the Old Testament, but for permitting human tradition to cloud and even falsify God's written Word (Mark 7:1-13).

Further, Jesus expected others to accept the Old Testament as authoritative. Often He would inquire: "Have you not read what David did . . . have you not read in the law . . ." (Matt. 12:3-5, NKJV). When questioned on the issue of divorce, He answered, "Have you not read . . ." (19:4, NKJV). His response to those upset by children praising loudly in the temple was, "Have you never read . . ." (21:16, NKJV). Once when His authority was being questioned Jesus told a parable, concluding it with these words: "Have you not read this Scripture . . ." (Mark 12:10, NKJV).

Responding to a lawyer's question about salvation, Jesus asked: "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" (Luke 10:26, NKJV). The lawyer

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answered with a direct quote from the Ten Commandments, and Jesus said: "You have answered right . . ." Answering the Sadducees' inquiry about marriage in heaven, He said: "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures . . . have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying . . ." (Matt. 22:29-31).

The prominent Pharisee Nicodemus sought Jesus out one night. While discussing His mission, Jesus questioned Nicodemus, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not know these things?" When asked about last-day events on the Mount of Olives Jesus urged His questioners to read Daniel in order to understand (Matt. 24:15).

The factual and historical reliability of the Bible

The apostle Paul intensifies this pattern of referring to the Old Testament and insisting on its authority. For example, in his Roman letter, he built a

powerful argument, showing that the foundation of the gospel is to be found in the Old Testament, and in the process Paul demonstrates the paramount principle of listening to what Scripture says about itself.

Moreover, while it is sometimes argued today that the truthfulness of the Bible does not necessarily include the historical details, we find Jesus and the New Testament authors accepting the historicity of the Old Testament. In fact, the New Testament writers rely on the historical narratives of the Old Testament to undergird the certainty of future actions of God.

Grudem is insightful when he declares: "Perhaps it has not been stated emphatically enough that nowhere in the Old Testament or in the New Testament does any writer give any hint of a tendency to distrust or consider slightly unreliable any other part of Scripture. Hundreds of texts encourage people to trust Scripture completely,

but no text encourages any doubt or even slight mistrust of Scripture."³

The aesthetic quality of Scripture is an integral part of its nature and quality. The exquisite nature of the ancient Hebrew poetry has long been extolled. In the last quarter-century, the literary quality of the biblical narratives has finally been recognized. It is now acknowledged that these stories were not written primarily for children, but are superb theological statements voiced within a distinctive literary expression. God utilizes aesthetic values to intensify His revelation, and even as a part of it.

Interpreting and understanding Scripture

To some readers, the Bible appears as an enigmatic collection of seemingly unrelated materials: narratives, poetry, legal codes, sermons, letters, prophecies, parables, royal annals, histories, and genealogies, with all of it bound together in one cover, and the question is How can one make sense of it all? The issue of interpretation (hermeneutics) is a continuing topic in theological studies. And Scripture itself clearly instructs that it is possible to misread and misinterpret Scripture. Many of the biblical writers, and even Christ Himself, warn against false teachers and false teaching.

Jesus Himself has provided the key component in the understanding and interpretation of Scripture. In exposing the mistake of the religious leaders of His time of coming to Scripture as though in itself there is some life-giving power, Jesus instead exposed the revolutionary idea of approaching the sacred writings with the realization that they actually testify of Him, and of life through Him (John 5:39, 40).

The apostle Paul testifies that when seeing Jesus in Scripture, a veil is taken away from the eyes (2 Cor. 3:14-16). The two disciples traveling to Emmaus also had an authenticating experience in the correct understanding of Scripture. The risen Lord interpreted the Old Testament Christologically for them, thus causing a "burning" in their hearts (Luke 24:32).

Contemporary Christians, like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus,

have read Scripture. They also know of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Yet some have yet to be persuaded to accept the Christ-centered nature of Scripture that the risen Lord presented on the road to Emmaus. To see Jesus Christ in the Bible with the eyes of the heart is to approach its interpretation and thus to understand it for its true intent.

The authority and value of the whole of the Bible

Some take the position that different portions of Scripture are of questionable authority or value. No modern writer addresses this issue more directly than Ellen White: "What man is there that dares to take that Bible and say this part is inspired and that part is not inspired? I would have both my arms taken off at my shoulders before I would ever make the statement or set my judgment upon the Word of God as to what is inspired and what is not inspired. . . . Never let mortal man sit in judgment upon the

Word of God or pass sentence as to how much of this is inspired and how much is not inspired, and that this is more inspired than some other portions. God warns him off that ground. God has not given him any such work to do. . . . We call on you to take your Bible, but do not put a sacrilegious hand upon it, and say, 'That is not inspired,' simply because somebody else has said so. Not a jot or tittle is ever to be taken from that Word."⁴

God Himself expresses the same sentiment: "Thus says the Lord: 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist,' says the Lord. 'But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word' (Isa. 66:1, 2, NKJV, emphasis supplied).

The Christian doctrine of Scripture is about a Book. Really, more than a Book. Through its many writers we meet a

God who yearns for His children, who is in earnest to communicate His love to them and who loves them more than He loved His own life. Fleming Rutledge expresses my sentiments eloquently: "Every time I think I am losing my faith, the Biblical story seizes me yet again with a life all its own. No other religious document has this power. I remain convinced in spite of all the arguments that God really does inhabit this text. With Job, I say yet again, 'I had heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee; therefore I despise my words, I melt away in dust and ashes'" (42:5, 6).⁵ ■

1 Fleming Rutledge, *Help My Unbelief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 25.

2 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press® Pub. Assn., 1911), 8.

3 Wayne A. Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation and the Problem of Formulating a Doctrine of Scripture" in *Scripture and Truth*, D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992), 31 (emphasis Grudem's).

4 Ellen G. White in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1957) 7:919, 920.

5 Rutledge, 25.

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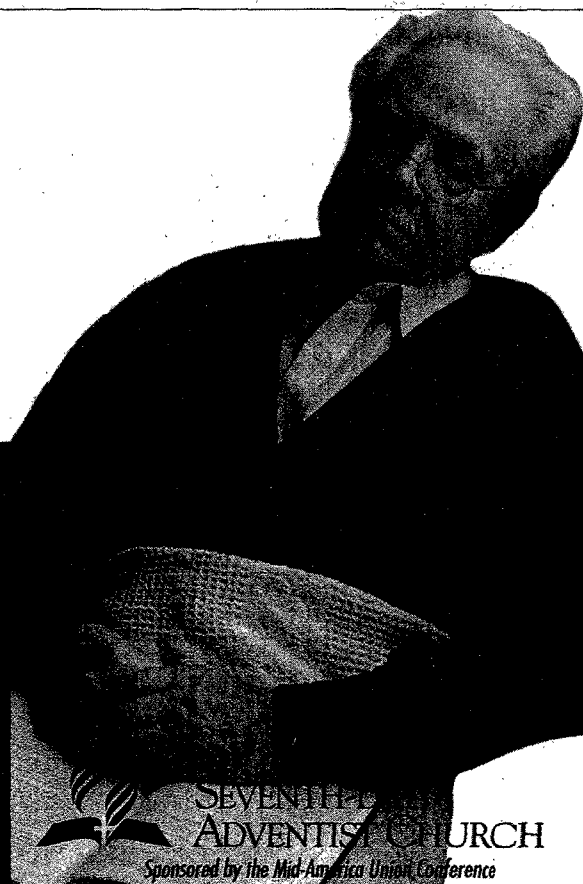
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Preaching: The challenge of a Christ-centered and holistic view of humanity

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We often say things about people, even from the pulpit, without seriously considering the assumptions of our statements.

Doing this often proves counterproductive and even disastrous for our preaching.

In this article different ways of viewing people will be analyzed and a few of the consequences of these beliefs will be exposed. An appeal will be made for a holistic Christ-centered anthropology, one which focuses upon every basic aspect of the person's being addressed in our preaching. This all-around approach to preaching will be seen to be vital to the task of preaching.

Literature on preaching often addresses only the so-called form and contents of preaching; how and what to preach. It leaves out a most determinative factor: *the preacher's basic assumptions*. The preacher's convictions and even feelings about people, or about anthropology, may be regarded as one such a basic assumption. These assumptions may challenge the congregation to social activism or to pietistic passivity. Pietism in this article indicates the pretension of a holy life without pious deeds, which spells emptiness and meaninglessness.

A liberation theological anthropology

Some preachers, proclaiming their anthro-

pological convictions from the pulpit, are to a large extent influenced by the school of thought known as Liberation Theology.

Liberation Theology regards the poor as champions of a new humanity. The liberation of human beings from pain, suffering, exploitation, and discrimination is seen as the true liberation of the human being. Consequently, people are not viewed as a means to an end, but they are seen as an end in themselves. Human dignity is regarded as the highest value. This theme, stated as a *preferential option for the poor*, runs through the entire script of Liberation Theology. It is not seen so much as a particular kind of theology as much as it is seen as a manifestation of the being and mission of the worldwide church.

It assumes that the gospel needs to be proclaimed within an active solidarity with the numerous struggles of the poor, and exploited. To situate oneself in this locus, the preacher needs to be converted to another world; a new way of understanding and of reformulating the gospel message. Only when Christians work toward abolishing injustice is authenticity possible. We are participants in God's redemptive acts because we play a part in God's creative acts.

Sin is seen as a refusal to love others and therefore a refusal to love God. Although people must be freed from personal individual sins, Liberation Theology stresses the social aspect of sin. People become truly human by the creation of a new social reality. Personal and structural changes establish people in a new humanity. Liberation and salvation are not regarded as identical, but liberation anticipates salvation.

Preaching that springs from this kind of pietistic anthropology takes serious cognizance of the socio-political messages of the Bible. According to Liberation Theology, Luke's version of the beatitudes, (6:20-26, NIV), e.g., "Blessed are you who are poor," does not speak of the spiritually poor and hungry, but of the *financially* poor people of the world. The gospel messages are not to be spiritualized and thus robbed of their literal liberating power.

A social anthropology

Social anthropology and the preaching that springs from its presuppositions, regards life on the earth as one of our greatest gifts. This means that the pursuit of life is not attainable

in isolation, without being involved with our fellow human beings. In all of life's pursuits, it is said, we should strive to maintain a dynamic relationship with our extended family, tribe, ancestors, as well as with God and nature. We are expected to engage ourselves in activities that will promote the total welfare of the whole of our community. A fulfilled Christian life cannot be experienced in isolation from others. Human beings are seen to be human only *because of others, with others, and for others.*

According to this approach, Christian preaching, as influenced by the Augustine, Luther, and Calvin tradition, has focused too much on the problem of death, forgiveness, and individual salvation. It has thus tended to spiritualize the gospel and to draw a sharp dividing line between the spiritual and physical needs of people. Western theologians are being accused of falling prey to Calvinism and the "separation" it effects between God and human beings.

A liberal anthropology

Liberal Anthropology has three main features as points of departure:

Individualism portrays the heart of liberalism. The individual is seen as more "real" and fundamental than society is. Preaching from this ground will ascribe a high degree of completeness and self-sufficiency to the individual. A more important moral value will be attached to the individual than to society or to groups of people.

Seen from this perspective, the world as a whole is seen without significant moral dimensions, and thus individuals must choose their own values and construct their own morality in a rational manner. To a large extent the autonomy and self-sufficiency of the individual rests upon the belief that one's experience is the touchstone of truth. Truth being offered from "the outside" can no longer be relied upon. One should have a "healthy" skepticism of traditional wisdom and accepted truths.

The liberal notion of the autonomy of the individual also contains the idea of "self-possession." Individuals are seen as "masters" of themselves.

The freedom of the individual is regarded as the highest value in Liberal Anthropology. Freedom is described as "freedom to." Individuals

LITERATURE ON PREACHING OFTEN ADDRESSES ONLY THE SO-CALLED FORM AND CONTENTS OF PREACHING. HOW AND WHAT TO PREACH. IT LEAVES OUT A MOST DETERMINATIVE FACTOR: THE PREACHER'S BASIC ASSUMPTIONS.

are seen to be free so that no one or nothing interferes with their activity. In this line of presupposition, the lives of individuals are supposed to belong to themselves.

Further, the concept of *Equality* is emphasized. All human beings are regarded as equal and should therefore be equally subjected to the law, but also equally protected by the law. Here there is no birth or title privilege. Only merit is to be rewarded.

So much emphasis is laid on the individual in this approach that vital group loyalties are overlooked. With this approach, preaching does not seriously address the freedom to serve God and our fellow human beings.

A "low" anthropology

A biblical anthropology with a "low" view of people is to a large extent based upon an emphasis of the fall of humanity into sin. Under this presupposition, people were created in the image of God, but this was considered as almost completely invalidated or cancelled out by the original sin.

People are considered sinful creatures, inclined to everything that is wrong and evil, and consequently, little should be expected from them. The result is that all optimistic views of humanity are shunned.

A "low" anthropology is not without biblical support and finds some expression in passages such as Psalms 22, 51, as well as Romans 3. Although this way of thinking accepts the basic equality of people, its emphasis is not on justice as a sign of equality, but on the universal need for salvation.

According to this view, we should focus more on the next world, whereas the present world should only be endured. Lategan is convinced that a "low" anthropology not only inhibits change, but that it prevents the development of a positive self-image.¹ The notion of a "low" anthropology tends to refuse to accept the concept of human rights.

Some scholars believe that this view has actually been more influenced by the Augustinian and Neoplatonic view of humanity and not so much by biblical thinking. In it evil is seen as a self-contained, pre-existent and "supernatural" entity that has been incarnated and embodied in human beings.

A "high" anthropology

The *Imago Dei*, the "image of God" motif of the Creation story, exemplifies a "high" anthropology, in contrast with a "low" approach. Scriptures that may be seen to "prove" its validity, are exemplified by passages such as Psalm 8:4-8.

Much of American pastoral theology, in particular, seems to have been influenced by this "high" anthropology and the liberal view of people. Boisson, regarded as the father of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement, believed that theologians and

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pastors should study "human documents," (that is, "people in distress"), as well as the relevant biblical passages that deal with these questions.

A new model or view of the nature of humanity developed within the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement. People were believed to be dynamic and to be capable of development and change. While human relations were regarded as of the highest importance, the relationship with God was certainly not ignored.

Carl Rogers, a prominent humanist psychologist, maintained certain notions about human beings that were, for various reasons, attractive to preachers who upheld a "high" view of humanity. Some of these ideas contain these elements:

- ♦ People are motivated by "one basic tendency and striving—to actualize, maintain and enhance the experiencing organism." People are seen to have an inner potential that preaching can help to unlock and release.

- ♦ Human brokenness or neurosis is seen as primarily a matter of

"incongruence" between the self and the "experiencing organism."

- ♦ Human fulfillment is understood in "process" terms. The actualization of one's potentialities for growth is seen as an ongoing process.

Preachers, following these assumptions, believe that the synthesis between Rogerian psychology and Christian theology provide a more positive image of human beings. They believe that the so-called high view of human beings made a lasting contribution when it uncovered that which lies beneath the surface within people: innate *human dignity*.

Others, however, believe that this approach has several limitations:

- ♦ It tends to "romanticize" the feelings of people. This synthesis equates the image of God in human beings with the principle of "biological actualization" and undercuts the importance of such elements as symbolic identity with a tradition and a history, and with human reason and moral sensitivity.

- ♦ It disparages the rational and moral dimensions of human beings.

The "actualization tendency" does not fully account for important dimensions of rational and moral life.

- ♦ There is an over-identification, even an equation, of salvation with "health." Christian living is far more than the fulfillment of one's individual potentiality. Christian life also has moral dimensions and includes aspects of self-transcendence and self-giving love.

The Christ-centric anthropology

This view of people points to the fact that the text of Hebrews 2, for example, integrates both aspects of the "low" and the "high" anthropology. Hebrews 2:5-18 is regarded as a Christ-centric reinterpretation of Psalm 8.

According to these texts little or nothing of the high expectations for human beings has been fulfilled: "Now we still do not see that everything has been subjected to him" (Heb. 2:8b refers to the soul of the human being). The author of Hebrews sees this to mean that even Christians have not reached their full potential.

What was described in Psalm 8 as a "high" anthropology is now used as the attribute of a "low" anthropology. For a little while, Jesus is made less than the angels, and the "little less than the angels" becomes "a short while lower than the angels." It serves to indicate the humiliation of Jesus. This humiliation, however, has a peculiar purpose. Through His suffering Jesus is crowned with honor and glory, and as a result, He opens the way for people to reach their full potential and "high" calling.

Humiliation is thus not the permanent status of Jesus, but it becomes the functional way by which the fulfillment of humanity, according to Psalm 8, is reached. The life of Jesus is both an ironic commentary on the failure of humans and, at the same time, a miraculous demonstration of how failure is to be overcome. Jesus leads many to glory, (Heb. 2:10) and

restores them to full humanity (Heb. 2:14-18).

A *Christ-centric view of humans* is seen as a refusal to accept the destructive effects of sin as a permanent state. On the other hand, however, it also refuses to be an open-ended optimistic anthropology.

A holistic anthropology?

Is a holistic view of people actually possible? In our preaching and teaching, is it possible to avoid the pitfalls and reduction of some of the anthropologies, delineated above, and to *construct an anthropology that addresses human beings as whole beings?*

According to holistic assumptions, the Bible knows only the "total" human being and not the different parts that some have defined or separated out in dualistic ways. Human beings do not only have bodies, but in the holistic sense, they are also their bodies. Accordingly, to state that "I am my body," is saying too much, but to say that "I have a body," is saying too little.

Sermons challenging only the so-called spiritual side of people, without addressing their physical and social existence, may be nothing more than pointing to "a pie in the sky, by and by."

Sometimes we may be tempted to overlook the importance of people as socio-political beings and forget that all people can only worship God within a particular culture and from within a specific social context. If we really want them to hear and understand the "whole" good news of the gospel and its implications, and not only the text of the Bible, then it is also important to make known "the text" of the human being.

In changed social situations the oppressed have often become the new oppressors.

Theologians who operate with binary oppositions, that is those who see reality merely in terms of good/bad, white/black, spirit/flesh and truth/untruth, are often tempted to be, on the one hand, totally

against any idea of wholeness, and on the other, they may have fallen prey to perfectionism. They tend to be extremely one-sided. On the one hand, a statement like, "Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached," should never be understood apart from Christ's redemption and re-creation.²

On the other hand, in our preaching we should not emphasize the hopelessness of God's people in a mechanical and unthinking way, or minimize the potential of people who have been recreated by Christ. Although Paul emphatically states that we are all under the power of sin and there is nothing good in people, our preaching should always also forcefully proclaim the fact that we are new creatures in Christ. We are not only always capable of sinning, but we are also able to be a new humanity in Christ.

It is important that we realize that we are free people in Christ. Many preachers emphasize the hopeless condition of our humanity, not because it is a biblical truth, but because people love to be "comforted" with this kind of preaching: The

worse they feel about themselves, the "better" they feel.

Conclusion: Preaching to the whole human being

Amid all the ideas, conceptions, and presuppositions about people that are behind our preaching, there is the critical need for us to begin to pray and think and work toward a Christ-centered anthropology. After all the horrors of the previous century and following the terrors that seem to multiply among us these days, it is impossible for us not to acknowledge the worldwide disastrous effects of our sin.

It is even more important, however, for us to proclaim a triumphant living Christ, who has been crucified and who works through the Holy Spirit toward our healing and wholeness. In our sinful world we cannot afford to be without an intentionally holistic anthropology, one that undergirds everything that comes from us and from our pulpits from week to week. ■

1 Bernard Latagan, "New Testament Anthropological Perspectives in a Time of Reconstruction" (*Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 76), 89.

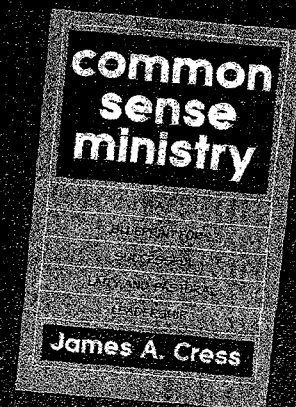
2 Ellen G. White, *Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press® Pub. Assn., 1903), 18.

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Understanding the book of Revelation: Three interpretative keys (part 1)

Hans K. LaRondelle



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Editorial note: This is the first in a three-part series. Parts 2 and 3 will appear in the March and May issues of Ministry.

Revelation is the most difficult of all New Testament books to interpret, primarily because of the elaborate and extensive use of symbolism.¹ With this challenging statement George Ladd begins his commentary on the last book of the Bible. Many scholars agree with Ladd. However, there are at least three interpretative keys that help us understand the difficulties in this book.

John wrote the descriptions of his apocalyptic visions in Revelation in a thoroughly Hebraic style of Greek because he actually thought in Hebrew. A meticulous analysis of John's Greek syntax shows that as a rule he used the Hebrew text of the Old Testament as his original source.² This fact obliges us to seek for the theological meaning of John's systematic allusions to the Old Testament and its history of salvation.

As a Hebrew Christian, John adopted Israel's covenant language and style of expression. This was completely familiar to Jewish Christians acquainted with Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. One important literary feature is illustrative of this and has hermeneutical significance: "The parallelism of the style is too obvious to be ignored. The author repeatedly breaks forth into verse in

which the parallelism of Hebrew poetry is carefully observed."³

More than 600 times the Apocalypse alludes to Israel's covenant history. This fact points to the *first key* for understanding the book of Revelation: John's symbolic visions have their roots and theological meaning in the Hebrew Bible! Knowledge of the Older Testament is therefore absolutely essential for grasping the meaning of John's prophetic language in Revelation. "The Old Testament in general plays such a major role that a proper understanding of its use is necessary for an adequate view of the Apocalypse as a whole."⁴

Creative use of the Old Testament

We need not impose some preconceived philosophical interpretive method on the book of Revelation, such as literalism or allegorism. But we do need to ask those questions that reveal John's own method of uniting the Word of God in the Hebrew Scriptures with the testimony of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, and how he blends Israel with the apostolic church of Christ.

John presents three interpretative keys at the beginning of the book itself. The opening statement contains the master key: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place . . . that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1, 2, NIV).

A close reading of these words indicates the *three* keys that are in John's mind and that become guidelines in helping us understand the Apocalypse: God, Jesus Christ, and their unified revelation to the church.

Let us first consider each of these divine authorities in their mutual relationship. (1) The new revelation of Jesus was given to Him by God, "his God and Father" (1:6, NIV), the covenant God of Israel. This implies that the Old Testament remains the foundational Word of God.

(2) This God reveals a new orientation of salvation history, because He entrusts His sovereign rulership to the risen Lord Jesus, who now reveals God's plan to His servants.

(3) John summarizes all he was shown as "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:2, NIV). This double phrase coordinates God and Jesus Christ on the same level of divine authority, because the grammatical construction of both parts of the phrase is similar.

Both God and Jesus now reveal their united testimony as a sacred trust to the church to receive and to hold fast as her supreme standard of faith and worship, even in persecution and in the face of death. With some variations, John uses this twofold phrase as his key signature to describe the faithful church in times of apostasy and persecution throughout the book of Revelation (see Rev. 1:9; 6:9; 12:17; 14:12; 20:4).

John's literary style of developing his theme

How does John present his interpretative keys within the Apocalypse? Any self-proclaimed principle of interpretation will prove to be inadequate, as Martin Kiddle rightly warns: "We realize now that it is futile to attempt to manufacture a substitute key, as though the book must be made to reveal what we think it ought to reveal. Instead, we must attempt to get back into the mind of the writer, to appreciate his outlook,

his reading of the times in which he lived, and his remedy for them."⁵

It is John's style to sum up the main theme of his book in his introduction or prologue, and then to develop it at length in his visions. For example, observe the striking similarity between the prologues in John's Gospel (John 1:1-18) and the Apocalypse (Rev. 1:1-8). In both prologues John testifies of the divine glory and authoritative testimony of Christ (John 1:1-3, 18; Rev. 1:1, 5).

While in the Gospel of John the prologue culminates in the glory of the Incarnation ("And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," John 1:14, NKJV), the prologue of the Apocalypse ends in the glorious return of Christ ("Look, he is coming with the clouds," Rev. 1:7, NIV). The Apocalypse thus functions as the continuation of the gospel story and builds on the earthly testimony of Jesus.

At the end of the first century, it was no longer necessary, as it had

been earlier, to argue that Jesus Christ had fulfilled the Messianic promises of the Old Testament and that the church was the chosen heir of its promises. The urgent question now was the consummation of the Old Testament promises in the return of Jesus.

Revelation's primary connection with Daniel

John proclaims that his book is the Apocalypse "of Jesus Christ which God gave him." This opening statement informs the church that the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ has the same inspiration and authority as that of the Hebrew Scriptures. At its conclusion the Lord identifies Himself by appealing to the prophetic Word of God: "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David and the bright Morning Star" (Rev. 22:16, NIV).

John's Apocalypse thus claims to be the heavenly "testimony of Jesus

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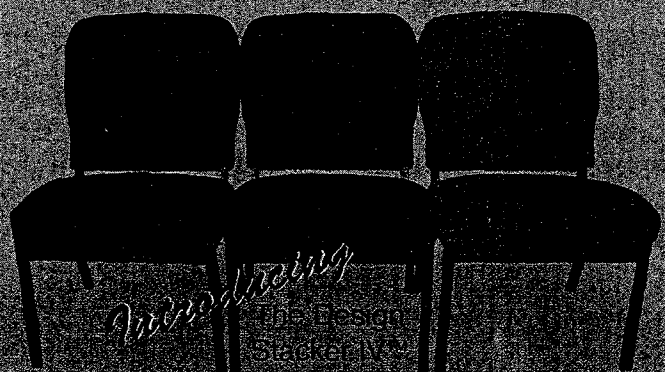
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Christ" for the church, in which the risen Lord reveals God's determined plan for the church age. Jesus identifies Himself as the Davidic Messiah, promised by Israel's prophets (Isa. 11:1 and Num. 24:17). Jesus' testimony will therefore be in essential harmony with God's prophetic Word.

What then is the content of His testimony for the churches waiting for His return?

John reveals: "to show what must

gospel of God's kingdom (Mark 13:10), and the promised "universal restoration" of Paradise (Acts 3:21).

John's allusion to Daniel in Revelation 1:1 strongly suggests that Revelation must be understood in conjunction with Daniel's symbolic visions about the future plan and purpose of God. This Danielic frame of reference is an integral part of the first key of knowledge for understanding John's Apocalypse.

take place"; "what shall be hereafter" (Dan. 2:28, 45; Rev. 1:1, NRSV).

Apparently, John replaces Daniel's phrase "at the end of days" (NRSV) ["in days to come," NIV], or "what will take place in the future" (2:45), by his word "soon" or "quickly." John's new emphasis on a "soon" fulfillment of Daniel's symbolic forecast marks a decisive progress in salvation history. While Daniel's book was "sealed until the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4, NRSV), John announces the inauguration of the fulfillment of Daniel's vision of the future that will bring the kingdom of God on earth.

REVELATION'S BURDEN IS TO REASSURE THE CHURCH OF CHRIST THAT ISRAEL'S END-TIME PROPHECIES WILL FIND THEIR ULTIMATE CONSUMMATION IN CHRIST AND IN HIS NEW COVENANT PEOPLE.

soon take place [Greek: *ha dei genesthai*]." These words are an explicit allusion to the same words used by Daniel to the king of Babylon: "There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days" (Dan. 2:28, 29, NRSV), "what shall be hereafter" (verse 45, NRSV, *ha dei genesthai*, LXX).

Daniel's and John's use of the word "must" [*dei*] for the future of humankind is of profound significance. They do not mean the blind necessity of fate but the plan and providence of Israel's God for the eternal future of humanity.

This God not only knows the future. He also "changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings" (Dan. 2:21, NRSV), and has determined the outcome of history after His own will (see Dan. 2:44, 45).

Walter Grundmann clarifies: "It is the *dei* of the mysterious God who accomplishes His plans for the world in the eschatological consummation."⁶ This divine "must" of God's plan includes not only the scourge of human warfare (Matt. 24:6), but centers primarily in the blessing of the Messiah's atoning death (Matt. 16:21; Mark 10:45), the proclamation of the

Recent scholarship has confirmed that Daniel is "the most influential" of all the Hebrew prophets to which the book of Revelation alludes.⁷ This does not mean that both apocalyptic writers convey the same limits of divine revelation. The New Testament apocalypse advances Israel's prophetic faith through a new interpretative principle of fulfillment in salvation history: its *Christological fulfillment*.

The historic fulfillment of Israel's Messianic prophecies in the earthly ministry of Jesus had already been the central burden of Jesus' testimony in the four Gospels. Revelation's burden is to reassure the church of Christ that Israel's end-time prophecies will find their ultimate consummation in Christ and in His new-covenant people. This is apparent from a comparison of the promises made to the churches in the seven letters in Revelation 2 and 3 with the promises realized in the New Jerusalem visions for the followers of God and the Lamb in Revelation 20-22. Thus Revelation assures the "soon" fulfillment of Daniel's sealed prophecies.

Comparing Daniel 2:28 and Revelation 1:1, for example, illustrates the close connection between the two books: "what will happen at the end of days"; "what must soon

John's vision of Christ's continuous ministry

John proclaims that God has taken a new initiative in salvation history in Jesus Christ, through His death, resurrection, and exaltation in heaven. This new act of God in Christ is the defining moment for the Christian faith. John therefore calls his Lord "the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5, NRSV).

These titles unify Jesus' earthly witness and His present and future ministries in heaven. In his subsequent vision of the scroll with seven seals in God's hand, John focuses specifically on Jesus' new role as the Ruler over all humankind as the critical juncture in salvation history (Rev. 5).

Significant in all this is the repeated emphasis on Jesus' worthiness to rule over humanity and the universe: "See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals" (Rev. 5:5, NRSV). Such designations of the risen Lord can be understood only from the Hebrew Scriptures and from their Messianic promises (see Gen. 49:10; Isa. 11:1-10). How does John clarify Jesus' victory on earth?

John describes the "conquering [*nikao*]" of Jesus in terms of His death: "Then I saw between the throne . . . and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered,

having seven horns and seven eyes" (5:6, NRSV). John views a slain Messiah. In other words, the "Lion"-Messiah has conquered by becoming the sacrificial "Lamb" of God! The nature of this "conquering" of Jesus is crucial for John, because it becomes the model for each Christian to "overcome" in the seven letters to the churches (see 3:21; 2:7, 11, 17; etc.).

Gregory Beale explains this well: "Christ himself overcame by maintaining his loyalty to the Father through suffering and finally dying (cf. 1:5). He was physically defeated but spiritually victorious."⁶

In Revelation 5 John portrays how the Father in a solemn ceremony in the heavenly throne room has handed over His sovereign reign of the world to the risen Lord Jesus. The Lamb of God has taken the scroll [*biblion*] of God's eternal purpose from "the one who was seated on the throne" (Rev. 5:7, NRSV).

The crucified and risen Lord will now begin to open the seven seals of the heavenly scroll (6:1), because He is authorized to execute the judgments of God that will lead up to the final establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. In response, the entire universe sings anthems in worship of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 5:13, 14). Thus the vision of Revelation 5 functions as a surprising initial fulfillment of Daniel's prophetic view of the coming of the "Son of man" to the Father to receive His lordship over the church and the world, even before the final judgment begins.

Stefanovic explains this progressive fulfillment of God's prophetic Word: "With the taking of the *biblion* [scroll] the whole destiny of humankind is put into the hands of the enthroned Christ; hence it is indeed the heavenly book of destiny. On the basis of its contents he would judge, hence, the judgment book."⁹

Apostles and the prophetic word

The apostles confirm the progressive fulfillment of God's prophetic

Word. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that Jesus was exalted "at the right hand of God" as "Lord and Messiah," and that the predicted "last days," or the Messianic age, are seen to have arrived (cf. Mark 1:15).

The visible proof of Christ's heavenly enthronement was God's pouring out of the Spirit of prophecy on the Christ-believing remnant of Israel, in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16, 17, 33-36; cf. Joel 2:28, 29). The apostolic author of Hebrews also affirms the progressive revelation of God: "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things" (Heb. 1:1, 2, NRSV; cf. Rom. 16:25, 26; 1 Peter 1:10-12). The God who inspired Israel's prophets has now spoken in a superior and fuller way in His Son, Jesus Christ.

John even raised the historic self-testimony of Jesus to the level of a testing truth for salvation: "For this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. . . . And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:9, 11, 12, NRSV).

Clearly, the connection between divine promise and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, between the Old and the New Testament, is one of progressive

testimony as it continues to come from the same covenant God. The historic testimony of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels, is the authoritative gospel key for understanding the intended meaning of the Word of God in Moses and the Prophets.

The testimony of Jesus, "the Alpha and the Omega" in the Apocalypse (Rev. 22:13), is the inspired Christological application of the apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel, Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah, as they speak beyond their setting in literal, historical Israel to the age of the church. ■

Parts 2 and 3 of this article will appear in the March and May 2003 issues of Ministry, respectively.

- 1 George E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), 10.
- 2 See R. H. Charles, *Studies in the Apocalypse* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1915), ch. 3; and *The Revelation of St. John, International Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1975):lxvi; "John translates directly from the Old Testament text."
- 3 Charles, *Studies*, 88.
- 4 Gregory K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*. JSNT Suppl. Ser. 166. Sheffield Ac. Press, 1998, 61.
- 5 Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1946), xxii.
- 6 In Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 2:23.
- 7 Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: NIGTC, Eerdmans, 1999), 77; John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation, ch. 2.
- 8 Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 353.
- 9 Rankov Stefanovic, "The Background and Meaning of the Sealed Book of Revelation 5." Ph.D. Dissertation, Andrews University, 1995, 322.

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Schizophrenia: What pastors need to know

**Andrew J. Weaver
and Richard L.
Binggeli**



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Schizophrenia is a severe, episodic illness caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. It frequently has a far-reaching negative impact on many aspects of an individual's life, as well as that of his or her family. It often has its onset when a person is young. About half of males and one-fourth of females who develop this illness do so before they turn 19.

Schizophrenia clearly has a biological basis; numerous studies have shown changes in brain structure and function. Neurotransmitters—substances that allow communication between brain cells—are thought to be involved in the development of the disorder. Persons with a close relative who has this condition are at the greatest risk of acquiring it. One in ten persons who have a parent with the disease will eventually develop it. The disorder carries a high risk of suicide. One in ten individuals with the illness end his or her life in suicide, especially in the first six years after the initial psychotic episode.¹

The disorder carries several disturbing symptoms, such as impairment of a variety of basic psychological functions including perception (hallucinations), reality testing (delusions), thought processes (loose associations), feeling (flat or inappropriate affect), behavior (disorganization), concentration, motivation, and judgment. Thus the condition usually affects occupational, educational, and social activities.

Primary treatment

Antipsychotic medications are not a cure, but they offer the best treatment available for persons suffering from this severe mental illness. After going onto such medications, most people show substantial improvement within a few weeks. The medications are especially helpful in reducing delusions, hallucinations, agitation, confusion, and distortions. Antipsychotic medications also reduce by half the risk of future episodes.

As is frequently the case, however, antipsychotic medications may have side effects, including stiffness, tremors, restlessness, drowsiness, dry mouth, and, occasionally, a chronic irreversible movement disorder. Newer antipsychotic medications appear to cause fewer side effects.

One of the greatest challenges in treating persons with schizophrenia through medication is that they stop taking their medication. Short-term hospitalization in a well-staffed facility can offer a person and his or her family needed stress relief in a protective environment while the person is adjusting to medications.

About 20-30 percent of those with schizophrenia recover to lead a normal life. Another 20-30 percent continue to suffer from moderate symptoms, while 40-60 percent continue to be seriously impaired from the disease. Approximately one-half of all mental hospital beds in the United States are occupied by patients with some form of this illness.²

Long-term care

Since schizophrenia is usually a long-term illness, continuing medical care and medications will be needed. It is important to find a psychiatrist who is well-qualified, interested in the illness, and empathetic with the sufferer.

Individual psychotherapy can also be helpful. Such therapy involves scheduled conversations between the client and a mental health specialist. These sessions focus on current and past problems, thoughts, feelings, or relationships. By sharing life experiences in this way, the person may gradually come to a better understanding of himself or herself, learning to more effectively sort the real from the unreal and distorted.

A supportive, reality-oriented approach is generally of more benefit than probing insight-oriented psychotherapy. Offering accurate, simple information about schizo-

phrenia and the medications will be an important part of the process of healing.

Self-help groups have become increasingly common and are often used by mental health professionals in addition to therapy and medication. These groups, usually led by ex-patients or family members of people with schizophrenia, provide patients with mutual support as well as comfort in the awareness that they are not alone.

Self-help groups also seek to promote accurate information about mental illness in order to dispel the stigma and to empower those affected by it.

The role of the faith community

The church can be of great value as a continuing source of contact and support for persons suffering from schizophrenia. It can also be of significant value to the families of persons suffering from the illness.

The church can offer acceptance and care that is often not found elsewhere. Families dealing with any chronic illness undergo considerable strain, and this is no less true for mental illness. Since schizophrenia is a disease of the brain, it is important that pastors encourage blame-free acceptance of the person and his or her family.

In a recent study, researchers discovered that three in four psychiatric patients identified religion to be an important source of comfort and support. However, the same study found that psychiatric inpatients were less likely to talk to a pastor than to a comparable professional in a general medical hospital. Moreover, while 80 percent of the psychiatric patients considered themselves spiritual or religious, only 20 percent had a pastor or spiritual advisor to consult.³

Some faith groups have developed outreach programs to help clergy and congregations support and care for those with mental illnesses. These groups can help combat the stigma

Resources in the United States

- ◆ *Consumer Organization and Networking Technical Assistance Center (CONTAC)* (c/o WVMHCA, 1036 Quarrier Street, Suite 208-A, Charleston, WV 25301; 888-825-8324; www.contac.org) is a nationwide resource center for mental health consumers and consumer-run organizations. This organization promotes self-help, recovery, and personal empowerment. It provides technical assistance for organizing and maintaining self-help groups, conducts leadership training, and provides online peer support.
- ◆ *Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA)* (P.O. Box 128232, Nashville, TN 37221; 877-883-2332; draonline.org) is an international organization founded in 1989 with 130 chapters. It offers self-help programs for individuals who experience the dual disorder of chemical dependency and a psychiatric illness. It is based on 12-step principles and the personal experiences of individuals in dual recovery. It has a newsletter and provides assistance in starting local groups.
- ◆ *Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health* (101 King Street, Suite 420, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-684-7710; www.ffcmh.org) is a national parent-run organization with 122 affiliated groups. It focuses on the needs of children and teens with mental health problems and provides information and advocacy. Its Web site features a Spanish connection.
- ◆ *National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)* (Colonial Place Three, 2107 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22201; 800-950-6264; www.nami.org), founded in 1979, is a network of self-help groups for relatives and friends affected by mental illness. It has a section devoted to giving support and information to siblings and children of persons with mental illness. NAMI has a newsletter and runs an antidiscrimination campaign on behalf of the mentally ill. It provides educational materials to clergy and religious organizations.
- ◆ *The National Empowerment Center* (599 Canal Street, Lawrence, MA 01840; 800-769-3278; www.power2u.org) is a consumer-run center that provides information on self-help resources and conferences. It also offers networking, conference calls, and workshops.
- ◆ *National Mental Health Consumers Self-Help Clearinghouse* (1211 Chestnut Street, Suite 1000, Philadelphia, PA 19107; 800-553-4KEY; www.mhselfhelp.org) is a consumer self-help resource offering information geared toward meeting the needs of mental health consumers. It offers assistance in advocacy, on-site consultations, training, educational events, and listing of related publications.
- ◆ *Pathways to Promise* (5400 Arsenal Street, St. Louis, MO 63139; 314-644-8400; www.pathways2promise.org) helps to develop outreach programs to the mentally ill through religious communities. It offers information, educational materials, and other resources for clergy.
- ◆ *Schizophrenia Anonymous* (c/o Mental Health Association in Michigan, 15920 West Twelve Mile Rd., Southfield, MI 48076; 810-557-6777). This international group is organized and maintained by individuals with schizophrenia-related disorders. It offers fellowship, support, information, and professional assistance. It has weekly groups, guest speakers, and phone help.

Many such organizations are, of course, based in other countries of the world besides the United States. Contacting mental health facilities and professionals, general social services organizations, or the chaplaincy and social services in your local hospital, will enable the pastor to locate and recommend sources of help to sufferers of schizophrenia and their families.

**Listed below are some helpful books to consider
when doing reading in this area**

- E. Fuller Torrey, *Surviving Schizophrenia: A Manual for Families, Consumers and Providers*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper, 1995).
- Kim T. Mueser and Susan Gingrich, *Coping with Schizophrenia: A Guide for Families* (Oakland, Calif.: New Harbinger, 1994).
- Rebecca Woolis and Agnes Hatfield, *When Someone You Love Has a Mental Illness: A Handbook for Family, Friends, and Caregivers* (New York: Putnam and Sons, 1992).
- Virginia Lafond, *Grieving Mental Illness: A Guide for Patients and Their Caregivers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).
- Ruth Fowler, *A Stranger In Our Midst* (St. Louis: Pathways to Promise, 1987). A congregational study guide on prolonged mental illness. It offers a continuing education curriculum and training manual designed for pastors and churches.
- John Preston and James Johnson, *Clinical Psychopharmacology Made Ridiculously Simple* (Miami: MedMaster, 1999), offers the layperson a succinct, practical guide to medications used when treating mental health problems, including schizophrenia.

that is often the "second wounding" associated with mental illness. Families report that the societal stigmas associated with the mentally ill have negative impacts on sufferers that come in the form of a sense of lowered self-worth, difficulty making and keeping friends, lack of success in getting a job or finding a place to live, and simply in overall recovery.

Popular motion pictures depicting mentally ill killers and high-profile news coverage of tragedies involving the mentally ill, contribute to these stigmas.⁴ The families of the mentally ill believe that accurate, factual infor-

mation about mental illness is the best remedy for these kinds of societal attitudes.

The truth is that people with schizophrenia are usually less violent than others. They are often timid and emotionally vulnerable. Very few are dangerous. They do not have a "split-personality" as portrayed in the famous classic, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Problems with violence and aggression may arise among a few individuals who do not continue their medications, especially if they abuse drugs or alcohol.

Unfortunately, individuals in the

U.S. who suffer from schizophrenia or other severe forms of mental illness do not receive treatment, and they become homeless, use alcohol and/or illicit drugs, and may end up in prison. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty estimates that at least 25 percent of our nearly one million homeless suffer from some form of mental illness.

There are now far more mentally ill persons in U.S. prisons (approximately 250,000) than in state hospitals (approximately 58,000). Until recently, state mental hospitals served as the places of last resort for those who could not find adequate treatment in the private sector. The increasing closure of these institutions has become a major reason for the lack of treatment of the severely mentally ill.⁵ The serious lack of appropriate treatment for the mentally ill is an issue that needs the active involvement of the faith-community. ■

- 1 J. F. Westermeyer, M. Harrow, and J. T. Marengo, "Risk for Suicide in Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic and Non-psychotic Disorders," *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, 179 (1991): 259-266.
- 2 M. S. Keshavan, P. Vaulx-Smith, and S. Andreson, "Schizophrenia" in *Handbook of Adolescent Psychopathology*, V. B. Van Hasselt and M. Hersen (eds.), (New York: Lexington Books, 1995), 465-496.
- 3 G. Fitchett, L. A. Burton, and A. B. Sivan, "The Religious Needs and Resources of Psychiatric Inpatients," *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, 185 (1997): 320-326.
- 4 O. F. Wahl and C. R. Harman, "Family Views of Stigma," *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 15 (1989) 1:131-139.
- 5 H. R. Lamb, "Deinstitutionalization at the Beginning of the New Millennium," *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, 6(1998) 1:1-10.

You Can Keep Them If You Care

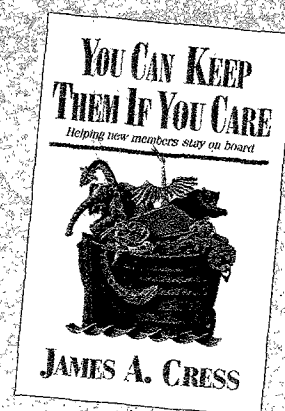
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What makes pastoral supervision effective?

Chor-Kiat Sim



Chor-Kiat Sim, D.Min., is pastoral care services chaplain, Washington Adventist Hospital, Takoma Park, Maryland.

The heat was unbearable, but I was freezing. My hands were cold, but my Sabbath suit was drenched with sweat. When members of the congregation congratulated me at the door after the worship service, I nervously accepted their gracious remarks. It was my first sermon without supervision and was intended for my training. The next Monday, I told my senior, supervising pastor, Matthew McNeill,* who had been on vacation, about the energy needed to prepare and deliver my sermon. He was strong in his affirmation of what I had achieved. That was almost 30 years ago, but I still treasure his lifelong commitment to pastoral ministry and supervision, and his commitment to my learning and to me.

Reflecting on my relationship with Pastor Matthew, I constructed a paradigm of pastoral supervision, with six fundamental principles. This paradigm, modeled by my senior pastor who drew from Christ's way of supervision,¹ consists of the following questions:

- (1) Who am I?
- (2) What is my ministry?
- (3) Where am I going?
- (4) What must I know about relationships?
- (5) How should I be trained?
- (6) What are my resources?

The themes in these questions can be classified in three interrelated phases in pastoral supervision: formative, directional, and continuous education (see chart on page 22).

The formative phase

Who am I? Knowing one's pastoral identity² is essential to a supervising pastor. As a senior pastor, Matthew knew who he was. His awareness of his heritage and rich pastoral experience enhanced his position and his function as a pastor.

He believed that he was more of a preacher/teacher than an evangelist. Knowing his gifts of preaching and teaching, he integrated them into his ministry. Such an awareness and self-understanding were a result of his deep knowledge of God. Knowing God and understanding himself influenced his pastoral responsibilities.

Matthew's supervisory leadership resulted in positive support from his associates and his congregation. A senior pastor's aptitude can inspire harmony and create a congenial atmosphere in the pastoral team that permeates the whole congregation.

By setting this kind of example, senior pastors also teach others how to know their strengths and weaknesses. They are free to be vulnerable or to be guarded in promoting learning and growth.³ Their interns and/or associates emulate them, becoming certain about their own pastoral identity, discovering how they may use themselves as "instruments"⁴ modeled after the supervision practiced by Jesus Himself.

When the disciples were fully aware of who Christ was (John 13:3-5), they could serve as He did. When they finally knew who they were, they were filled with the Spirit (Acts 1:6-22 and 2:1-4). Nicodemus invested his time and talent for the Lord, and the woman of Samaria introduced Christ to her whole town after they knew what sinners they were and what a Savior they had (John 3:1-18; 4:7-42). Knowing oneself along with actually acknowledging Christ as the Master Supervisor is the first step in pastoral supervision.

What is my ministry? Identifying one's true and specific calling in ministry does not come naturally. Years of experience and feedback from seasoned ministers have helped to heighten my awareness of my calling.

Matthew, my senior supervising minister, believed in creative leadership and was inclusive in his outlook. He visited me personally, respected my ethnic background, and attempted to understand me as a young ministerial graduate. He helped me to identify the untrodden grounds in the formative stage of

FORMATIVE PHASE

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Who am I?</i>
Embrace my history
Know my strengths
Know my weaknesses | 2. <i>What is my ministry?</i>
Know my gifts
Identify and stay within my boundaries
Identify my mentors |
|--|--|

DIRECTIONAL PHASE

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3. <i>Where am I going?</i>
Identify my priorities
Identify priorities of the church
Set goals and objectives | 4. <i>What do I know about relationships?</i>
Know my intra-personal relationships
Know my inter-personal relationships
Have a vital relationship with God |
|--|---|

CONTINUOUS EDUCATION PHASE

- | | |
|--|--|
| 5. <i>How can I be trained?</i>
Develop my faith and leadership skills
Use denominational resources
Continue to learn from family | 6. <i>Where are my resources?</i>
Appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit
Use Christ as a role model in supervision
Evaluate my personal and professional growth |
|--|--|

my career that defined my role and interests.

Senior pastors should believe that "setting boundaries in the workplace" can help their team to grow spiritually.⁵ They must allocate time to meet the spiritual needs of their interns, organize special programs and retreats so that the interns can reflect on areas of weakness and strength. With God's guidance and a senior pastor's empowerment, interns or associates can grow and perform even what is considered humanly impossible.

Senior pastors play an important role in assisting interns in identifying their gifts in ministry. A competent senior pastor helps them to know what their callings are and empowers them to serve with love. Love is the key to enhancing spirituality, pastoral care, evangelism, family life, and other ministries of each congregation.

The directional phase

Where am I going? A clear sense of mission provides direction in ministry. Matthew knew where he was going. When he felt convicted to

organize his worship services as revival meetings, he was focused and took time to plan according to set strategies. He made announcements in advance and worked out every conceivable detail.

He encouraged pleasant pulpit decorum, giving the glory to God. He was creative and constructive in various aspects of programming. Matthew knew his mission and helped me to develop my own mission statement. My mission at that time was to continue my professional growth and assist him in reviving the church. With this in mind, we prayed for guidance and experienced a revival in the congregation. The Holy Spirit led many in our congregation to baptism.

There is power when a person knows his or her mission clearly.⁶ Only a clear mission can direct one's pastoral vocation successfully. In order for pastors to know who and what they are and where they are going, they need to set goals and be open to periodic evaluations for personal growth.

Spiritually speaking, mission-

driven pastors journey along the path of righteousness, balancing law and grace. They will encounter difficulties, but blessings and reconstructions will come as they set "the image of Christ" to be their highest ambition.⁷ When pastors possess a sense of mission and a desire to emulate Christ, their churches will grow because there is power in having such a mission, one clearly seen and planned for.

What must I know about relationships? Supervisory competence consists of intra-relationships and inter-relationships. Recognizing that everyone has his or her shadow side, Matthew and his associates spent time in providing constructive feedback to one another. He believed in "leadership from within."⁸ Therefore, he encouraged his associates to have a vital relationship with God. Matthew had a rich spiritual experience himself, which was his source of motivation.

Building relationships between the senior pastor and the associate begins with both spending time with God. Such relationships are the source for "love, friendship, mutual respect and trust."⁹ Then the pastoral team will experience their connections with God, letting warmth and love permeate their congregation.

Continuous education phase

How can I be trained? Pastoral education is a continuous process. The local conference ministerial association has resource materials that outline the biblical principles and professional growth plans that pastors need. Senior pastors should not hesitate to adopt these programs, and invite feedback from other pastoral educators to evaluate the performance of their pastoral teams.

Matthew expected his pastors to be well prepared for their assignments whether in worship, evangelism, or training. He conducted regular pastoral meetings, both for educational and administrative purposes. Frequently, he shared with me the latest publications and findings in

nurture and evangelism. He inculcated the principles of spiritual growth by praying daily and inviting the Holy Spirit to inspire, comfort, and edify.

To equip and train ministerial interns, senior pastors should meet with them at least once a week. Those experienced in pastoral supervision are likely to say that full and effective supervisory responsibility in an institutional setting requires at least 12 hours each week. This includes educational seminars, verbatim analysis, personal consultation, and supervision. In congregational settings, however, perhaps four hours a week on the average will do. One hour for educational purposes; another for a group planning; and two for individual work or pastoral function-related consultation between the senior pastor and the intern. A well-organized curriculum, including phases of pastoral ministry and evangelism, will enable senior pastors to help their supervisees to measure their progress.

What are my resources? Spirituality is vital in pastoral supervision. There is no use supervising, teaching, or worshipping without Christ being the

center of all our plans and activities. Matthew was creative and spiritual because of his commitment to Christ. Under Matthew's supervisory leadership, I was encouraged to spend more time with the Lord. His constant prayer for me reminded me how Christ prayed and agonized for His disciples. Matthew prayed constantly for me and our congregation.

The senior pastor's responsible attitude and passion for pastoral ministry will encourage young pastors. God calls senior pastors to model whatever an intern or an associate needs. Some will be particularly helpful with preaching. They will set examples in dynamic preaching and nurturing sermons, and will openly share their "secrets" with their interns. Others may inculcate a caring spirit toward each congregation, loyalty to the church organization, or commitment to weekly pastoral visitation. Whatever their special talents, senior pastors have a responsibility to model the essentials of pastoring and to reflect on these with their associates.

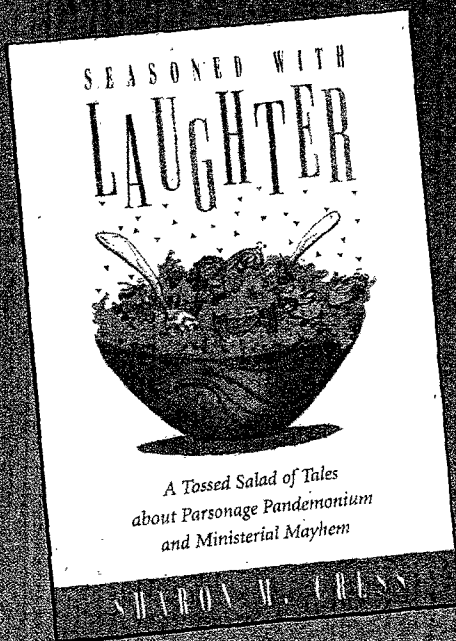
At their heart, the three phases in this paradigm are centered in Christ's

method of supervision. Pastoral supervision is a sacred calling responded to by senior ministers who want to mentor younger and/or growing pastors.

Through effective supervision and modeling, senior pastors can contribute to the development of a strong and effective ministry. ■

* Matthew McNeill is a pseudonym.

- 1 In Luke 24:17-32, while journeying to Emmaus, Christ asked questions, walked with the disciples, and opened the Scriptures as a means of supervision. As a result, the disciples cherished their heart-warming experience and were empowered to fulfill the gospel commission.
- 2 E. E. Thornton, "Pastoral Identity," *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1990), 567.
- 3 Barry K. Estdt, John R. Compton, and Melvin C. Blanchette, eds., "Towards Professional Integration," *The Art of Clinical Supervision* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1987), 7.
- 4 Darryl J. Tiller, "The Self as Instrument," *The Supervision of Pastoral Care* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 146.
- 5 Henry Cloud and John Townsend, *Boundaries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1992), 195.
- 6 Laurie Beth Jones, *The Path* (New York: Hyperion, 1996), xi.
- 7 Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 8.
- 8 Parker J. Palmer, "Leading From Within," *Noetic Sciences Review*, Winter 1996, 45.
- 9 Jarr DeVillie, *The Pastor's Handbook on Interpersonal Relationships* (Silver Spring, Md.: The Ministerial Assn., 1995), 37.



Seasoned With Laughter

This book has been described as a tossed salad of tales about parsonage pandemonium and ministerial mayhem. Author Sharon Criss has collected hilarious tales from pastoral families around the world and compiled them in this book. Proceeds from *Seasoned With Laughter* will be used to help pastoral spouses spread the gospel in their own neighborhoods.

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Transformed into a new person: The relevance of God

Wally Drotts



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Fisherman's Chapel,
Bodega Bay,
California.

What is the purpose of Christianity and the church? Why the busy programs, expensive edifices, learned clergy, and scholarly seminaries? One basic purpose: to bring God and human beings into a relationship so as to supply life with meaning and hope. People do not exist for the institution; the institution exists for people. Failing that, the church loses its franchise. The central purpose for which the church and its ministers exists is to cultivate and inspire that meeting of humans and God.

When asked why he robbed banks, a notorious bank robber answered, "That's where the money is." Ask your congregation why they come to church and do they say, "That's where God is"? Meeting God is the core purpose of biblical religion. A study of Jacob illustrates the point.

Genesis presents Jacob's life as a movement from being a deceptive manipulator to becoming a man at peace with God, from a devious religionist to a devout and deeply spiritual person. Jacob's life can be divided into three phases.

Phase 1: Egocentrism

The first phase of Jacob's life may be labeled as "egocentric." Jacob had an acute case of it. He was the leader and others were his servants, even if he had to conquer them

by wit and strategy. In the young Jacob we see a dangerous mix of naive intelligence, driving ambition, and illusions of grandeur. He seems to have absorbed, at his mother's knee, the skill of spotting and exploiting the weaknesses of people to his personal advantage.

Scripture cites three instances to support Jacob's early reputation as a cheat. Genesis 25 relates his birth account as if to say that Jacob's tendency was congenital. When Rebecca delivered the twins, it was noticed that Jacob grabbed the heel of his brother who preceded him from the womb. Jacob seemed to protest the accident of being born second, and from the beginning tried to manipulate things in his favor. Thus the ancients read the incident and named the child Jacob, meaning "supplanter" or "one who grabs the heel."

The second instance involves taking advantage of his brother's hunger. Esau, the older twin, was a robust, hairy outdoorsman. Jacob pursued the more refined and intellectual arts. No wonder his mother and he grew close.

The day Esau returned from the hunt, starved, Jacob saw his opportunity to recover the birthright denied him at birth. For a simple meal of porridge, Jacob asked in return his brother's birthright. Hungry, naive, and impulsive, Esau traded his birthright for a single meal. Jacob was learning well the art of saving his neck by using his head.

The most cruel deception of all was Jacob's daring plot in tricking his aged and blind father. Two assets most coveted by a Semitic son were birthright and the death blessing. Jacob had manipulated himself into gaining the first. He had apparently awaited the opportune moment to capture the second.

Genesis 27 records the ugly deed. Isaac's dying request of his elder son, Esau, was a meal of his favorite venison. Esau loved his father and was delighted to do his bidding. He left immediately for the hunt. Unfortunately, Isaac's wife and the mother of his children, who preferred Jacob to Esau, overheard the request. She quickly plotted a deception. Jacob would take it to his father dressed in a hairy garment simulating Esau's body. Although Isaac was suspicious, the deception succeeded and Jacob won the coveted blessing. Jacob cheated his father and betrayed his brother—a memory he would never shake off.

The price was high. Jacob lost his father's respect and his brother's trust. Within hours,

urged by his mother who feared Esau's reprisal, Jacob was on the road. Why not use the time to find himself a wife among their relatives far to the east? As it turned out, Jacob never saw his mother again. When he returned 20 years later, she was dead.

The third instance showing Jacob's egocentrism was at the time of his famous dream. While he grew immensely as a result of this dream, his ego was still insistent. In the dream Jacob saw a ladder, or ramp, stretched from heaven to earth, indeed to the very place he lay. Hurrying back and forth on errands were angels, obviously messengers of the real King over all the earth. The ramp led up to God's throne. Instantly and hauntingly, Jacob would have to reckon with the Almighty. Jacob's dream was not his conversion, however, for he quickly tries his ingrained bargaining skills on God. "Bring me back," he says, "to this place, and I'll give You ten percent of my gains" (see Gen. 28:20-22).

At least we can say this: The God who until then had been academic and irrelevant to Jacob, now became, if not dear, at least actual and real. This first phase of Jacob's life illustrates the adolescence of our modern mind, which dismisses God as a myth, and the human as ultimate.

Phase 2: Realism

As it is for all of us, reality was Jacob's main subject in the school of the real world. Fantasy was forced to give way to adversity. During the next 20 years, Jacob grew humble. What he had previously done to others was now being done to him.

Charmed by Rachel, he agreed with her father to pay a dowry for her hand in marriage through seven years' work without pay; but on the wedding night he discovered that he'd been outwitted by a father-in-law more skilled at deception than he (Gen. 29 and 30). Rachel's sister was now his wife. To marry Rachel, the woman he loved, he agreed to work an additional seven years on the same

terms. Fourteen years to get a wife!

On a subsistence income, Jacob raised a large family. Only by the help of God and careful strategy was he able to escape at last. Life plodded hard during those years. No heavenly dreams or divine revelations came to brighten Jacob's life. The daily chore of his life was as normal and uneventful as ours. Yet he did not seem to grow cynical. If God had forgotten him, he could not forget God.

The Jacob of Phase 2 became a seasoned man, mellowed by life, and ripe for the higher life. If not yet a fully changed man, the foundations had been laid for Jacob's ultimate encounter with God.

Phase 3: Conversion

If in Phase 1 God had been academic with Jacob, and in Phase 2, seemingly absent, with Phase 3 God became *actual* and *alive* to Jacob. He discovered in God the answer to life. He became a transformed person.

Genesis 31 tells the story of his stealthy, near violent escape from his father-in-law and their coming to terms. But the worst was yet to come.

As Jacob traveled toward his original home, news arrived that his brother, Esau, was coming to meet him with a small army of 400 men. It seemed that Esau was about to deal out Jacob's final deserts. Yet Jacob would use his head to salvage what he could. One wife, half the children, and half the cattle he sent in one direction, while the other half of everything he sent off in another

direction, thinking that if one group were captured, at least the other group would escape. But he himself stayed back, alone.

That night Jacob didn't sleep. He was terribly afraid, but what finally dominated him was a need beyond that of protection. It almost seemed he was struggling for his soul with God. The fundamental commitments of his life were at stake as out of the darkness of the night a terrifying stranger emerged to wrestle with him.

As morning began to break, so did the ultimate cry of the human soul. Jacob cried out to the Stranger, whom now he began to realize was not an enemy, "I will not let You go until You bless me."

By cunning Jacob gained earlier the best blessings men could give—the birthright and the death blessing, but he remained unsatisfied. There had to be more. The blessing he now craved with the whole of his being was the blessing of God. He would cling until that blessing came. *This* was the moment of Jacob's ultimate turning.

The person first born as "Jacob," God now made into an "Israel." He was given the name that the Jewish people have carried with pride ever since. Religion fulfilled its purpose in Jacob's life; it had brought him to God and made him completely new. That's true religion. That's what the church and its ministry is all about.

Clement of Alexandria was right in asking, "What help is it to you that God is God, if He is not *your* God?" ■

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Should we depersonalize another person's faith?

Julia Vernon



Julia Vernon is chaplain at the Hospice of Bountiful in Grantsville, Utah.

One of my first questions after I began working with military veterans was, "Why is the speech and literature of war so full of ethnic slurs?" The answer was always the same. "These names dehumanize the enemy and it is easier to fight and kill a dehumanized, impersonal enemy. You hesitate killing people if they still appear to you as human beings." Thus, dehumanization, or depersonalization, is a standard, valued technique in war.

Sadly, this technique has its equivalent in the language of religion as well: Papist, popery, Prod, Hebe, Christ-killer, Dunkard, cultist, mumbo-jumbo, Hairy Krishner, bells and smells, Mooney, Jay Dub, heretic, apostate, Sabbatizer, and Holy Roller. Such terms dehumanize the other person and his religion, making it easier to reject, even hate, and ultimately to persecute. After all, if the other religion is called by a derogatory name, if it is not worthless, it is at least diminished. The base part of our nature tells us this absolves us of all obligations to learn, understand, communicate, or consider the claims of the command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Since not only military language but that of religion has a long history of depersonalization, it's not surprising that we have expanded our reach beyond the mere adherents to include deity also. If the use of epithets reduces the followers of a religion we

disagree with, are afraid of, and ultimately don't like, why not use the same technique on their god too?

I first noticed this technique when I moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, nearly 30 years ago. Salt Lake City is the world headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As I visited with various churches and religious groups, I kept hearing the same sentiments from the pulpit. "The Mormon Jesus isn't our Jesus." "They don't have the same Savior we do." "Their god isn't our God."

While it's clear that we have various ways of understanding or viewing God, some of them substantive and necessarily uncompromisable, these kinds of depersonalizing statements go further than these variations require and add elements that just don't belong. They do this because they contain an edge of judgment, a shoot of disdain, an intent to hurt, and sometimes even to hate. Even statements such as, "The Jehovah's Witnesses' god isn't our God," or "The Roman Catholics don't have the same Savior we do," may have a note of objectivity in them, but in the end they are clearly made on the background of a kind of superiority and religious egotism.

Since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, were intimately connected to the attackers' view of their religion, it was inevitable that some Christian ministers would cement the religious connection even further by tarnishing and depersonalizing an entire religion—its people and its faith. In the aftermath, statements of dehumanization and judgment of the Muslim people as a whole became all too common in many quarters.

A seed of distorted truth lies behind many epithets. For example, those who have at a certain point in their experience been forced by poverty and persecution to be very frugal, such as the Scots, may be labeled as miserly. Those who reject the majority-accepted, orthodox portrait of God and paint an alternative portrait may be accused of embracing a different god altogether. Again, the destructive element is not the fact that we disagree with a given person or group as they present their faith, but that our disagreement turns to disdain, dehumanization, and depersonalization. This simply was not the way of Jesus Christ.

Can dehumanization be justified?

The essential question must come back to this: Are these departures and differing views

of God enough to justify the dehumanizing accusation that they worship a different god? From the standpoint of historical continuity, they are not.

For example, the Christian portraits of God, while differing in some ways from the Jewish portraits, are rooted in the same divine/historical events, utilize the same Scriptures, incorporate many of the same religious heroes and symbolism, and use much of the same religious language. The later portrait of God was painted and embraced by people who originated in the earlier faith tradition. The later one grew out of the foundation of the earlier one as a divergent continuance of the worship of the same God—a different portrait painted from a different perspective.

Most often, the original followers of a new religion viewed themselves as part, or a continuity, of their parent faith. They saw themselves as having found a fuller understanding of God, or as possessing a more mature understanding of Him. While the resulting tensions with the parent faith were very strong and led to a violation of some of the principles espoused in this article, when all was said and done, they inevitably recognized their spiritual ancestry even as they espoused a faith different from the original.

Even in the case of Islam, there is a tie of language between its view of God and those of Judaism and Christianity. Hebrew Scriptures use the terms *elohim*, *elowahh*, and *el* to refer to God. *Allah* is the direct descendant of those words, just as Arabic is a direct descendant of ancient Hebrew. Even as it is important and valuable to note the substantive differences between faiths, so is noting and valuing the substantive and even the “organic” similarities and historical affinities.

While we cannot concede the call of inner conviction or conscience before God, and while, by the nature of those convictions, we are called to share our faith evangelistically, we

need to honestly assess not only the arenas over which we disagree or depart from others but also embrace those areas in which we find genuine commonness and brotherhood. If we are genuinely faithful to both sides of this interfaith reality (what we have in common and what we don’t), it cannot but enliven and strengthen our evangelistic effectiveness.

50 (TEV). “John spoke up, ‘Master, we saw a man driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn’t belong to our group.’ ‘Do not try to stop him,’ Jesus said to him and to the other disciples, ‘because whoever is not against you is for you.’” Even those who don’t see Jesus our way may be serving “our Jesus.” It isn’t up to us to pronounce

THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION MUST COME BACK TO THIS: ARE THESE DEPARTURES AND DIFFERING VIEWS OF GOD ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY THE DEHUMANIZING ACCUSATION THAT THEY WORSHIP A DIFFERENT GOD?

For the Christian minister, it is essential to go deeper than the usual approaches of either indiscriminately embracing the approaches of a given view of God and faith, or blanketly and destructively denigrating it. We need to go, not only beyond prejudice and fear of the unknown but beyond historical and linguistic scholarship as well. We need to go and learn at the feet of the Master-Teacher as to how to react to those who have painted a different portrait of our God. So, what did Jesus teach?

Relating as Jesus did

First, He taught us that the call to “love our neighbor” is a call to love and respect precisely those who have a differing portrait of God. In Luke 10:25-37, a Samaritan was the model. A differing portrait of God, an accusation that the Samaritans’ god was not God, was the driving force behind the bitter hostility of Jews against Samaritans. Jesus taught His audience that love and depersonalization cannot co-exist in our ministry.

Second, Jesus instructed His first 12 ministers not to disrespect those whose portrait of Him differed from their own, the one He had taught them. We find the story in Luke 9:49,

this differing vision as “not our Jesus.”

Third, in Matthew 7:12 (TEV) Jesus taught His ministers to treat even those we perceive as our theological enemies as we ourselves want to be treated. “Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and of the teachings of the prophets.”

In coming to grips with that directive, we ministers need to ask ourselves some difficult key questions. Do we want to perpetuate or multiply the mind-set of bigotry, even the bigotry that prompts attacks such as occur all about us in our world? Do we want others to write off our portrait of God as merely a god? Do we wish them to dehumanize us through destructive attacks on our religion? Do we wish them to cut off all dialog by refusing to become acquainted with us? Do we wish to chop up the platform on which they might come to appreciate or even embrace our portrait of God? If we do, one way to accomplish it is to use the technique of denigration and depersonalization on their religion!

The fourth item applies to all of us, but perhaps especially to those of us who take the idea of “Christian war-

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Ministry is to minister

Allen Davis*

At times it amazes me that I've reached such an advanced age without learning some basic life lessons! But there are times when the Holy Spirit does lead us "into all truth" even though feeling the impact of truth can be more than a little painful.

It's all quite easy as long as I relegate the Holy Spirit's revelational role to clarifying some concept of doctrinal correctness, especially if it is targeted at somebody else's spurious view of Scripture. I find that comfortable, and better still, a tool that I can use to my advantage. But, when the Lord directs His light upon the flaws of my inward fabric, I tend to twist and squirm.

Recently He did it again. Someday I'm going to learn.

Learning my lessons—real ones

During the last several months I've found myself heading down a rather well-worn emotional path. I became involved in discussions regarding several professional positions that were open and which seemed attractive to me, only to have them all come to naught. I'd either get a "call out of the blue" dealing with one or another of these attractive situations, or I'd actually get a little proactive and see what I could do to get my name into the mix of consideration. Each episode turned into an exercise in futility.

As I faced the frustrating fruitlessness of

things, growing out of my sense of personal rejection, I found myself reverting to some childish self-preoccupations. These would reveal themselves in moments of woundedness when I would dejectedly think about how it was that no one really understood my needs and my gifts, and how very much I'd like to be given the chance to . . . whatever.

I also found that if I allowed myself the luxury of self-pity long enough, I'd start to feel twinges of resentment. That's the sort of thing that happens when I start taking an inventory of how hard I work, how much I give, and how no one seems to notice.

Once in a while, in moments of lucidity, I'd remember an experience told to me by a very dear friend of mine, who had advanced into a high administrative position in the church. He and I had a mutual friend who had given years of his life to the pastorate, but unknown to me had grown bitter when he was passed over for positions he felt he should have had. He had been looking at my first friend and his administrative advancement. Watching his "progress" through the years, he had become jealous because he came to feel that those kinds of opportunities always seemed to leave him standing where he was.

I was determined that I'd never become bitter. I was determined I'd not take stock of the colleagues with whom I went to college, assessing where they were in the pecking order, compared with me. Yet, in spite of my best intentions, I recently found myself again taking an accounting of my efforts and the apparent lack of measurable "returns," the ones that I "always" seemed to experience.

Ministry is wonderful, but . . .

Now, don't get me wrong. In sane moments I know that ministry is the sweetest thing I've ever been given, no matter the role I'm fulfilling or the "level" on which I find myself. I know I'm genuinely privileged to have what I have, and to do what I do.

I pastor a church where 90 percent of my members truly appreciate what I do for them, and where only 10 percent think I'm the antichrist! That's worth something, isn't it? (The trouble is, I'm just as human as the next pastor. . . . Nine sincere "thank you's" for my investment in my people always gets short-circuited by the one sincere saint who says of my sermon, "Well, that was different . . ." or worse.)

* Allen Davis is a pseudonym.

A wise colleague of mine once observed that ministry is the only profession in the world where the folks for whom you discharge your task all believe that they are outshining experts in your field of specialization. This truth finds a way of surfacing all too frequently in my case, and rattling me just a little.

Don't get me wrong. In cogent moments I know I'm indeed a man most blessed by the fact that God has entrusted pastoral ministry into my hands. The truth is that I'm in a situation where very little of what I do is as excitingly fulfilling to me in the kinds of ways some might expect it to be. Preaching is preaching, whatever the level. Teaching is teaching, whether to a few or multitudes.

The thing is, ministry as a profession is not a 60-hour week of preaching and teaching. That would be exciting, but it's not the daily reality I face. Some of ministry is just simple giving in the arena that meets the needs of my congregation, whether it's my ideal life agenda or not.

The Spirit's shattering insight

Thankfully, as I said, the Holy Spirit recently found a way to painfully shake my heart and my head. The quakings caused by the Spirit came in the wake of a direct question: "Has it ever crossed your mind that ministry means 'ministry'—as in 'to minister'? It's not about you!"

How did I get this old without really putting it together that way?

Please know that I really do believe that a gracious Lord intends to give us the best in life, but the truth is that Jesus never once looked to heaven and said, "Hey, I'm not getting much out of this for myself. Where's my reward? What's going on here anyway?"

I'm not joking. That's the big insight for this period of my life.

"Ministry means 'ministry'—as in 'to minister.'" It's not about me, my needs, my attainments, my reputation, or my fulfillment. I'm paid for the privilege that allows me to minis-

ter, and to do it well. That's it. I'm not paid to expend my energies in self-promotion or in self-fulfillment. In this context it's also true that ministry after this order doesn't leave room for the jealousies or woundedness that may come down the road of disappointed ambition or trivial criticism.

But I must ask again, How did I get this far without the Holy Spirit being able to lead me into this truth?

There's one more confession. . . . I'm not a little nervous. A large enough piece of me is afraid that the Lord is soon going to push things further, asking me to define love in its mature, incarnational sense! ■

Should we depersonalize another person's faith?

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fare" seriously. In Romans 12:20, 21, the Spirit laid down a surprising basic rule of engagement. "As the scripture says: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for by doing this you will make him burn with shame.' Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good" (TEV).

Often, I hear ministers from various denominations describe how they use depersonalization to apply the concept of Christian warfare to those with differing visions of God. They sometimes express the sentiment that this is the only alternative to compromising with error.

Evangelizing as Jesus did, does not include insulting and degrading either the faith of those we seek to win or the people themselves. Aspects of our conditioning and culture may seem to demand that. The idea of telling it fearlessly and "prophetically" may seem to require it. But that is a delusion, and besides, it doesn't work very well! We must tell the truth, but it should always be told in genuine love.

As implied in the passage from

Letters

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Darwinist dream of the undirected forces of nature; chance and necessity. The most recent advances in physics and biology point directly to an intelligent Designer as the best explanation for the origin of life and its diversity.

Even if Parsons is correct that no professional biologists/geneticists reject Darwinism, this is a matter of philosophy and not a matter of evidence, and it can be explained in precisely the same terms as my adherence to a young age for life on earth. ■

—Earl M. J. Aagaard, Angwin, California.

Romans 12 cited above, there is the way that adheres more closely to the biblical model, the rules of engagement that are worthy of our calling. Even though we cannot in good conscience praise a differing vision, we can follow the Romans 12 rules of engagement more closely, treating our differing neighbors with kindness and respect in the way we talk about our faith and theirs. That kindness may well lodge in their hearts, softening hostility and creating an environment in which true spiritual dialog might some day take place, and on the basis of which they might even be won over.

Depersonalization is, first and last, an invention of this world. It is completely carnal in nature, born of the human temptation to strike out at anything different from ourselves. In 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV), God cautions us regarding our Christian warfare: "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. . . .*" (emphasis supplied).

God's spiritual weapons include not just the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17, NIV), but also the weapons of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23, NIV). ■

Hurry up and wait

JAMES A. CRESS



For Adventists to celebrate the 75th anniversary of any venture seems incongruous with our name. Although personally pleased with *Ministry's* continuing contribution as we reach our publication's diamond jubilee, my Seventh-day Adventist heritage leads me to apologize more than congratulate.

Our Lord's delay forces both a theological and practical challenge for every believer in the eschaton. From those first century believers who anticipated a quick parousia to early Adventists who mistakenly established a date for the second coming, we have struggled with short-term planning and dashed dreams as we have postponed projects or closed the coffin on beloved friends and family members.

Seventy-five years ago, *Ministry's* first issue emphasized our confidence in the soon return of Jesus. Sixty years ago my parents entered ministry confident that Jesus would return long before they would grow old or wait in the grave. Thirty years ago, Sharon and I eagerly began our pastoral ministry with no sense of need to plan for a retirement we would never reach. Proclaiming our confidence in the surety of Jesus' coming took precedence over to His counsel to "occupy till I come." "After all," we and hundreds of other pastoral couples reasoned, "the church will always care for its retirees if the Lord delays."

We actively proclaimed the nearness of Jesus' return by citing texts enumerating end times characterized by chaos among governments, collapse of families in the midst of moral and societal deterioration, upheaval in nature, proliferation of disease and disasters, and compromise by spiritual leadership. Oh, and don't forget Scriptures strongest warnings against the multiplication of independent ministries which attempt to draw away disciples after themselves.

Somehow, as Lisbon's earthquake, the dark day, and falling stars faded into history's recesses, their indications of immediacy of the second coming were less persuasive than the reality of their importance as signals of transition from the dark ages to the time of the end.

When church's growth demanded expansion and renewal, "Should the Lord delay His coming," became code to explain the necessity of long-range plans, expanding facilities, or even renovating buildings which critics suspect should never have been constructed in the first place.

Living squarely between what Charles Bradford terms the "ought" and the "is," the church ought to be in the kingdom, but is still here on earth. Even now we seem unwilling or incapable of planning beyond the next quinquennium a global strategy to "finish the work" because it might be perceived as lack of confidence in Christ's near return.

Too often, those who struggle with the issues of delay are labeled liberal because they seek understanding beyond rote repetition of answers developed by Uriah Smith. Self-styled "historical" Adventists brand any who differ with their particular theological interpretation as heretics even as they prey on the nostalgia of thousands to support fiercely independent ventures.

Both as an individual believer and as an Adventist pastor, I long for the culmination of our blessed hope! I believe in the literal, visible, personal, and imminent return of Jesus and pray that it will occur in my lifetime. My confident proclamation is predicated on personal study and earnest desire to help others prepare for His coming.

My most powerful sermons focus on Jesus' return. One year I preached a twelve-sermon series, the last Sabbath of each month, on the second coming. After all, we are Adventists because of the Advent. Beginning the next year, my elders asked me to continue. "Preach the same sermons over again, Pastor."

I do not scornfully ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" even though our Heavenly Father has failed to follow the time line I might have devised. Instead, I pray for patient comprehension of the New Testament which always places that delay in terms of God's infinite love, patience, and unwillingness to see any sinner perish (2 Peter 3:9).

Even as I affirm my confidence in the future and my gratitude for God's providences in the past, I am called upon to live in the present. Even in the midst of traumatic, troubled times, we live in the kingdom of grace while we long for the kingdom of glory.

To paraphrase Barry Oliver's outstanding affirmation, "Just as we eagerly look forward to the future of Jesus coming, we gratefully look up to the present reality of His grace which opens heaven for us now." Lively hope anticipates the future. Living faith endures the present.

Revelation concludes with the cry of the lonely heart, "Even so, come quickly" coupled with the reality of preparatory waiting, "and the grace of our Lord and Savior, be with you all."

Jesus wants to return even more than I want Him to. Hurry up and wait! ■

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